

Tinubu pardons Vatsa, Lawan, grants clemency to 82 prisoners, grants national honours to Herbert Macaulay, 959 Nigerians, Bill Gates **P 6**

Amupitan gets Council of State nod as INEC chair

•Obasanjo, Abdulsalami absent •President to send name to Senate for confirmation

From **Juliana Taiwo-Obalonye, Abuja**

THE National Council of State has endorsed the appointment of Joash Ojo Amupitan, Professor of Law and expert in the Law of Evidence as chairman of the Independent

National Electoral Commission (INEC), following President Bola Tinubu's recommendation and in line with the constitutional provisions requiring consultation with the Council of State.

Briefing State House correspondents after the

meetings, Governor of Imo State, Hope Uzodinma said the appointment was unanimously approved.

"Mr. President, in keeping with statutory provisions, presented the name of Professor Amupitan, a highly respected scholar

of impeccable integrity who has never participated in partisan politics and his appointment was unanimously endorsed by the Council," he said

In compliance with the constitution, President Tinubu will send Amupitan's name to the Senate

for screening.

Amupitan, 58, from Ayetoro Gbede, Ijumu Local Government Area in Kogi is an alumnus of the university. He specialises in Company Law, Law of Evidence, Corporate Governance and Privatisation Law. He became a Senior

Advocate of Nigeria in September 2014.

Amupitan was born on April 25, 1967.

After completing primary and secondary education, he attended Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, from 1982 to 1984,

• Continued on Page 6

Forest guards storm bushes to flush out bandits, kidnappers

P 4

■ NSA reveals FG action plan ■ Senate holds executive session



L-R: Governor Hyacinth Alia (Benue); Osun State Deputy Governor, Kola Adewusi; Rivers State Governors, Siminalayi Fubara; Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), George Akume; Governors Dapo Abiodun (Ogun); Abdullahi Sule (Nasarawa); AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq (Kwara); Peter Mbah (Enugu) and Alex Otti (Abia), during the Hybrid Council of State meeting in Abuja, yesterday

SSANU, NASU protest delay in implementation of 2009 negotiation **P 27**
 ■ Bemoan suffering of members

Presidency rejects Sowore's plan for 'Free Nnamdi Kanu' protest **P 26**

Tinubu, Sanwo-Olu mourn Kolade **P 28**

W'Bank verdict: ADC mocks Tinubu **P 26**
 ■ Says his economic policies have ruined lives

PAGE 2 BUSINESS



Managing Director/Chief Executive of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), Mr. Thompson Sunday (right) and President/Chairman of Council, Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Prof. Pius Olanrewaju, when the latter recently led members of his executive team to the NDIC head office, Abuja to deepen collaboration aimed at addressing emerging risks and challenges within Nigeria's banking sector.

BREAKFAST NEWS



NCDMB, NEXIM disburse \$42m to boost SMEs

THE Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and Nigerian Export Import Bank (NEXIM) have disbursed about \$42 million to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to boost their participation in the oil and gas sector.

The Head, Specialised Business at NEXIM, Muhammed Awami, disclosed this at the NCDMB stakeholders' sensitisation and engagement forum in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, yesterday.

He said that although the working capital of the capacity fund is \$30 million, they have exceeded the amount in order to attract more Nigerian players in oil and gas sector.

The programme themed; "Deepening Local Content through Certification, Compliance and Financing Support" brought together key players in the oil and gas industry to discuss the involvement of Nigerian players.

Awami appealed to the duly registered Nigerian oil service providers with viable contract with International Oil Companies (IOCs) and National Oil Companies (NOCs) to take advantage of the NCDMB working capital and capacity fund, managed by NEXIM bank.

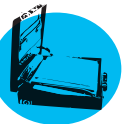
He said the fund offers flexible financing and tailoring solutions to meet their business needs, and catalyse business growth, help to access markets, expand global footprint and unlock new opportunities.

"Once you meet pre-disbursement conditions, we disburse the funds to you, and after disbursement, we also sometimes monitor jointly with NCDMB. Sometimes, we just do spot check assessment of utilisation of the funds, to make sure the funds are being used for the purpose it was disbursed.

"When it's time to repay, we expect that repayments are made by the beneficiaries so that we can also lend again to other people. The fund working capital and capacity fund is \$30 million. But, so far, we have disbursed about \$42 million."

Continued on www.thesun.ng

BRIEF CASE



Companies info in brief

IDGC:Glo educates girls on importance of menstrual, mental health

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE International Day of the Girl Child, Glo Foundation, the social responsibility arm of telecommunications company, Globacom, has urged secondary school girls across the country to pay attention to their menstrual and mental health.

The Foundation explained that, these two key issues have become imperative if the girls would grow into adulthood with confidence while embracing the future without inhibitions. This year's IDGC, with the theme: "The GIRL I am, the changes I lead: GIRLS on the frontline of crisis", was an opportunity for the Foundation to reach out to students with information on how to promote to promote the well-being of the girl child.

The health awareness campaign in conjunction with the Health Aid for All Initiative (HAFAl), an NGO, sought to educate 100 girls from each of the selected schools in Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt, Benin, Owerri and Kaduna.

The schools included; Community Secondary School, Port Harcourt; Methodist Government Junior High School, Agege, Lagos; LGEA Upper Basic School Kudansa, Maraban Rido, Kaduna; Oba Ewuare Grammar School, Oko Central, Benin City; Orogwe Secondary School, Owerri; and Junior Secondary School Dutse Sagwari, Abuja.

According to the Foundation, "Menstrual periods should never be a reason for a girl to lose confidence, miss school, or feel held back.

Continued on www.thesun.ng

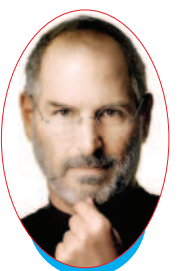
Int'l crude oil and commodity prices



Brent crude oil -	\$66.27	+1.25%
WTI crude oil -	\$62.59	+1.39%
Natural Gas -	\$3.33	-4.80%
RBOB Gasoline -	\$1.91	+0.92%
Heating oil -	\$2.29	+1.17%
Prices as at 08/10/2025 (17:46 BST)		

CEO Quote

Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do."



-Steve Jobs, Co-Founder of Apple

NEITI uncovers N1.5trn unremitted funds, owners of 4,800 undeclared assets

By **Adewale Sanyaolu**

THE Executive Secretary, Nigerian Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (NEITI), Mr. Orji Ogbonnaya Orji, has disclosed that the agency has identified outstanding remittances of N1.5 trillion owed the federation by some private companies and government agencies.

He also revealed that NEITI has unmasked the true owners of over 4,800 extractive assets and currently helping the government combat corruption and illicit financial flows.

Orji stated these in his address at the National Association of Energy Correspondents (NAEC) Energy Conference 2025 with the theme "Nigeria's Energy Future: Exploring Opportunities and Addressing Risks for Sustainable Growth" held in Lagos, yesterday.

The NEITI boss lamented that the unremitted funds could significantly support energy infrastructure, education and healthcare if recovered.

He added that the agency's findings also exposed the devastating cost of poor accountability.

"In 2022 alone, Nigeria lost 13.5 million barrels of crude oil valued at \$3.3 billion to theft and sabotage. That is revenue that could have financed a full year of the federal health budget or provided energy ac-

cess to millions of households.

These losses are not just economic, they represent broken trust, institutional weaknesses, and missed opportunities for national progress. This is precisely why transparency and accountability are not optional. They are existential."

He argued that Nigeria's energy future will not be defined by the size of our reserves or production capacity, but by how transparently and prudently we manage our natural resource wealth, the revenues, data, contracts, and decisions that shape our national destiny.

According to him, the era of secrecy in resource gover-

nance is over, saying the global energy transition towards cleaner fuels, gas optimisation, and renewable energy requires openness, responsibility, and innovation at every stage of the value chain.

"Data builds trust, and trust drives investment."

He explained that transparency is not a bureaucratic exercise, it is an economic imperative because it attracts capital, technology, and partnerships.

Our latest NEITI industry reports make this truth evident.

He further disclosed that NEITI's 2021-2022 Oil and Gas Industry Reports revealed that Nigeria earned \$23.04 bil-

lion in 2021 and \$23.05 billion in 2022 from the sector.

However, he regretted that the findings also exposed the devastating cost of poor accountability.

"These are revenues that could have financed a full year of the federal health budget or provided energy access to millions of households.

This is precisely why transparency and accountability are not optional. They are existential. He pointed out that NEITI, over the past decade, has evolved from an auditing agency to a governance reform institution.

Continued on www.thesun.ng

Greenwich Merchant Bank hits N50bn capital mark, set for expansion

GREENWICH Merchant Bank has attained a major growth milestone by successfully meeting the Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) N50 billion minimum capital requirement for banks of its level.

The apex bank, in a letter dated September 22, 2025, confirmed its approval of Greenwich's N22.6 billion fresh capital raised through a Rights Issue and Private Placement, which brought the bank's total capital above the new threshold and strengthened its standing as one of Ni-

geria's most progressive financial institutions.

The fresh injection of capital significantly enhances Greenwich's financial capacity, positioning it to underwrite larger transactions, offer more competitive financing and expand its product portfolio. The move also bolsters investor confidence, ensuring sustainable growth and improved returns.

Speaking on the achievement, the Chairman of Greenwich Group, Mr. Kayode Falowo, described the devel-

opment as "a significant milestone in our growth journey and a strong testament to the resilience and commitment of everyone across the organisation."

He added: "It positions us strategically for the next phase of our expansion and service delivery. We thank our shareholders for their trust and applaud the Board and Management for their dedication in achieving this. Greenwich remains committed to driving even greater achievements in the future."

In his remarks, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Benson Ogundeji, emphasised that the milestone reflects confidence in the bank's strategic vision and operational excellence.

"Our successful capital raise is not just a regulatory compliance milestone; it is proof of the confidence our shareholders place in our vision and the trust our clients and partners have built with us over the years," Ogundeji said.

He added: "We see this as a springboard to strengthen our capacity to deliver innovative financial solutions while contributing meaningfully to Nigeria's economic growth and stability."

The bank's capitalisation success comes at a pivotal time as Nigerian banks intensify efforts to meet the CBN's recapitalisation directive aimed at boosting sector stability and deepening resilience.

Continued on www.thesun.ng





IMO STATE GOVERNMENT



SPECIAL INVITATION TO THE UNVEILING OF MYIMOAPP AND GRADUATION OF 10,000 COHORT 3, SKILLUP IMO TRANEES

The Imo State Government most cordially invites Imo State stakeholders and the general public to the unveiling of MyImoApp and the graduation ceremony of 10,000 youths trained and equipped under the Cohort 3 SkillUp Imo Project.

MyImoApp is a one-stop platform designed to connect Imo people at home and abroad to developments in the state and enable them to be part of the governance process.

Come and witness the making of history and the fulfilment of a promise by the visionary government of Distinguished Senator Hope Uzodimma, CON, the transformative Governor of Imo State.

Date:
Friday, October 10th, 2025

Venue:
Emmanuel Iwuanyanwu International
Conference Centre, Owerri

Time:
11:00 AM

Host:

His Excellency,
Governor Hope Uzodimma, CON,
Governor of Imo State

Signed:

Chief Cosmas Iwu
Secretary to the Government of Imo State

NEWS AROUND THE CITY

CRIME

COURT

LIVING

CALL: 08109473658

Police shower souvenirs to public in Delta

By **Godspower Okereke**

AS the world celebrated the 2025 customer service week on Wednesday, Delta State Police command participated fully by showering gifts to members of the public across the state.

The command took advantage of the occasion to appreciate Deltans for their support in the fight against crime and criminality.

According to Commissioner of Police, Olufemi Abaniwonda; "Partnership with members of the community is key and has been one of the major reasons why successes have been recorded in the fight against crime and criminality in the state. Souvenirs were presented to road users, market women, parents and youths in appreciation for their support and partnership with the command in crime fighting.

"Protection of lives and property is the core mandate of the Nigeria Police, and the populace, in this case, could be seen as customers because we are partners in crime fighting.

"Similar outreach was also carried out in Ughelli, Warri, Sapele and other parts of the state, with the presentation of gift items, books and lots more to residents, primary and secondary school students.

"This is a non-kinetic approach to crime fighting and going forward, it will be sustained to further bridge the gap between the police and the community."

\$6bn Mambilla power fraud: Agunloye disregarded FEC directive in award of contract -Witness

From **Sola Ojo**, Abuja

THE trial of former Minister of Power and Steel, Olu Agunloye, continued yesterday, at the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court, Apo, Abuja, with more revelations unfolding on the alleged \$6 billion Mambilla Power Project contract scandal.

During the hearing before Justice Jude Onwuegbuzie, the third prosecution witness (PW3), Umar Hussein Babangida, told the court that the former minister disregarded a directive and resolution of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) at its meeting held on May 21, 2003, when he went ahead to award the contract to Sunrise Power and Transmission Company Limited.

According to Babangida, the FEC meeting, which was presided over by then-President Olusegun Obasanjo, had resolved that the Mambilla Hydroelectric Power Project contract should not be awarded to Sunrise Power.

Despite this resolution and a clear directive to that effect, the witness told the court that Agunloye proceeded to issue an approval letter to the company, granting it the \$6 billion contract.

"The Federal Executive Council, presided over by the then President, resolved that the contract should not be awarded to Sunrise Power and directed the Minister not to proceed with it.

"However, the defendant disregarded this directive and went ahead to issue an approval letter to the company," Babangida testified.

Under cross-examination by the defence counsel, Adeola Adedipe, SAN, the witness maintained his position, insisting that the former minister acted contrary to the FEC resolution and the President's directive.

Agunloye is being prosecuted by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), on an amended seven-count charge bordering on official corruption and fraudulent award of a contract for the construction of the 3,960-megawatt Mambilla Hydroelectric Power Station, valued at \$6 billion (Six Billion US Dollars).

One of the charges reads, "That you, Olu Agunloye, whilst being the Minister of Power and Steel on or about May 2, 2003, in Abuja, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, knowingly disobeyed the directive of the President made in the FEC meeting of May 21, 2003, directed at you pursuant to the President's powers under Section 5(1)(a) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

•Continued onwww.thesun.ng

Certificate scandal: Group asks Enugu Attorney General to prosecute Nnaji

THE Citizens Advocacy for Social and Economic Rights (CASER) has called on Enugu State's Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice to prosecute former Minister of Innovation, Science and Technology, Geoffrey Uche Nnaji, an indigene of the state.

The erstwhile minister recently resigned from office over certificates forgery scandal. An online newspaper, Premium Times, had published an investigative report, which showed that Nnaji allegedly forged the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) Degree certificate and a National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) discharge certificate, which he submitted to the Senate, Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (OSGF), and Directorate of State Service (DSS) for his appointment, screening, and confirmation as a minister in President Bola Tinubu's government in August, 2023.

Addressing journalists in Abuja yesterday, Executive Director, CASER, Frank Tietie, said the organisation had already written to the Attorney General of Enugu State to immediately begin the prosecution of Nnaji as federal agencies that should have prosecuted him appeared to be dragging their feet.

According to the lawyer and activist, the dereliction of duty on the part of federal agencies, especially when linked to high-profile personalities, undermines public confidence in the nation's justice system and erodes the foundational principle that no one is above the law.

•Continued onwww.thesun.ng



Retired police officers protesting unpaid benefits by PENCOM at the National Assembly, Abuja, yesterday.

Photo: Mudashiru Atanda

FG unleashes forest guards to flush out bandits, kidnappers - NSA

By **Christopher Oji**

THE Federal Government has deployed a new line of defence against insecurity with the rollout of the Forest Guards Initiative aimed at flushing out bandits, kidnappers and other criminal gangs from Nigeria's forests.

National Security Adviser (NSA), Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, made this known yesterday in Abuja, at the opening of the Federal and States Security Administrators' Meeting (FSSAM).

The meeting was held at the Na-

tional Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC), Office of the NSA. According to Ribadu, the initiative approved by President Bola Tinubu, marked a decisive shift in the nation's internal security strategy, targeting the forests that had long served as safe havens for violent criminals.

"We are taking the fight to where the criminals hide.

"The Forest Guards Initiative is a bold step to secure our forests, restore peace to rural communities, and deny bandits and kidnappers freedom of action," he said.

The NSA disclosed that more than 130,000 armed forest guards would be

deployed across the country's 1,129 forest and game reserves, starting with pilot operations in Adamawa, Borno, Niger, Kebbi, Kwara, Sokoto and Yobe States.

He added that the move aligns with the administration's broader goal of strengthening national security for peace and prosperity.

Earlier, the Permanent Secretary, Special Services Office, Muhammed Danjuma, said the initiative was being jointly coordinated by ONSA and the Federal Ministry of Environment in collaboration with state governments.

Danjuma described the project as a

"security game-changer" designed to reclaim forest spaces from criminal gangs, safeguard critical natural assets, and protect vulnerable rural communities.

He, however, stressed that success would depend on strong political will, adequate resourcing, and collective commitment at both national and sub-national levels.

The three-day meeting brings together security administrators from the 36 states and the FCT to review the nation's internal security architecture and recommend practical solutions to emerging threats.

Senate holds executive session on strategies to address insecurity

•Says no religious group facing targeted killings in Nigeria

From **Adesuwa Tsan**, Abuja

THE Senate has declared that the insecurity crisis in Nigeria is not specifically targeted at any religious group in the country.

It said this in plenary yesterday, after considering a motion raised by Ali Ndume and 20 others, titled "urgent need to correct misconceptions regarding the purported Christian genocide narrative in Nigeria and in the international community."

Leading debate on the motion, Ndume noted recent discussions in the United States Senate and Congress on Nigeria's religious freedom, including moves to designate Nigeria as a "country of particular concern."

U.S. Senator, Ted Cruz, had introduced the Nigeria Religious Freedom Accountability Act of 2025, which he said, seeks to protect Christians and other religious minorities being persecuted in Nigeria by holding accountable Nigerian officials, who facilitate Islamist jihadist violence and the imposition of blasphemy laws.

Sen. Cruz said, "Nigerian Christians are being targeted and executed for their faith by Islamist terrorist groups, and are being forced to submit to sharia law and blasphemy laws across Nigeria. It is long past time to impose real costs on the Nigerian officials, who facilitate these activities, and my Nigeria Religious Freedom

Accountability Act, uses new and existing tools to do exactly that. I urge my colleagues to advance this critical legislation expeditiously.

"Religious persecution and violence against Christians and other religious minorities in Nigeria is endemic, driven in significant part by Islamist jihadism and institutionalised sharia law in large parts of the country."

While stressing that it is not desirable to be designated as a country of particular concern, Ndume emphasised that debates on Nigeria's security challenges ought to be based on accurate facts and balanced perspectives. The lawmaker added that the killings by criminal elements are not defined by religion alone, but by a "complex mix of terrorism, criminality, and socio-economic factors affecting both Christians and Muslims."

He said the increasing circulation, both domestically and internationally, of the narrative alleging an ongoing "Christian genocide" in Nigeria "amplified by some advocacy groups, foreign media, and religious networks, though often arising from genuine concern, risk oversimplifying Nigeria's security challenges, deepening sectarian suspicion, and creating negative perceptions of the country in the international community."

However, the Senate did not adopt the recommendations of the motion. Following contributions by Senators Aliyu Wammako, Kawu Samaila and Jimoh Ibrahim, the Senate president called for more extensive deliberations on the matter. He explained

•Continued onwww.thesun.ng

NEWS AROUND **THE CITY**

S'East: Amnesty links 1,844 deaths to military, militia, separatist groups

From **Jude Chinedu**, Enugu

AMNESTY International has accused both state and non-state actors in the South-East region of gross human rights violations that have left at least 1,844 people dead between January 2021 and June 2023.

In a new report covering January 2021 to December 2024, titled "A decade of impunity, attacks and unlawful killings in the South East", the human rights watchdog said that the violence, fuelled by activities of government-backed security outfits, separatist militias, "unknown gunmen", and cult groups, has plunged the region into what it described as a "hybrid of criminal and political violence."

According to Amnesty International, "The security situation in South-East Nigeria involves a hybrid of criminal and political violence that different actors can choose to portray and manipulate to suit their interests."

The organisation said that both state-backed forces such as the Ebube Agu paramilitary outfit and national security agencies, as well as non-state armed groups including the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), its militant wing Eastern Security Network (ESN), and 'unknown gunmen', were responsible for "widespread killings, torture, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, and destruction of property."

"Between January 2021 and June 2023, over 1,844 people were killed in the South-East region, while there were cases of abductions, mob violence, and electoral violence. As at the time of writing this report, the killings continued," the report stated.

The group said it conducted in-person and phone interviews with more than 100 survivors and relatives of victims, alongside civil society representatives, lawyers, and religious leaders in Enugu, Abia, Imo, Anambra, and Ebonyi states. However, requests for meetings with the five South-East governors "did not receive any answer," except from Anambra State, which "acknowledged receipt but did not provide an opportunity for a meeting."

•Continued onwww.thesun.ng

RULAAC demands release of nurse trainee detained by Imo police

By **Lukman Olabiya**

THE Rule of Law and Accountability Advocacy Centre (RULAAC) has called for the immediate release of 21-year-old student Nurse, Princess Nmesoma Chukwunyerere, who has been detained for over 80 days without trial by the Imo State Police Command.

In statement issued by RULAAC, the right group described Nmesoma's prolonged detention as a grave injustice and a disturbing violation of constitutional rights, calling it a test of both the rule of law and police accountability in Nigeria.

According to the statement, Nmesoma, a student nurse at Mother of Mercy Hospital and Maternity, Orlu, was arrested on July 15, 2025, while doing part-time job, at Evergreen Pharmacy in Umudiato, Orlu. Her arrest was allegedly connected to a robbery that occurred nearly a month earlier, on June 22.

Her father, Gabriel Ekechukwu, said she was initially held at the Orlu Police Division for three weeks, during which she was reportedly tortured and threatened by police officers demanding a confession. Following her refusal, she was transferred to the Anti-Kidnapping Unit, widely known as "Tiger Base," in Owerri.

•Continued onwww.thesun.ng

Kaduna police nab 26 suspected kidnappers

THE Kaduna State State Police Command has arrested 26 suspected kidnappers, recovered four fabricated firearms and ransom money.

Kaduna State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) DSP Mansir Hassan, confirmed the development in a statement, yesterday, saying that, "in a sustained effort to rid the state of banditry and kidnapping, operatives of the command, in a coordinated joint operation, with patrol teams from Anchau Division and the Kaduna Vigilance Service (KADVIS), arrested six suspected kidnappers.

"The operatives also recovered two fabricated firearms, and some parts of ransom money paid to the kidnappers."

He explained that the operation was on October 5, at about 1:15 am following credible intelligence that led to the arrest of a 21 years male suspect and five others.

He said that investigation revealed that the

suspects, on September 22, at about 2:15 am criminally conspired and invaded the residence of one Idris Adamu, 60 and abducted him and held in captivity for several days before releasing him after collecting a ransom of N5 million.

He said that during the same coordinated operation, two additional suspects, were arrested after a brief gun duel with the police.

He said however, that two other suspects were still at large and currently being trailed by operatives.

He said that exhibits, including two fabricated locally made pump-action guns, five empty cartridges, some amulets and cash sum of N546,000, believed to be part of the ransom proceed were recovered from them.

Hassan further said that on October 3, at about 6:00 p.m., a team of operatives from the Anti-Kidnapping Unit intercepted and arrested one suspect from Ikara Local Government Area and found in his possession two fabricated revolver rifles.

•Continued onwww.thesun.ng

Man, 23, jailed 1 year for possession of fraudulent document

By **Marvelous Udoruisi & Oyinlola Arolawun**

A 23-years-old man, Abimbola Joseph Olamide has been found guilty and sentenced to one year imprisonment by the Lagos State Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Court, Ikeja.

The convict, Olamide was docked before Justice Rahman Oshodi by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), on a one-count charge, bordering on possession of document containing false pretence.

According to the charge NO.: ID/26228C/2025, the particular of the offence read: "Joseph Olamide Abimbola, on or about the 7th day of May, 2025, in Lagos, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, had in your possession, a document titled: My happiness, containing false pretence, printed out from your Facebook account wherein

you represented yourself as a lady to unsuspecting members of the public, which document you knew or ought to have known to be false".

The prosecution held that offence, possession of document containing false pretence is contrary to Section 320 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State, 2015.

After the one-count charge was read to Abimbola, he however, pleaded guilty to the charge and the trial judge called for the review of the case.

The defence counsel, Damola Shodeinde, told the court that the defendant, was a first-time offender, who has learnt a big lesson and that the justice should tamper justice with mercy.

The defendant in his allocution, said: "I am sorry my lord, my colleague led me to do it and I promised to make amends, so please have mercy on me".

•Continued onwww.thesun.ng



ABUAD SCIENTISTS SECURE NAFDAC APPROVAL FOR THREE MEDICATIONS & ONE FOOD ITEM

Scientists in Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, ABUAD, which was recently ranked by Times Higher Education Impact Rankings as one of the Best 100 Universities in the world and No. 1 in Nigeria for four consecutive years: 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025, have SECURED APPROVAL FOR THREE (3) NEW MEDICATIONS AND ONE (1) FOOD ITEM.



AB-MAL Capsules:
An herbal remedy for the management of feverish conditions.



ABUAD Herbal Virucidine liquid:
An immune booster and an antioxidant.



AB Health Animation Capsule (250mg):
An herbal remedy and an antioxidant which also invigorates the body.



AB Cashew Nuts (Roasted):
Crunchy and Tasty

For further information

Interested individuals and companies should contact:

Telephone: 08039524453

Email: abpharma.parenteral@gmail.com, and / or

Telephone: 080-6510-9823 and 091-2230-7113

Email: industrialpark@abuad.edu.ng

Signed

Lady Christie Oluborode,
Registrar & Secretary to Council

From **Juliana Taiwo-Obalonye**, Abuja

Tinubu pardons Vatsa, Lawan, grants clemency to 82 prisoners

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu has granted pardons and clemency to a wide range of Nigerians, including prominent historical figures and former legislators, while also reducing sentences of numerous inmates across the country.

Major General Mamman Jiya Vatsa, who was executed in 1986 following a treason conviction, received a posthumous pardon. Vatsa, remembered as a poet and military officer, was among 17 individuals granted pardons after the National Council of State endorsed the Presidential Advisory Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy's (PACPM) recommendations in a meeting held in Abuja.

Also honoured posthumously was Herbert Macaulay, a Nigerian nationalist and co-founder of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), alongside Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. Macaulay, the party's first president, played a foundational role in Nigeria's independence movement but was unjustly convicted by British colonial au-

thorities in 1913 and banned from public office. President Tinubu's pardon today symbolically clears the blemish on Macaulay's record more than a century later.

Four notable former convicts received presidential pardons to facilitate their reintegration into society. These are former House of Representatives member Farouk Lawan, Anastasia Nwaobia, Hussaini Umar, and Ayinla Alanamu. The clemency was granted as they have shown remorse and reformed. Additionally, Nweke Francis Chibueze, serving life for cocaine trafficking, was pardoned as well as Nwogu Peters, who served 12 years of a 17-year sentence for fraud.

The President also formally pardoned the Ogoni Nine - Ken Saro Wiwa, Saturday Dobe, Nordu Eawo, Daniel Gbooko, Paul Levera, Felix Nuata, Baribor Bera, Barinem Kiobel, and John Kpuike—whose deaths sparked international outcry over human rights abuses.

National honours were conferred on the Ogoni Four—Chief Albert Badey, Chief Edward Kobani,

Chief Samuel Orage, and Theophilus Orage - recognising their contributions and sacrifices.

In total, President Tinubu granted clemency to 82 inmates, reduced sentences for 65 prisoners, and commuted death sentences of seven inmates to life imprisonment.

The recommendations came from the 12-member Presidential Advisory Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy chaired by Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Lateef Fagbemi. Other

members include high-ranking officials from the judiciary, Nigerian Police Force, Nigerian Correctional Service, National Human Rights Commission, and religious bodies such as the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) and Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN).

According to the committee's report to the Council of State, "A total of 175 inmates were interviewed, and 62 applications were received on behalf of 119 inmates consid-

ered, totaling 294. Of the inmates interviewed, 160 were male and 15 were female. Eighty-two were recommended for clemency; two for pardon; 65 for sentence reduction; and seven death row inmates had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment."

The committee outlined its criteria for recommendations as including old age (60+), terminal illness, youth (16 years or below), long-term incarceration of 10+ years with good conduct, vocational

rehabilitation, and demonstrated remorse.

Secretary to the Government of the Federation, George Akume, inaugurated the PACPM on January 15, 2025, heralding the President's commitment to justice reform, prisoner rehabilitation, and human rights protections in Nigeria.

The statement stated, "This exercise marks a historic moment in the Nigerian justice system, reconciling past injustices and fostering societal reintegration for reformed citizens."



Archbishop Michael Francis Croffy, Apostolic Nuncio to Nigeria with Cardinal John Onaiyekan (sitting in white) with participants during COFP Fellowship programme on Religios Peace, tolerance in Africa, put together by Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace in Auja recently.

NLC queries 'speedy' granting of injunctions, ex parte orders by court against workers

THE Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has queried the haste with which injunctions and ex-parte orders were sought and granted by court to stop workers from realising their legitimate objectives.

The NLC President, Joe Ajaero, stated this yesterday at the 2025 annual public lecture of the National Industrial Court of Nigeria (NICN) in Abuja.

The lecture had as its theme: "Labour Justice and Labour Law Education."

Ajaero said the speed at which injunctions and ex-parte orders were being granted to the government and employers in the country had become a significant impediment to industrial harmony.

"It is, therefore, our firm belief that the judicial process, especially under the sacred mandate of the National Industrial Court, must not be used to further the emasculation of workers and their organisations.

"On the contrary, it must be deployed as a shield to protect the weak and vulnerable worker from the paws of unconscionable employers.

"This is the core of your lordships' sacred mandate," he said. "We are compelled to ask: Why does it appear that it is only the government and employers that are hastily granted such injunctions by the NICN?"

"It is in the light of this that we must address a growing and deeply disturbing challenge: the use, and

often misuse of injunctions by employers and governments to stifle workers' constitutional rights to associate, assemble and hold an opinion and the pliant disposition of some of the judges."

According to him, this trend requires urgent remediation if we are to make any meaningful progress towards true labour justice.

He said these orders, often obtained in haste, were routinely used to truncate the legitimate activities of workers and their unions.

"This judicial tool, meant to preserve the status quo, has been weaponized to emasculate labour and tilt the balance of power decisively and unjustly against the workforce," he said. Ajaero said the union also observed a troubling one-sidedness in the judicial application of Section 40 of the 1999 Constitution.

"While the right of individuals to belong to the political party and religion of their choice is vigorously protected, the correlative right to belong to the trade union of one's choice appears to be treated with less judicial fervour."

The president, who observed that NICN is the specialised court vested with the jurisdiction over the labour laws, urged the court to take cognisance of the constitutional provisions in its entirety and deliver justice in a consistent manner.

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

PDP, LP, others hail new INEC helmsman, draw up agenda

From **Ndubuisi Orji, Sola Ojo, Jude Idu**, Abuja, **Emmanuel Adeyemi**, Lokoja, **Jude Chinedu**, Enugu and **Noah Ebije**, Kaduna

THE People Democratic Party (PDP), the Labour Party (LP), the Coalition of Nigerian Youth Leaders (CONYL), the Obidient Movement and former governorship candidate in Kogi State, Alhaji Yakubu Murtala Ajaka, have charged Professor Joash Ojo Amupitan, the newly appointed Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) chairman to restore the confidence of Nigerians in the electoral process.

This is as Kogi State Governor, Usman Ododo, commended President Tinubu on his appointment.

In a statement by the Commissioner for Information, Kingsley Fanwo, Ododo said the appointment was a strong validation of President Tinubu's commitment to excellence, merit and national inclusiveness in the leadership of the nation's democratic institutions.

While the PDP National Publicity Secretary, Debo Ologunagba, said the

Gov Ododo commends Tinubu

party would come UP with a detailed reaction to the appointment, it said it expects the Senate to act in the interest of democracy in considering his nomination.

Reacting, the Obidient Movement, in a statement by its National Coordinator, Dr. Tanko Yunusa, expressed the hope that Amupitan's tenure would mark a significant milestone in the electoral history of Nigeria.

"We look forward to seeing a new Electoral Act that will enhance the credibility, freedom and fairness of our elections, particularly as we approach the 2027 general elections.

"We wish you a successful tenure and pray for God's guidance and protection as you navigate the challenges of this critical office."

The Labour Party (LP) described him as a legal luminary with deep

respect for the rule of law and therefore, welcomed his appointment.

The National Publicity Secretary, Obiora Ifoh, said the party has followed his professional trajectory and was confident that his tenure would mark a positive turn in Nigeria's electoral administration.

"We are glad that the era of impunity that characterised the immediate past leadership of INEC has come to an end.

"Professor Amupitan is known for his profound knowledge of the law and respect for judicial pronouncements.

"We believe he will restore the trust Nigerians once had in the electoral umpire."

Ifoh recalled that the previous INEC leadership had faced several controversies, including near-sanctions from the courts for disobeying

lawful orders, which the Labour Party described as a major source of frustration during recent off-season elections.

"The last INEC chairman barely escaped the court's hammer following his penchant for disobeying valid court orders.

"The Labour Party was one of the major victims of that disobedience, and it cost us dearly," Ifoh added.

He, however, expressed optimism that the new INEC chairman's background as a professor, Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) and former pro chancellor, would bring integrity, competence and administrative discipline to the commission.

"Professor Amupitan has gone through years of academic and administrative experiences. We believe he will not allow emotion or political pressure to override the law, as was witnessed in the past.

"Nigerians are eager to see a new era of credible elections and we trust he will deliver," Ifoh noted.

The Coalition of Nigerian Youth Leaders (CONYL) believes his experience in law and academia will help restore public confidence in the nation's electoral system.

"This pivotal role comes at a crucial time for Nigeria as we move towards strengthening our democratic processes and we are confident that Professor Amupitan's wealth of experience in academia and legal practice will significantly contribute to enhancing the credibility and integrity of our electoral system."

CONYL President General, Goodluck Ibem, noted that Amupitan has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to fairness, justice and transparency throughout his career.

"As a distinguished legal scholar and a dedicated administrator, Professor Amupitan has shown unwavering dedication to excellence.

"We believe that his leadership at INEC will set forth new standards of transparency and accountability that our nation so desperately needs," he added.

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

Council of State okays Amupitan as INEC boss, approves NPC chairman

• Continued From Page 1

and the University of Jos from 1984 to 1987. He was called to the bar in 1988.

He earned an LL.M at UNIJOS in 1993 and a PhD in 2007, amid an academic career that began in 1989, following his National Youth Service at the Bauchi State Publishing Corporation in Bauchi from 1988 to 1989.

Currently, he serves as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration) at the University of Jos.

A position he holds in conjunction with being the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council of Joseph Ayo Babalola University in Osun State.

Among the academic positions he has held at UNIJOS are: Chairman of the Committee of Deans and Directors (2012-2014); Dean of the Faculty of Law (2008-2014); and Head of

Public Law (2006-2008).

Outside of academics, Amupitan serves as a board member of Integrated Dairies Limited in Vom, a member of the Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Governing Council.

He is also a member of the Council of Legal Education (2008-2014), among other roles. He was a board member of Riss Oil Limited, Abuja (1996-2004).

Amupitan is the author of many books on law, such as Corporate Governance: Models and Principles (2008); Documentary Evidence in Nigeria (2008); Evidence Law: Theory and Practice in Nigeria (2013); Principles of Company Law (2013) and an Introduction to the Law of Trust in Nigeria (2014). He is married and has four children.

The Council also approved the appointment of Aminu Yusuf from

Niger State as the new chairman of the National Population Commission (NPC).

Governor Uba Sani of Kaduna State disclosed this to State House correspondents.

According to him, the Council's decision followed recommendations by President Tinubu, who presided over the meeting. The Council also approved the appointment of Alhaji Tonga Betara Bularafa as Federal Commissioner representing Yobe State at the Commission.

Both appointments, he said, received unanimous approval from the members of the Council.

In attendance were former presidents and heads of state, Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Abdulsalami Abubakar as well as governors and other members of the Council. Former presidents, Olusegun Obasanjo and Goodluck Jonathan were absent.

Birthday Felicitation To

OSUJI TIMOTHY OBASI
(T MONEY)
C.E.O FISH LOGISTICS.

On this special day, we extend our warmest wishes to a remarkable Uburu son, international businessman and devoted patron of Adu Youth Forum.

As you celebrate today, we honor not just a successful businessman, but also a passionate patron who continues to lift our community.

Your dedication to youth empowerment is an inspiration to all of us. May your year be filled with greater business achievements and continued success in all your life and philanthropic endeavors. Keep soaring!

Happy Birthday sir!



For: Adu Youth Forum, Uburu

Hon. Ogbonnaya Ene Odii
President, Adu Youth Forum.

Prince Nwaervo Nnamdi Nelson
Publicity Secretary, Adu Youth Forum.

Engr. Chidi Innocent Onu
Secretary, Adu Youth Forum.



PUBLIC NOTICE

ANAMBRA STATE GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

ANAMBRA STATE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD (ASUBEB)
Adjacent State House of Assembly by INEC Road Awka

INVITATION TO BID

In furtherance of the commitment to provide a conducive learning environment in the Basic Education sector of Anambra State, Mr. Governor, Prof. Charles Chukwuma Soludo, CFR, in collaboration with the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), Abuja, has approved the execution of the 2022, 2023, and 2024 FGN-UBEC/ANAMBRA-SUBEB Intervention Fund Projects. These projects are aimed at enhancing teaching and learning facilities in public basic schools across the State.

Accordingly, and in compliance with the Public Procurement Act, 2007, the Anambra State Universal Basic Education Board (ASUBEB) hereby invites interested, competent, reputable, and duly qualified contractors to tender for the execution of the underlisted projects:

1. SCOPE OF WORKS

The projects cover, but are not limited to, the following:

- * Construction, Rehabilitation and Renovation of Classroom blocks in public basic schools.
- * Provision of wash facilities.
- * Provision of furniture for pupils and teachers.
- * Supply of instructional materials and equipment
- * Procurement and installation of ICT facilities.

LOTS DETAILS

2022, 2023 and 2024 UBEC/ASUBEB INTERVENTION PROJECTS

S/N	PROJECTS	LOT NO.
1	Construction of New 4 Classroom Block with office Apartment, Conference Room & Toilet (Upland Area)	LOT A
2	Construction of New 4 Classroom Block with office Apartment, Conference Room & Toilet (Riverine Area)	LOT B
3	Construction of 4 new classroom block with toilet facility, 6 compartment toilet and borehole/well with solar sumo and overhead tank	LOT C
4	Construction of teachers Quarters (Riverine Area)	LOT D
5	Construction of teachers Quarters (Upland Area)	LOT E
6	Construction of Skill Acquisition Center	LOT F
7	Construction of 6 – Compartment W/C pour Flush Toilet Facility	LOT G
8	Construction of Hostel	LOT H
9	Construction of perimeter fence with Gate and Security House	LOT I
10	Drilling of Borehole / Well with Solar Sumo and overhead tank	LOT J
11	Landscaping of School Compound.	LOT K
12	Procurement of Speed Boat.	LOT L
13	Procurement of Sport Equipment (See sample at the PRS /Procurement Unit)	LOT M
14	Procurement of a set of One Seater Primary Plastic Table and Chairs. (PTC)	LOT N
15	Procurement of a set of Iron frame Teachers Chair & Tables(IFC&T)	LOT O
16	Procurement of a set of ECCDE Plastic Round Table & 4 Chairs (ETC)	LOT P
17	Procurement of a set of One Seater JSS Plastic Table & Chair. (JTC)	LOT Q
18	Procurement of Magnetic White Board (MWB)	LOT R
19	Procurement of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM)	LOT S
20	Procurement of ECCDE TOYS	LOT T
21	Procurement of 4x4 Pick Up Vehicle	LOT U
22	Renovation of Marked Classroom Blocks in the Underlisted Schools (Indicate the name of School on your Envelope for the LOT No.	LOT V

LIST OF SCHOOLS FOR THE RENOVATION

S/N	PROJECTS CODE	NAME OF SCHOOL	LGA	LOT NO
1	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/001/2022	MBARAFOR SCH. UMUCHU	AGUATA	LOT V1
2	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/002/2022	OBINIKPA MFS ACHINA	AGUATA	LOT V2
3	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/003/2022	MFS IGBOUKWU	AGUATA	LOT V3
4	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/004/2022	PRIMARY SCHOOL, ISUOFIA	AGUATA	LOT V4
5	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/005/2022	UNITY P/S ENUGU AGULERI	ANAMBRA EAST	LOT V5
6	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/006/2022	UNITED P/S UMUEM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V6
7	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/007/2022	NDEZE MFS MMIATA-ANAM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V7
8	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/008/2022	OTAKU MFS OMOR	AYAMELUM	LOT V8
9	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/009/2022	UMUEZEAGU P/S ANAKU	AYAMELUM	LOT V9
10	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/010/2022	OBINAGU MFS NAWGU	DUNUKOFIA	LOT V10
11	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/011/2022	UNIVERSAL PRI. EDU. ABBA	NJIKOKA	LOT V11
12	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/012/2022	UZOEGBO OBIUNO P/S NNEWI	NNEWI NORTH	LOT V12
13	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/013/2022	ISLAND P/S OBIANWAGU	OGBARU	LOT V13
14	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/014/2022	TOWN SCH. ARONOTA NDIKELIONWU	ORUMBA NORTH	LOT V14
15	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/015/2022	OKPOKO CPS XI	OGBARU	LOT V15
16	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/016/2022	NNAMDI AZIKWE SEC. SCH. ASAGANA	NJIKOKA	LOT V16
17	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/017/2022	COMMUNITY DEV. NKWELLE – FARM	OVI	LOT V17
18	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/018/2022	PRIMARY SCHOOL, AKPU	ORUMBA SOUTH	LOT V18
19	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/019/2022	MFS OKOCHI OKPUNO	AWKA SOUTH	LOT V19
20	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/020/2022	UNION P/S IGBOUKWU	AGUATA	LOT V20
21	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/021/2022	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. UMUOJI	IDEMILI NORTH	LOT V21
22	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/022/2022	PRIMARY SCHOOL, EZIRA	ORUMBA SOUTH	LOT V22
23	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/023/2022	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. NDIOWA	ORUMBA NORTH	LOT V23
24	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/024/2022	AKPAPA PRIMARY SCHOOL, ONITSHA	ONITSHA NORTH	LOT V24
25	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/025/2022	NKWOJI MFS UMUEM ANAM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V25
26	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/026/2022	IGWEBUIKE MFS UMUNACHI	DUNUKOFIA	LOT V26
27	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/027/2022	ADOGBE MFS OKIJA	IHALA	LOT V27
28	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/028/2022	OKPOKO CPS X	OGBARU	LOT V28
29	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/029/2022	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. EBENATOR	NNEWI SOUTH	LOT V29
30	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/030/2022	AGULU – AWKA P/S AWKA	AWKA SOUTH	LOT V30
31	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/031/2022	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH.	AWKA NORTH	LOT V31

32	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/032/2022	WALTER EZE SEC. SCH. UKPO	DUNUKOFIA	LOT V32
33	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/033/2022	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. UKWULU	DUNUKOFIA	LOT V33
34	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/034/2022	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. NDIUKWUENU	ORUMBA NORTH	LOT V34
35	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/035/2022	AGUATA HIGH SCH. AGUATA	AGUATA	LOT V35
36	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/036/2022	PRINCE MEMO. SEC. SCH. ONITSHA	ONITSHA NORTH	LOT V36
37	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/037/2023	OKA COMMUNITY SCH. UGA	AGUATA	LOT V37
38	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/038/2023	COMMUNITY P/S AWBA – OFEMILI	AWKA NORTH	LOT V38
39	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/039/2023	AMAENYI COMMUNITY SCH. AWKA	AWKA SOUTH	LOT V39
40	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/040/2023	UNITY MODEL SCH. ICHI	EKWUSIGO	LOT V40
41	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/041/2023	OCHI P/S UMUOBA ANAM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V41
42	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/042/2023	OKPOKO CPS XII	OGBARU	LOT V42
43	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/043/2023	OKPU P/S OWERE EZUKALA	ORUMBA SOUTH	LOT V43
44	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/044/2023	UNION P/S AMAMUKE	AWKA NORTH	LOT V44
45	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/045/2023	NWANNEKA MFS EZI-AGULERI-OUT	ANAMBRA EAST	LOT V45
46	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/046/2023	UGWUOCHI MFS AMICHI	NNEWI SOUTH	LOT V46
47	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/047/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. ADAZI-NNKWU	ANAOCHA	LOT V47
48	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/048/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. MGBAKWU	AWKA NORTH	LOT V48
49	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/049/2023	GTC ICHI	EKWUSIGO	LOT V49
50	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/050/2023	GTC ENUGWU –AGIDI	NJIKOKA	LOT V50
51	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/051/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. AGULUZIGBO	ANAOCHA	LOT V51
52	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/052/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. ISUANIOCHA	AWKA NORTH	LOT V52
53	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/053/2023	MODEL COMPREH. SEC. SCH. NKWELLE-EZUNAKA	OVI	LOT V53
54	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/054/2023	COMMUNITY HIGH SCH. UGBENU	AWKA NORTH	LOT V54
55	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/055/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. AKWAHEDI	NNEWI SOUTH	LOT V55
56	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/056/2023	NJIKOKA MFS EZI-AGULERI-OUT	ANAMBRA EAST	LOT V56
57	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/057/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. AMANUKE	AWKA NORTH	LOT V57
58	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/058/2023	ANTHONY OBAZE MEMO. SEC. SCH. OCHUCHE	OGBARU	LOT V58
59	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/059/2023	OKPOKO CPS X	OGBARU	LOT V59
60	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/060/2023	UMUOGBUEFI P/S EBENEKE	AWKA NORTH	LOT V60
61	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/061/2023	VIABLE MFS ODEKPE	ANAMBRA EAST	LOT V61
62	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/062/2023	MODEL P/S IGBAKWU	AYAMELUM	LOT V62
63	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/063/2023	URBAN P/S OMOR	AYAMELUM	LOT V63
64	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/064/2023	COMMUNITY SCHOOL, ULI	IHALA	LOT V64
65	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/065/2023	UNITY P/S NDIAKABA ULI	IHALA	LOT V65
66	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/066/2023	OKPOKO CPS II	OGBARU	LOT V66
67	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/067/2023	UGBADA MFS OROMA ETITI	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V67
68	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/068/2023	TWON SCHOOL, AMORKA IHALA	IHALA	LOT V68
69	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/069/2023	AKANATOR P/S OMOR	AYAMELUM	LOT V69
70	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/070/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. IYIOWA ODEKPE	OGBARU	LOT V70
71	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/071/2023	IDEKE GRAMMAR SCH. ODEKPE	OGBARU	LOT V71
72	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/072/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. ABBA	NJIKOKA	LOT V72
73	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/073/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. IFITE-OGWARI	AYAMELUM	LOT V73
74	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/074/2023	NEW BETHEL SEC. SCH. ISULO	ORUMBA SOUTH	LOT V74
75	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/075/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. IDEANI	IDEMILI NORTH	LOT V75
76	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/076/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. EZINIFITE (BSS)	AGAUTA	LOT V76
77	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/077/2023	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. UKPO	DUNUKOFIA	LOT V77
78	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/078/2023	MFS UTU-OWOM	OGBARU	LOT V78
79	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/079/2023	OKUTALUKWE SEC. SCH. ENUGWU-UKWU	NJIKOKA	LOT V79
80	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/080/2024	NTIOWA MFS UMUMBO	AYAMELUM	LOT V80
81	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/081/2024	AMIKWE P/S OMOR	AYAMELUM	LOT V81
82	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/082/2024	MODEL SCHOOL, EZIOKA ISUOFIA	AGUATA	LOT V82
83	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/083/2024	AMORJI P/S ISUOFIA	AGUATA	LOT V83
84	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/084/2024	PRIMARY SCHOOL, AGULUEZECHUKWU	AGUATA	LOT V84
85	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/085/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH.	AGUATA	LOT V85

86	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/086/2024	MFS OKPOLODUM	OGBARU	LOT V86
87	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/087/2024	MFS UMUJENEM NNEWI	NNEWI NORTH	LOT V87
88	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/088/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. NAWGU	NJIKOKA	LOT V88
89	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/089/2024	NJIKOKA P/S UMUMBO	AYAMELUM	LOT V89
90	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/090/2024	NOMADIC SCH. URUM	AWKA NORTH	LOT V90
91	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/091/2024	OMAGU MFS UMUOBA ANAM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V91
92	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/092/2024	COMMUNITY P/S IBOLO	EKWUSIGO	LOT V92
93	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/093/2024	CENTRAL SCH. OZZU	ORUMBA NORTH	LOT V93
94	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/094/2024	MFS AGWE-EFI	OGBARU	LOT V94
95	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/095/2024	MFS OSE-OGWUGWU	OGBARU	LOT V95
96	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/096/2024	CENTRAL SCHOOL, ORA-ERI	AGUATA	LOT V96
97	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/097/2024	SPECIAL EDU. SCH. UMUCHU	AGUATA	LOT V97
98	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/098/2024	ODAH MFS P/S AGULERI OTU	ANAMBRA EAST	LOT V98
99	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/099/2024	IGWEBUIKE P/S UMUERI	ANAMBRA EAST	LOT V99
100	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/100/2024	MFS NENI	ANAOCHA	LOT V100
101	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/101/2024	COMMUNITY P/S ISUANIOCHA	AWKA NORTH	LOT V101
102	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/102/2024	UNITY P/S AWBA –OFEMILI	AWKA NORTH	LOT V102
103	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/103/2024	EGE MFS AWBA –OFEMILI	AWKA NORTH	LOT V103
104	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/104/2024	OTOKO P/S ISUANIOCHA	AWKA NORTH	LOT V104
105	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/105/2024	UMUJENI COMMUNITY P/S UMUAWULU	AWKA SOUTH	LOT V105
106	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/106/2024	EZI-AWKA P/S AWKA	AWKA SOUTH	LOT V106
107	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/107/2024	OTUBE MFS IFITE –OGWARI	AYAMELUM	LOT V107
108	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/108/2024	OBUNAGU MFS UMUNACHI	DUNUKOFIA	LOT V108
109	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/109/2024	EZIAMA P/S ULI	IHALA	LOT V109
110	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/110/2024	ODACHALA MFS UMUERI	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V110
111	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/111/2024	PRIMARY SCHOOL, ONEH	ORUMBA SOUTH	LOT V111
112	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/112/2024	URWUBIALI MFS ODERPE	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V112
113	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/113/2024	AJAGU MFS IGBEDOR	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V113
114	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/114/2024	COMMUNITY P/S OGWU-ANIOCHA	OGBARU	LOT V114
115	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/115/2024	UNITY P/S OGWU –ANIOCHA	OGBARU	LOT V115
116	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/116/2024	URWUNGWU COMMUNITY SCH. LILU	IHALA	LOT V116
117	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/117/2024	CENTRAL SCHOOL, AGBUDU	ORUMBA SOUTH	LOT V117
118	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/118/2024	AKPAKWU MFS NTEJE	OVI	LOT V118
119	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/119/2024	PREMIER P/S II, OBOSI	IDEMILI NORTH	LOT V119
120	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/120/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. NNOCI	IDEMILI SOUTH	LOT V120
121	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/121/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. EZIOWELLE	IDEMILI NORTH	LOT V121
122	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/122/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. UMUEZE ANAM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V122
123	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/123/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. OGWU – ANIOCHA	OGBARU	LOT V123
124	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/124/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. ABBA	NJIKOKA	LOT V124
125	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/125/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. ATANI	OGBARU	LOT V125
126	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/126/2024	ATAKA MFS UMUERUM	AYAMELUM	LOT V126
127	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/127/2024	UDOKA P/S UMUOBA ANAM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V127
128	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/128/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. AWGBU	ORUMBA NORTH	LOT V128
129	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/129/2024	COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. AJALLI	ORUMBA NORTH	LOT V129
130	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/130/2024	COMMUNITY HIGH. SCH. OGBOJI	ORUMBA SOUTH	LOT V130
131	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/131/2024	ARIBO MFS UMUKWU ANAM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V131
132	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/132/2024	UNITY P/S MMIATA ANAM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V132
133	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/133/2024	UMUJARABA COMM. SCH. UKPOR	NNEWI SOUTH	LOT V133
134	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/134/2024	COMMUNITY BOYS SEC. SCH. IGBOUKWU	AGUATA	LOT V134
135	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/135/2024	NWEJE MEMO. P/S II, ODOAKPU	ONITSHA SOUTH	LOT V135
136	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/136/2024	OMAGBA P/S II, ONITSHA	ONITSHA SOUTH	LOT V136
137	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/137/2024	IHALA COMM. P/S AMORKA	IHALA	LOT V137
138	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/138/2024	AGBAEDO MARKET SCH. NNEWI	NNEWI NORTH	LOT V138
13				

Homeowners petition Tinubu, accuse Umahi of recklessness

From Adesuwa Tsan, Abuja

OWNERS of WINHOMES Estate, a \$250 million Diaspora-funded real estate project in Lagos, have petitioned President Bola Tinubu, accusing the Minister of Works, David Umahi, of reckless and damaging conduct over the ongoing demolition controversy surrounding the estate.

In a petition addressed to the President, WINHOMES Chief Executive Officer, a US-based Nigerian engineer and Diaspora investor, Stella Okengwu, alleged that the minister's actions and public statements amounted to abuse of office, misrepresentation and conduct capable of eroding investor confidence in Nigeria.

She stated that Umahi's repeated invocation of the President's name in a dispute that is already before a competent court was "improper, unconstitutional and dangerous," warning that it exposed the presidency to both legal and diplomatic risks.

"This matter is sub judice. By tying your name to his actions, he has placed the presidency in the line of legal and international fire," Okengwu wrote, citing Section 1(3) of the 1999 Constitution as supreme over all officeholders.

Okengwu explained that the WINHOMES project, initiated in 2021, was designed as a tourism-led, Diaspora-backed development model to encourage Nigerians abroad to invest at home. The 20-hectare estate, she said, has three valid titles and 2,500 fully serviced plots valued at N150 million each, amounting to

about N375 billion (\$250 million).

She lamented that the rerouting of the Lagos coastal highway project had already affected 400 plots worth about N60 billion, while the total estimated loss, including infrastructure, stands at about N85 billion.

"This is Diaspora sweat, real capital and tangible infrastructure now endangered by ministerial overreach," she said.

The WINHOMES CEO also dismissed allegations that the project was funded through illicit means, insisting that the company was fully certified by the Special Control Unit Against Money Laundering (SCUML) and compliant with all Central Bank and anti-money laundering regulations.

"All transactions were made through legitimate financial channels, such as Sendwave, MoneyGram, Western Union and TapTap. Any attempt to label these funds as illegal is defamatory and will attract legal consequences," she stated.

Okengwu further accused Umahi of misleading the public by claiming that the court had already ruled in favour of the Federal Government, clarifying that the case, Suit No. FHC/L/CS/10063/25, is still pending before Justice Akinayo Aluko of the Federal High Court, Ikoyi.

Citing the 1986 Supreme Court case of Governor of Lagos State v. Ojukwu, she reminded the Minister that no party, including government agencies, is permitted to take the law into its own hands, while litigation is ongoing.

"The Minister's physical visit to

the site and his public declaration that he has taken over the land are contemptuous and unconstitutional," she said.

She also alleged that some private developers had approached the Minister to buy portions of the disputed land, warning that such actions would amount to fraudulent interference with private property and could further damage Nigeria's reputation among foreign investors.

"The world is watching. Every reckless statement from the Minister de-marks Nigeria and raises the risk perception of foreign investors," Okengwu warned.

She appealed to President Tinubu to call Umahi to order, reaffirm the sanctity of the judiciary and set up an independent panel to assess the financial and reputational losses suffered by Diaspora investors.

She also demanded immediate compensation, a public retraction of alleged misinformation and an investigation into the reported cash-to-USD transactions within the Ministry of Works.

"This is your moment to prove that Renewed Hope is not just a slogan but a covenant of justice," she told the President. "Either we defend the Constitution and Nigeria's investment credibility or allow ministerial impunity to destroy decades of trust."

The petition concluded with a call for structured dialogue between the Federal Government and WINHOMES through its legal representatives, emphasising that "the credibility of Nigeria's investment climate will be judged by how this case is handled."

	UMUJONYIBA UFUMA	NORTH	V157
158	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/158/2024 PRIMARY SCHOOL, AMAOKPALA	ORUMBA NORTH	LOT V158
159	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/159/2024 OMAGBA P/S II, ONITSHA	ONITSHA NORTH	LOT V159
160	UBEC/SUBEB/JSS/RN/160/2024 SECONDARY SCHOOL, OMOGHO	ORUMBA NORTH	LOT V160
161	UBEC/SUBEB/JSS/RN/161/2024 RIVERSIDE SEC. SCH. UMUERUM	AYAMELUM	LOT V161
162	UBEC/SUBEB/JSS/RN/162/2024 OUR LADY'S HIGH SCH. ONITSHA	ONITSHA SOUTH	LOT V162
163	UBEC/SUBEB/JSS/RN/163/2024 OGBARU HIGH SCH. OGBARU	OGBARU	LOT V163
164	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/164/2024 BASDEN NOMADIC P/S FEGGE	ONITSHA SOUTH	LOT V164
165	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/165/2024 AGAI P/S II, FEGGE	ONITSHA SOUTH	LOT V165
166	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/166/2024 OKPOKO CPS IV	OGBARU	LOT V166
167	UBEC/SUBEB/JSS/RN/167/2024 COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. NKPOLOGWU	AGUATA	LOT V167
168	UBEC/SUBEB/JSS/RN/168/2024 COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. OKO	AGUATA	LOT V168
169	UBEC/SUBEB/JSS/RN/169/2024 COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. AWADA	IDEMILI NORTH	LOT V169
170	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/170/2024 PRIMARY SCHOOL, AJALLI	ORUMBA NORTH	LOT V170
171	UBEC/SUBEB/JSS/RN/171/2024 COMMUNITY SEC. SCH. OKPUNO	AWKA SOUTH	LOT V171
172	UBEC/SUBEB/JSS/RN/172/2024 METU MEMO. SEC. SCH. ONITSHA	ONITSHA SOUTH	LOT V172
173	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/173/2024 NOMADIC SCH. KARA CAMP	OGBARU	LOT V173
174	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/174/2024 UGWUNADEGBE MMIATA ANAM	ANAMBRA WEST	LOT V174
175	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/175/2024 UNITY P/S IGBAKWU	AYAMELUM	LOT V175
176	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/176/2024 ARMY CHILDRREN P/S I, ONITSHA	ONITSHA NORTH	LOT V176
177	UBEC/SUBEB/PRI/RN/177/2024 OKPOKO CPS. III	OGBARU	LOT 177

2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Interested contractors are to submit the following documents in their bids:
- Evidence of Certificate of Incorporation with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) including Form CAC2 and CAC7.
 - Evidence of Company's Income Tax Clearance Certificate for the last three (3) years (2022, 2023, and 2024).
 - Evidence of current Pension Compliance Certificate (PENCOM).
 - Evidence of current Industrial Training Fund (ITF) Compliance Certificate.
 - Evidence of current Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) Compliance Certificate.
 - Evidence of Registration on the National Database of Federal Contractors, Consultants and Service Providers by submission of Interim Registration Report (IRR) or valid Certificate issued by the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP).
 - Company's Audited Accounts for the last three (3) years (2022, 2023, and 2024).
 - Evidence of financial capability and banking support.
 - Company profile with Curriculum Vitae of key professional staff including copies of academic/professional qualifications.
 - Verifiable documentary evidence of at least three (3) similar projects executed in the last five (5) years including Letters of Award, Job Completion Certificates and photographs of the projects.
 - Sworn affidavit disclosing:
 - That the company is not in receivership, insolvent or bankrupt.
 - That none of the company's directors or officers has been convicted in any country for criminal offences relating to fraud, financial impropriety or misrepresentation.
 - That the company is not in default of tax or other statutory obligations.
 - That all information presented in its bid is true and correct in all particulars.

3. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

- Tender documents and additional information may be collected from the office of Head, Procurement Unit, Anambra State Universal Basic Education Board.
- Tenderers may tender for more than one LOT.
- Tendering shall be by open tendering.
- Registration of company with ASUBEB Ten thousand Naira (₦ 10,000)
- Tendering Fee of Thirty thousand naira (₦ 30,000) should be paid into ASUBEB Account Department, (Non-Refundable).**

4. BID SUBMISSION

All bid documents must be submitted both electronically via email info@asubebanambra.com. (Excluding Financials) and physically (Including Financials) in a sealed envelope, addressed to the Executive Chairman, Anambra State Universal Basic Education Board (ASUBEB), Adjacent State House of Assembly by INEC Road Awka, Anambra State from Friday of 10th October to Friday 21st November 2025 (Not later than 12noon).

All bidders shall enclose their technical documents in a separate sealed envelope marked ~TECHNICAL BID~ and financial bids in another sealed envelope marked ~FINANCIAL BID~ With the name/description of project.

Both the TECHNICAL BID and FINANCIAL BID envelopes will thereafter be enclosed in a bigger outer envelope and properly sealed.

The outer envelope will be marked at the top left -hand corner with the project name and LOT number with the name of the company. The Documents, that is the bigger outer envelope after being addressed should be deposited in the tender box.

5. OPENING OF BIDS

Bids shall be opened publicly at the expiration of tender period on Friday 21st November, 2025 at 12noon at the Conference Hall of ASUBEB Headquarters, Awka, in the presence of bidders or their representatives, relevant professional bodies, Non-Governmental Organizations, and interested members of the public.

6. GENERAL INFORMATION

- Bids must be in English language and signed by an authorized officer of the bidding company.
- Late submissions will be rejected.
- This advertisement shall not be construed as a commitment on the part of ASUBEB to award contracts to any bidder, nor shall it entitle any bidder to make claims or seek indemnity from ASUBEB.
- ASUBEB reserves the right to verify all claims submitted by bidders and to annul the procurement process at any time without incurring any liability.

SIGNED: **DR. VERA NWADINOB**
EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

ANAMBRA STATE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD (ASUBEB)

Constituency projects: LP chieftain calls for independent media verification of Kalu's claims

From Okey Sampson, Umuahia

A chieftain of the Labour Party (LP) in Abia State, Chief Iheanyi Chinasa, has challenged the deputy speaker of the House of Representatives, Benjamin Kalu to an independent media verification of the projects he claimed to have attracted for his constituents.

In a statement, Chinasa, who hails from the same Bende federal constituency as Kalu said he had looked at what the deputy speaker presented online as projects he has attracted for the area and found them to be untrue.

"Just looking at the submissions that were made online as projects being attracted and executed by the deputy speaker, I find them very spurious.

"Therefore, my demand as a citizen and a constituent of Bende federal constituency, is to have an independent media verification audit to all the projects. Let's send an independent media committee. If he's not willing to sponsor it, I will pay for

it. I will sponsor it myself. Let them go and confirm those purported submissions by the deputy speaker.

"The deputy speaker has given us a long list of all the things he has done. Now, I don't want to talk about the things that are in the budget that I have seen for Bende Federal Constituency that I didn't see on the list. I don't even talk about where it is for now. But I need the ones on his list to be verified by an independent body.

"Starting from the Nkpa Bridge project he claimed to have attracted down to the classrooms he claimed to have built, every single one of them. Let's have an independent body of journalists and media personalities go down there with a video and show us each of those projects. Let's know if he's telling us the truth," he said.

Chinasa, the Abia State Liaison Officer in Abuja, noted it was not enough for Kalu to accuse Governor Alex Otti of not using the money the state received fully, adding that the deputy speaker himself should also account for all the money that passed

through his processes.

He said Kalu should come clean and tell his constituents the cost of each of those projects to be able to know whether they tally with the amount of money allocated for them.

"Kalu should tell his constituents the cost of each of the projects he claimed to have attracted and let's go down and do an independent verification and see if the cost even corresponds with the state of affairs or the state of the project as enumerated here.

"He often touts himself as the number six man in the country. His powers purported to be equivalent to about 60 members in the house, what has he really done in Bende for our people?"

"I have seen the empowerment done by other members of the House, the deputy speaker cannot even be equal. I have seen empowerment done in other states, like Edo and Lagos and one will be tempted to ask questions," Chinasa said.

NDLEA clarifies position on cannabis oil export report

THE National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has clarified that the statement of its Chairman/Chief Executive Officer at a workshop organised by the Nigerian Academy of Science (NAS) on the prospect of cannabis oil export was merely its opinion and not an announcement of the Federal Government's position on the issue yet.

Chairman/CEO of the Agency, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (ret'd) had, in his remarks as one of the invited guests at the workshop themed, "Cannabis oil debate: The path forward for Nigeria," organised by the NAS in Abuja on

Wednesday, October 8, disclosed that the NDLEA was not averse to the idea of exporting cannabis oil to other countries that desire it for the sole aim of generating foreign exchange earnings for Nigeria, while maintaining its opposition to its local use due to the position of the extant law on such and the already high prevalence of drug abuse in the country.

"It is important to note that the Agency's position was one of the many opinions canvassed by various stakeholders invited to address the workshop and should not be seen as the Federal Government's approval of the position

yet, especially since the Agency commissioned the ongoing study on cannabis oil by NAS.

"We can only be further guided on this matter by the final recommendations of NAS, which will eventually be submitted to the Federal Government as part of inputs that will be used to develop an informed policy on the subject."

This clarification is needed to avoid misrepresentations and suggestions that the Agency has approved cannabis oil export, a decision that can only be taken by the Federal Government after considering inputs from various stakeholders.

2027: Jonathan's ambition adds to PDP's headache

From **Romanus Ugwu**, Abuja

THE debate for and against the eligibility of former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan to contest the presidential election has, in recent times, understandably, dominated the political discourse across the country in the build-up to the forthcoming 2027 poll.

But the phenomenal trend of his name popping up in preparation to every of such major elections will definitely no longer come as a surprise. Obviously, dropping his name has gradually become a recurring decimal in the past three presidential election seasons.

From the 2019 to the 2023 poll, and now in the build-up to the 2027 presidential election, his speculated interest in vying for the ticket has become recurrent.

In the preparation for the 2019 presidential poll, when rumours were rife that Jonathan was nursing the aspiration to square up against then incumbent President, Muhammadu Buhari, for example, it took his intervention in the media to rest the speculation, particularly after his admission that he was moved to tears seeing people shouting "GEJ, we want you back".

While dismissing the possibility of returning to the office then, Jonathan had noted: "I am not God, but I sincerely doubt the possibility. People come to me every day saying they want me back. I am always moved to tears whenever I go out and see the huge crowd shouting GEJ, we want you, even in the North.

"Instead of getting swollen-headed, I actually reflect on my achievements, mistakes and feel humbled and very sober... I have never been a man of inordinate ambition. I am a man of very modest means. I hardly travel because of the logistical costs. I have played my part and I have moved on," he said to foreclose the possibilities of his return to power then.

Jonathan was even more definite when asked what he would do should PDP offer an automatic 2019 presidential ticket to him. He said "Are you not aware that our party has zoned the presidency to the North, and the chairmanship to the South? Even Ayo Fayose, who declared interest, may face big challenges because of the decision of our party."

However, despite dismissing such aspiration during that dispensation, it did not stop similar speculations from rearing its ugly head again in the build-up to the 2023 presidential poll. The dropping of his name was so real that a group of northern cattle breeders even spent over a N100 million to purchase the All Progressives Congress (APC) presidential expression of interest and nomination forms for him.

But, if only they had stopped at buying the nomination forms for him, it would have slid like similar other speculations during the previous election year; some Nigerians went as far as visiting his office in Abuja, to appeal and pressure him into entering the race.

And perhaps, moved by emotions or indecision, the Bayelsa-born politician came close to accepting their appeal, shoring up their hopes with the expression of "watch out."



•Jonathan

He had told them, "Yes, you are calling me to come and declare for the 2023 presidency, yes, I can't tell you that I am declaring, the political process is ongoing, just watch out."

However, when he weighed the options and finally realised the enormity, he was said to have resolved to pull out of the race and, as usual, he claimed, in a statement by his spokesperson, Ikechukwu Eze, that he was neither aware of any prior moves by the cattle dealers nor ever authorised them to procure the nomination forms on his behalf.

The statement read: "It has come to our notice that a group has purportedly purchased APC presidential forms in the name of former President Jonathan. We wish to categorically state that he was not aware of this bid and did not authorise it.

"We want to state that, if he wanted to contest any election, he would make his intentions clear

to the public and will not enter through the back door. While we appreciate the overwhelming request by a cross-section of Nigerians for him to make himself available for the 2023 presidential elections, we wish to state that he has not in any way committed himself to this request," Eze stated with equivocation.

But, in what apparently looked as if no lesson had been learnt, the clamour urging Jonathan to contest ahead of the forthcoming 2027 presidential poll has started building up loudly again.

From a chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Prof Jerry Gana to the least of his supporters, the usual continuous clamour for him to join the race has heightened the political temperature in the country.

Boldly confirming that Jonathan will run in the 2027 presidential election on the platform of PDP, Prof. Gana had recently said: "In 2015, former President Jonathan

said his ambition was not worth the blood of Nigerians. After him another President ruled for eight years and now another has ruled for two years. Nigerians have seen the difference and the difference is very clear.

"Nigerians are now asking us to bring back our friend, Jonathan. I can confirm that he will contest the 2027 presidential election as PDP candidate and you will vote for him to return as President again," Prof. Gana said.

But, dismissing his claims, PDP's National Publicity Secretary, Debo Ologunagba, had denied the opposition party ever directed the former Minister of Information to make such an utterance or hatch any plan to offer an automatic ticket to him.

Ologunagba said: "Prof. Gana doesn't speak for the PDP. I don't speak for him. People can express their opinion. But I will emphasise this: in this party, as we are, former President Jonathan is a member; he has not said he is not a member. But I can tell you, this party has eminently qualified Nigerians, particularly at the governors' level.

"They have done exceedingly well that Nigeria can tap on and say, step up the place and do the right thing, because their performances in their states show their capacity, which is actually the DNA of the PDP. Our party is focused on our convention, and when we get to that bridge, we will cross it," he said.

As usual, characteristics of former president Jonathan, he has maintained a discomforting silence in confirming his aspiration since the rumours of his plan to contest the forthcoming presidential election started spreading.

And by way of complicating the issue, not even the comments from both his wife, Dame Patience, and the ferocious attack from the presidency, targeted at discouraging and dissuading him, could make him speak up to categorically confirm his interest in laying the matter to a permanent rest.

Recall that while celebrating her relationship with First Lady Oluremi Tinubu and distancing herself from the stress involved in venturing into public office again, the former first lady tactically declared support for President Tinubu to continue.

"The distress of Nigeria is so much that if God manages to bring you out of it, you should glorify Him. Why do you want to go back there? I need peace... My peace is enough. I told her (Oluremi) that I would campaign with her. I am not running. I am not going back to the Villa. If you call me, I will not go," Dame, who has a strong influence on her husband, Jonathan, said.

Apparently rattled by his muteness in the escalating speculations, the presidency, through the Special Adviser to the President on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, had noted: "Jonathan reserves the right to run if he wishes. It is his inalienable right to contest the presidency again.

"But he will have his date in the court of the land...and will also have his encounter with the people as to whether he has anything new to offer after his disastrous six

years, for which they voted him out in 2015.

"We cannot forget in a hurry how his regime, devoid of any clear economic agenda, engaged in frivolous spending, ran the economy aground and put the country in dire straits," he noted in the statement.

The presidency further said: "It is on record that between 2010 and 2013, crude oil sold for an average of \$100 per barrel. By December 2014, however, the Jonathan-led government could no longer pay salaries to Federal Civil Servants. At least 28 states across the country owed workers huge salary arrears.

"They broke the economy before, and millions of Nigerians who will not easily forget the recent past will not allow them to return to run it down again."

Incidentally, instead of the threats by the presidency and comments by his wife indicating that he won't run, to force him to chicken out of the race, Jonathan, in the contrary seems to have even fuelled and rekindled the speculations with his extensively publicised visits to both Peter Obi, the 2023 Labour Party (LP) presidential candidate and the interim National Chairman of the opposition coalition party, African Democratic Congress (ADC), Senator David Mark, perhaps as part of his consultations.

In the perception of many Nigerians, former president Jonathan administered the country like a man afraid of his own shadow, a man perpetually consulting, constantly studying the situation, and forever setting up committees, but he is also a man with listening ears.

History may however remember him as a man who helplessly watched the country to be subdued under the weight of insecurity orchestrated by the Boko Haram insurgents that metamorphosed from a ragtag group of extremists into a full-blown terrorist army, capturing territories, overrunning military bases, and hoisting their black flags in many parts of the country, particularly the northern region.

Ordinarily, pundits say, Jonathan is certainly not the president Nigerians are desirous of but having gone through the crucibles of what many political watchers described as inefficiency and agonising pains of hunger and hopelessness since the APC-led administration took charge, Nigerians have, all of a sudden, seen him as a better saint to clamour for to lead them even if it is back to the Egypt regardless of the hurdles of crossing the red sea.

However, what may count against him, according to his detractors, is that Nigerians seem to be wiser in choosing their leaders, especially who becomes the president. They are no longer ready to be beguiled by the rhetoric of humble background after passing through the deceptive humbling beginnings of Jonathan.

But, if he braces the odds and finally decides to throw his hat into the ring to contest, his renewed aspiration will, among other things, certainly resurrect the unending debate over his eligibility to stand

•Continued onwww.thesun.ng

"Incidentally, instead of the threats by the presidency and comments by his wife indicating that he won't run, to force him to chicken out of the race, Jonathan, in the contrary seems to have even fuelled and rekindled the speculations with his extensively publicised visits to both Peter Obi, the 2023 Labour Party (LP) presidential candidate and the interim National Chairman of the opposition coalition party, African Democratic Congress (ADC), Senator David Mark, perhaps as part of his consultations."



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Mandatory submission of theses before NYSC mobilisation

THE Federal Government has approved a new policy, which makes the submission of students' theses and final year projects into the Nigeria Education Repository and Databank (NERD) compulsory for mobilisation into the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme. President Bola Tinubu had invoked provisions in Sections 2(4)(4) and 16(1)(C) of the NYSC Act, and approved the new policy. The new policy was contained in a circular signed by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Senator George Akume.

The policy also states that effective from October 6, no Nigerian graduate, whether from a Nigerian university, polytechnic, college of education or a foreign institution will henceforth be mobilised for or exempted from the NYSC without proof of NERD compliance. Section 6.1.23 of the NERD guidelines, the new policy will serve 'as a quality assurance check and as a yearly independent proof of continuous academic enrolment and affiliation.' The spokesman of NERD, Haula Galadima, also explained the measure will 'raise the bar in the quality of academic content, output and presentation nationwide.'

We believe that the new NYSC mobilisation policy is part of the government's initiative to uphold quality assurance and keep a record of all graduates and their theses or final year projects for future reference and research. The policy will also enable the government and the academic community to keep a record of all Nigerian graduates, their year of graduation, the title of their thesis or final year projects and the lecturers who supervised them. It will solve the problem of recycled projects because no project will be uploaded twice and ensure academic integrity.

In spite of the envisaged benefits of the new NYSC mobilisation policy, we urge the government to consult further with major stakeholders in the tertiary education sector to avoid unnecessary duplication of policies. The government can still achieve the aims of the new policy without tying it to NYSC mobilisation. NERD and the universities and other affected higher institutions can work out plans on how to share this information, which is in their databank already. The government should spare prospective corps members the ordeal of uploading their theses and final year projects in NERD databank considering our poor network systems. The government should not create another avenue for malfeasance for unscrupulous NERD officials before prospective corps members could upload their theses or final year projects. There are many problems facing the smooth operation of NYSC which the government should address forthwith. This uploading of theses or proj-

ects is hardly one of the challenges facing the scheme. There are thousands of varsity graduates still waiting for NYSC mobilisation months and even years after graduation. Yet, the government intends to further delay them with uploading of theses and final year projects.

Considering the large number of graduates from Nigerian universities, polytechnics and colleges of education and their counterparts from foreign countries, the sustainability of this policy is doubtful. NERD officials may find it extremely difficult to cope with the volume of work the new policy will entail. Implementation fatigue may trail the policy. We believe that details of theses or final year projects of students are uploaded in the functional repository of each university or tertiary institution. NERD can liaise with the universities to obtain the information instead of tying it to NYSC mobilisation. The databank can serve as part of the criteria for annual appraisal and ratings of universities across the country.

The NERD data bank should be reserved exclusively for archival national resources for research. To encumber it with the theses of graduating students across the country will detract from its main focus. The government should task the universities to make their repositories functional. Such repositories should also contain the publications of all lecturers teaching in that institution. In developed countries, every university has a rich repository of the theses of their graduates. Nigerian universities can replicate it without dragging NERD and NYSC mobilization into the mix.

The NYSC scheme was established by Gen. Yakubu Gowon (rtd) in 1973 to assist in the reconstruction, reconciliation, and rebuilding of the country after the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. The objectives of NYSC are 'to instill discipline, patriotism, and self-reliance in Nigerian youths, foster national unity and understanding across diverse ethnic groups, and promote national development through skilled human resources and community service.' It also aims to encourage shared experiences among youths and raise their moral and social standards, making them amenable to contributing to the nation's progress.'

Whether the NYSC has achieved its objectives or not is debatable. The NYSC may soon lose its relevance if prospective corps members are not timely mobilised for service after graduation as it used to be. This issue of having arrears of unmobilised corps members is a disservice to the lofty scheme. The time has, indeed, come for a review of the scheme considering rising security challenges across the country and the inability of NYSC to cope with increasing number of graduates.

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Electoral reforms: The Senate should lead the charge

AFARA LANE
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LET me start this article by stating my new found discovery that democracy is not the best form of government despite many contrary views by experts and politicians. Let me also state that some nations embrace it simply because it allows the people to gather every four years to choose their leaders through the ballot. China is a communist country but it is also among the most developed countries in the world today. It is even more developed than many countries that wear democracy as a chieftaincy regalia.

It is no longer news that democracy is dying in many countries and there are many reasons why democracies die. Democracy is dead in many African countries. Some countries, Nigeria inclusive, will witness the death of democracy if the relevant organs of government refuse to carry out extensive electoral reforms now. Democracy has died in many African countries with sit-tight leaders. Cameroon is one of such countries. It has also died in African countries with military leaders. We have many such countries in West and Central Africa. There is no point bothering readers with the list of such countries, which are public knowledge already.

Considering the technical glitches that marred the 2023 general election and the attendant refrain 'go to court' if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the poll. Let me also state clearly that our elections since 1999 have never been perfect. Even before 1999, our elections had been imperfect. Some will add, there are no perfect elections anywhere in the world.

Granted that there are no perfect elections anywhere in the world, ours have grown from bad to worse if not the worst. We are no longer ashamed of rigged polls. We tend to gloat and

rejoice over compromised polls. The quest for electoral victory at all cost has blinded our conscience and blunted our sense of fairness. I shudder at champions of democracy of yesterday dancing naked today over tainted poll victories.

It is perhaps against this backdrop that the European Union's (EU) urgent call for electoral reforms ahead of the 2027 general election can be clearly situated. The call was made by Barry Andrews, a member of the European Parliament and Chief of the EU Election Observation Follow-up Mission to Nigeria, during a meeting with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Abuja. Andrews wants the government to quicken critical electoral reforms before the 2027 general election.

Not quite long ago, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) warned that Nigerians would not accept technical glitches excuses from INEC in the 2027 elections. According to the National Publicity Secretary of the party, Debo Ologunagba, the party will lead the crusade to ensure a credible election in 2027. "We, as a party, are going to take charge. Nigerians will not listen to any story about glitches, there must be none because the infrastructure in the country today can support it. If you can support the Point of Sale (PoS) in a remote part of the country, INEC should be on notice. The 2027 general election must be seamless, free, fair, transparent and credible. Any attempt to abridge the rights of Nigerians to choose their leaders will be resisted," Ologunagba stated.

The PDP chieftain probably captured the mind of most Nigerians over the 2027 elections. The era of electoral heist should be gone and give way to an era of credible polls. A transparent and credible election is good

for the winner and the loser. It is good for the electorate. It will enable the winner to celebrate the electoral outcome and for the loser to bear the loss gallantly and for putting up a great fight. It will also reduce to recourse to unending litigations and avoidable waste of time and the deployment of inelegant language in electoral discourse.

As we await the appointment of the new INEC chairman, the call for electoral reforms has intensified. The Youth Initiative for Advocacy and Advancement (YIAGA) Africa calls for good handling of the appointment of the new INEC leadership. The Executive Director of YIAGA Africa, Samson Itodo, enjoined President Bola Tinubu to demonstrate leadership by being transparent in the appointment of the new electoral umpire.

Now that the erstwhile chairman of INEC, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, has bowed out after 10 years of conducting our elections, Nigerians will like the new electoral umpire to be someone who will surpass the achievements of Yakubu. No doubt, Yakubu did his best as the boss of our electoral commission. Granted that there were errors here and there, he introduced many electoral reforms which the new INEC chairman will build upon. Part of the new electoral reforms will centre on electronic voting and transmission of election result in real time. We are tired of queuing under the sun or rain for hours before casting our votes.

We must allow technology govern our electoral system. If people can cast their votes electronically just as people can register for voting electronically, it is going to reduce voter suppression and intimidation. It will reduce ethnic tensions and violence that trail some of our polls. It will reduce rigging, falsification of

election results and other infractions associated with elections in the country.

The leadership of the National Assembly should, indeed, lead the charge for urgent electoral reforms before the 2027 general elections. Instructively, the Senate President Godswill Akpabio, on Tuesday called for urgent legislative action, constitutional reforms to strengthen our democracy. Akpabio had in his welcome address to senators at the resumption of plenary drawn attention to the hardship in the country, including banditry and terrorism, soaring food prices and natural disasters, and stressed that the crisis demands urgent legislative attention.

According to him, 'Let us hear the cry from the farms and the markets across the nation. Hunger cannot be defeated with words. Hunger requires policy direction and diligent execution to defeat it. Our people do not look to us for lamentations. That is not why they voted for us. They look to us for action.' He went on to say that 'Every home afflicted by disasters, insecurity and hardship, the 10th Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria hereby extends to them the hand of fellowship and the prayer of comfort. We promise them that we shall not flinch from the duty of redress for our people in this country.'

Akpabio also declared: 'We must revisit the constitutional amendment, the alterations to make our federation stronger, our governance more efficient and our democracy much more inclusive.' The 10th Senate should lead the crusade to give Nigerians the needed reforms that will make our elections more transparent and credible. There should be no excuses or margin for error in the conduct of the 2027 polls.

Mahmood Yakubu: A humane assessment

By **Emmanuel Nnadozie Onwubiko**

"Be a good human being, a warm hearted, affectionate person. That is my fundamental belief." (-14th Dalai Lama). "If you judge people, you have no time to love them." (-Mother Teresa)

PROFESSOR Mahmood Yakubu leaves the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) after ten years at its helm; a decade that will be debated, dissected and, I suspect, ultimately judged kindly by history. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has formally accepted Professor Yakubu's departure and, in recognition of his service, conferred on him the national honour of Commander of the Order of the Niger. The handover to the most senior national commissioner, May Agbamuche-Mbu, marks the end of an era and the start of another fraught moment for Nigeria's electoral architecture.

To assess Yakubu fairly we must do two things at once: catalogue the hard, demonstrable changes he put in place to modernise Nigeria's elections, and then judge how those changes held up under the stress test of Nigeria's deeply adversarial politics. On the first task (the one that will determine whether INEC is stronger on the morning after his exit than it was on the morning of his appointment), Yakubu's record is substantial, concrete and, in many ways, transformative.

When Mahmood Yakubu arrived at INEC in November 2015, he inherited an electoral agency that had begun to recover public trust after the Attahiru Jega years. Over the next decade he pursued a program of institutionalising technology, stabilising

processes and expanding access to the register; reforms that were not merely cosmetic but structural. The Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) became a fixture at polling units; the machine records accredited voters, stores a picture of the EC8A (the polling unit result sheet) and was designed to reduce the kind of human tampering that has long hollowed out confidence in electoral outcomes. Complementing BVAS was the INEC Result Viewing portal (iReV); a public interface that allowed citizens, parties and observers to compare what was uploaded from polling units with what was being collated at state and national centres. Those two innovations (the biometric accreditation and the result-viewing portal), are not mere gadgets. They rewired the spine of the results chain and moved Nigeria from paper-only opacity toward a model of verifiable transmission.

Technology alone does not make an election free or credible; it makes verification possible. Yakubu's INEC institutionalised procedures that, for the first time in decades, made it relatively easy for political actors and citizens to detect discrepancies between the result sheets at polling units and what appeared on official portals. This had a practical consequence: in the 2023 general elections several outcomes that would once have been unthinkable were validated on the ground and in the collation halls. The fact that results ran against the presumed preferences of political heavyweights (from presidential candidates to incumbent governors) is itself evidence that the mechanics of counting and transmission were functioning in ways that allowed voters' choices to surface. Consider three state-level examples that mattered politically and symbolically.

Those achievements do not make Nigeria's democracy invulnerable, but they have raised the bar for anyone who would try to subvert the will of the people.

In Lagos (the commercial hub that was, for decades, a political fief of Bola Tinubu), the Labour Party's Peter Obi won the plurality of votes, a seismic outcome that spoke to the emergence of new urban coalitions and, importantly, to the ability of INEC's systems to capture and publish polling unit returns for citizens and the media to scrutinise. That result, confirmed in the data and widely reported by credible international outlets, undercut the narrative that the commission could be bent to produce a foregone conclusion in even the most politically sensitive geographies.

In Osun State, the presidential tally favoured the Peoples Democratic Party's candidate, an outcome that again cut across expectations and local party machines. And in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, the Labour Party's dominance was decisive and visible on the result portals and official collations. These were not trivial or isolated quirks; they were systemic signs that votes were being counted and reported in ways that allowed the people's will to be revealed, even when that will clashed with established power.

If one wishes to measure institutional independence by outcomes, look also to the rout of political heavyweights who assumed their influence could buy them seats. At least five outgoing governors who sought to move to the Senate after two terms were defeated by opponents; an outcome that would have been harder to engineer if the electoral market were rigged in favour of incumbency rent. The International Centre for Investigative Reporting recorded the defeats of prominent outgoing governors — Samuel Ortom (Benue), Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi (Enugu), Darius Ishaku (Taraba), Simon Lalong (Plateau) and Ben Ayade (Cross River) — and their losses were widely reported as evidence that the electorate and the electoral machinery combined to produce genuine upsets.

The list of losers includes not only governors but a string of sitting national assembly leaders and committee chairmen who were unseated; a political cleansing of sorts that reflected voters' impatience and the capacity of the electoral process to enforce it. ICIR's compilation of National Assembly members who lost their seats in 2023 reads like a catalogue of the vulnerable and the over-confident: minority leaders, long-standing committee chairs and seemingly secure incumbents found themselves out of office when results were tallied and verified. Those outcomes matter because they are measurable, verifiable instances where the electoral process functioned against the

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

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Three writing mistakes professionals make — and how to fix them

SPEAKING & WRITING
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NO matter how long we've been in the professional world, our writing remains one of the strongest reflections of who we are. From emails and reports to proposals and presentations, the way we write can enhance our credibility—or quietly weaken it. Many professionals work hard at their jobs but pay little attention to their writing habits. Yet, in today's workplace, a poorly written message can cost opportunities, strain professional relationships or create misunderstandings.

Below are three common mistakes professionals make in writing, along with practical ways to correct them.

1. Writing without clarity

One of the most damaging writing habits is the lack of clarity. Many professionals write long, complicated sentences that make it hard to grasp the main point. Sometimes, they use vague phrases or load their messages with unnecessary jargon in a bid to sound formal or knowledgeable. Instead of impressing, this often confuses the reader.

For example, compare these two sentences:

"We may have to leverage potential synergies with relevant stakeholders to optimise outcomes."

"We'll work with the right partners to get better results."

Both say the same thing, but the second is clear and easy to understand. Professionals often assume that complexity equals intelligence but, in good writing, clarity always wins.

How to fix it:

Know your message before you start writing. If you can't summarise it in one sentence, your reader won't grasp it either.

Prefer short sentences to long, winding ones.

Replace jargon with plain language whenever possible.

Read your writing aloud; if it sounds confusing, it probably is.

Remember, the best writing respects the reader's time and understanding.

2. Overloading messages with unnecessary words

Another mistake professionals make is saying in 50 words what could be said in 15. Long-winded writing often creeps in through fillers, vague expressions and weak sentence structures. This habit not only dilutes your message but also makes your writing appear careless.

Consider this sentence:

"I am writing this email to kindly inform you that I will not be able to make it to the meeting scheduled for tomorrow at 2:00 p.m. due to unforeseen circumstances."

This can be trimmed to:

"I won't be able to attend tomorrow's 2:00 p.m. meeting due to unforeseen circumstances."

Both are polite, but the second is direct and efficient.

How to fix it:

Eliminate wordy expressions like "in order to," "at this point in time," or "due to the fact that."

Use strong verbs instead of weak phrases. For instance, say "decide" instead of "make a decision."

Don't overuse formal fillers like "I am writing to say..."—just say it.

Edit ruthlessly. First drafts are meant to be improved.

Clear, concise writing signals confidence. It tells the reader: "I know what I want to say, and I value your time."

3. Ignoring tone and context

Many professionals underestimate the power of tone in writing. A message can be technically correct but emotionally off. For instance, a blunt one-line email to a colleague might be interpreted as rude when you simply meant to be efficient.

Tone is especially important in emails, reports and professional feedback. The same sentence can sound polite or aggressive, depending on how it's framed.

For example:

"Send me the report immediately." (This can come across as harsh.)

"Could you, please, send me the report as soon as possible?" (This is more courteous.)

Tone also depends on context. Writing to a colleague isn't the same as writing to a client or a senior executive. Professionals sometimes use casual language where formal language is expected—or the other way around.

How to fix it:

Always re-read your message from the recipient's perspective.

Use polite expressions like "please," "kindly," and "thank you," where appropriate.

Match your tone to the context. If it's an official report, keep it formal. If it's a quick team note, keep it clear and warm.

Avoid writing when you're upset or rushed; these states often lead to poor tone.

The power of thoughtful writing

Good writing is not about using big words or showing off grammar skills. It's about communicating ideas clearly, concisely, and respectfully. Whether you are a manager, an entrepreneur or a new graduate, your writing can either amplify your professional voice or diminish it.

You may not have control over every factor at work, but you have control over how you write. When your emails, reports and proposals are well crafted, you project confidence, competence, and credibility.

So, the next time you write something at work, pause and ask:

Is this clear?

Is this concise?

Is this polite?

Is this appropriate for the context?

If your answer to all three is yes, you've likely avoided the most common professional writing mistakes—and set yourself apart as someone whose words carry weight.

Remember: knowledge minus use amounts to nothing.

Many battles of Gov. Mutfwang in Plateau

THE TEMPLATE
BY EMEKA ALEX DURU

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THERE are people you judge from a distance and run into wrong conclusions. It can only take understanding of their situations or environments to fully appreciate what they go through and why they act in certain ways. That was the lot of Second Republic governor of Imo State, Dr. Sam Mbakwe, popularly called Dee Sam. When it was split from the then East Central State in 1976, Imo was literally bare and lacked basic infrastructure. Newspaper columnist, Professor Obi Nwakanma, captured the state of affairs in Imo at the beginning in one of his usually robust outings. According to Nwakanma, when Sam Mbakwe arrived Owerri Government House as governor in 1979, the three major cities in the state — "Owerri, Aba, Umuahia, still had houses operating 'bucket latrines' and the cities still employed night soil men (ndi Oburu nsi) and ran waste landfills." That was enough to deter the lily-livered.

The first statewide public safety and hygiene law passed under the Mbakwe administration gave every landlord and household in these cities four months and a tax rebate to change the infrastructure from the bucket system to the water system, failure of which the houses would be marked as public health hazard zones. This was fully accomplished in three months.

In 1981, faced with inadequate transportation system to and from the state, Mbakwe threatened that, if the Federal Government did not build an airport in Owerri, he would mobilize and build one. He actually did so. Next, was the Ndiegoro flood menace in Aba, the commercial nerve centre of the state. The

magnitude of the disaster was huge. On a daily basis, houses were swallowed by the flood and residents displaced.

With meagre resources at the disposal of the state, controlling the rampaging flood posed a serious challenge to Mbakwe. Left with no option, he cried out to the Federal Government of President Shehu Shagari for assistance. Because of his consistency in raising the matter at every forum, Dee Sam was nicknamed the "Weeping Governor." Many that did not understand what he was going through mocked him with the tag. But he knew his travails and worked towards overcoming them. Mbakwe ended up being the best governor to have emerged from the old and present Imo, if not in the entire country, ever since.

In some ways, Governor Caleb Mutfwang of Plateau State is passing through some of the ordeals Mbakwe encountered, though the magnitude and context of the battles before him are wider. While Mbakwe battled with infrastructure deficit, Mutfwang contends with violence and destruction of lives and properties in his domain. Unlike some of his colleagues whose complaints were on inheriting empty treasuries, Mutfwang had crises and insecurity waiting for him on assumption to office. The governor met a state that was virtually in disarray, torn by occasional eruption of communal and religious crisis. Intrusion of terrorists and bandits in the violence profile of the state makes the situation more disturbing. While the governor cries out over his challenges, many think that he lacks the courage and focus to face his battles. But that is taking the

matter from the surface. Truth be told, Mutfwang needs empathy and deserves encouragement. The Plateau State he inherited is an entity that has lost its trademark ambience and serenity. It is now living on lost glory, so to say. It would only take someone who had lived in Plateau in its days of innocence to appreciate the extent of assault that the state has suffered in the hands of bloodthirsty hounds.

I was in Plateau for a graduate programme in the University of Jos (UNIJOS) in the early 1990s. Before then, I had longed to visit the state. Growing up, my parents, especially my mother, used to regale us with stories of the beauty and placidity of Jos. My family was in Jos during our infancy before it was forced out of the city following the crisis and pogroms of 1966 that eventually snowballed to the civil war.

Those tales fired my urge to visit Plateau. While in UNIJOS between 1991 and 1993, I confirmed the beauty and serenity of the place. The unique Jos weather, relative low cost of living, peaceful environment and fellow-feeling among the residents compared to no other place in the country. It was in Plateau, Jos in particular, that, for the first time, I noticed churches and mosques sharing the same compounds or separated by thin walls. Where we lived, Angwan Rogo, was behind the university and predominantly populated by Muslims. But it did not really matter to us. During festive periods for either Christians or Muslims, we were served with food by wealthy members of the particular faith celebrating. Nobody in the city, to my knowledge, was discriminated

against or attacked on the basis of faith, sect or ethnicity. It was not for nothing that we prided UNIJOS as a mini-Nigeria, an institution that had many students living in peace without any group dominating the others.

Sadly, that era is gone. It is now so bad that, a month ago, when I had cause to be in Jos, I learned with pains of the existence of the axiomatic "Wall of Jericho" dividing the residents on religious lines. It rankled in particular that a friend that I pleaded with to take me to my former place of residence in Angwan Rogo refused to go and advised me against embarking on the risky trip. That spoke much on how bad things are in the state.

TheNiche columnist and immediate past national secretary of Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Usman Leman, is right that: "Once celebrated as the nation's 'safe haven' and proudly proclaiming itself the 'Home of Peace and Tourism,' the state has been transformed into a theatre of conflict, leaving a devastating trail of lost lives, destroyed property and hundreds of thousands displaced." Leman is an alumnus of UNIJOS. He knew what the state was and what it is currently. This is the depressing story of Plateau, an unflattering index of state failure and irresponsibility on the part of successive leaders in the country and the people.

When Mutfwang, therefore, alleged that the recent killings in his state were genocidal and sponsored, he might have his points. A situation where more than 148 communities in the

•Continued on www.thesun.ng

"Blizzards, floods, volcanos, hurricanes, earthquakes: They fascinate because they nakedly reveal that Mother Nature, afflicted with bipolar disorder, is as likely to snuff us as she is to succour us." **-Dean Koontz**

Send stories to: 08155134235

THE LIFELINE



EBONYI FLOOD OF TEARS

Swallows 8 persons, houses, crops and other property worth millions of naira

From **Uchenna Inya**, Abakaliki

VICTIMS of the flood that occurred in Enohia Itim, Afikpo in Afikpo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, are still counting their loses, two months after the disaster. Between July and August this year, the area recorded heavy flooding that claimed eight lives, while houses, crops and other property worth millions of naira were destroyed.

A total of 894 persons were affected by the flood in the community. The victims said they have not recovered from the devastation the disaster caused them.

Blessing Okoche, who lost her mother, Angela Okoche, and younger sister to the incident, said she was yet to recover from the tragedy. She was among the victims given N1 million and relief materials recently by Governor Francis Nwifuru over the disaster.

The girl, who is now mother to her eight siblings that survived the incident, said losing her mother was a great loss and life has



Mrs. Godwin who lost her 22 year-old son

not been the same for them, especially as she lost her father years ago.

Blessing said: "My mother and my



Grace Otu, Blessing's grandmother with the year-and-half-old child

siblings were in a boat returning from our farm across the river when the boat capsized and they all fell into the river.

"My siblings were all rescued alive but my mother and her sister, who was also in the boat, were swept away by the river. We looked for them but we couldn't find them. Their bodies were recovered one week after the incident.

"They have been buried. My mother was buried in my father's plot of land in our community. There was no burial rite for her and her sister. We have left everything till December this year. My father is no more.

"I am devastated. I don't know where to start. We are eight in number as children and as you can see I am the only one that has grown up a little, others are very tender. I don't know how they came out alive. I thank God for saving them.

"The flood has really affected us, we have not recovered from it. I don't know how our lastborn will start school because there is no money for that. I have been thinking about this, not knowing that God has packaged something for us through our governor.

"This N1 million will help me to put him in school and take care of his and my other

siblings. May God bless the governor for remembering us. I will utilize this money properly to make our governor proud."

Her grandmother, Grace Otu, revealed how one of her granddaughters, one year and half old was rescued from the river when the boat capsized. She explained that the child was picked floating on the water. "Thank God for saving her life."

"My daughter, Angela, and her children were returning from farm across the river when the boat carrying them capsized. The river carried her away while her children, including this baby I am carrying who was floating like a dry leaf, were all floating and they were rescued alive."

"I want to thank the state government for remembering us. This money they gave us will be used to train this child and her other surviving siblings. Their mother is my first daughter and you know what it means to lose one's first daughter. We have not recovered from the loss," she said.

Favour Edwin, a goiter patient whose 22-year-old son, Innocent Ewa, died in the incident, also said she has not recovered from the disaster. She described Innocent as the breadwinner of her family and that his death had adversely affected her family.

"My 22-year-old son, Innocent Okpani Ewa, was fishing when the flood occurred. He was coming out of the river in a boat when it capsized and the river carried him."

"Till today, I have not seen

him. He is the one taking care of me, he is the breadwinner in my family and I have not recovered from his death. Even as I speak with you, I am still devastated because of his death. I am the mostly hit in the disaster," she stated. .

The state government recently disbursed N100 million to the 894 victims of the disaster in the community. The government disbursed the N100m cash and relief materials, including bags of rice, garri, mattresses and buckets to the victims at the Afikpo Council headquarters.

Deputy governor of the state, Princess Patricia Obila, flagged off the disbursement. A breakdown of the disbursement revealed that families that lost their people during the flood incident received N1million each, while those whose crops were destroyed received N500,000 each and other victims received N250,000 each. Each of the victims also got four bags of rice, two bags of garri, mattress and buckets.

Obila, while addressing the people, noted that the money and relief items disbursed to them was in fulfillment of the government's promise to come to their aid following the flood disaster. She described Gov. Nwifuru as a compassionate leader who does not joke with the well-being of the people.

She urged Afikpo people to continue to support Nwifuru's administration for more dividends of democracy.

Commissioner for Human Capital Development, Mrs.

Ann Aligwe, who supervised the distribution of the cash and relief materials, lauded Nwifuru for the gesture, describing him as a kind-hearted governor.

"Our dear governor is a welfare governor. He has come to Ebonyi State to take care of the people through his Charter of Needs manifesto. This is why you are having this items and cash here."

"When we got information that Enohia Itim community was affected by flood disaster which claimed lives and destroyed property, we quickly dispatched our officials to the community."

"After this assessment and evaluation, we went to the governor and discussed with him. As a humanitarian governor, he said that he is the governor of everybody, he is from Afikpo local government area because his deputy is from Afikpo local government area."

"He immediately approved hundreds of millions and said we should procure relief materials, food items and also give cash to all the people affected by the flood in Enohia Itim," she narrated.

Chairman of Afikpo local government area, Chief Timothy Nwachi, described Nwifuru's administration as a responsive government. He said flood has been happening in the local government without any compensation for the victims until Nwifuru became governor and provided succour for the victims.

Nwachi's words: "The government is responding, not just responding but responding timely. We sent a distress call to the appropriate authorities and in less than 32 days, we are receiving this response."

"So, that's to say that the government we have as it stands now is a government that responds to people's needs and it is a government that is responsive to the problems of those they are leading."

"So, I want to sincerely thank our dear governor and all the agencies that are working under him and every other relevant agencies that made today a success."

Abia, FTAN unite under Otti's vision on World Tourism Day



Participants at the event

By Johnson Adebawale

THE 2025 World Tourism Day (WTD) celebrations in Abia State ignited a powerful message of hope, partnership and transformation as government leaders and private sector stakeholders came together to pledge stronger collaboration to advance tourism as a catalyst for inclusive development. Held in Umuahia, the capital of Abia State, the event convened policymakers, cultural advocates, academics and industry experts under the theme "Tourism and Sustainable Transformation," setting the stage for a bold vision of Abia's future.

Representing Gov. Alex Otti, the Chief of Staff, Pastor Caleb Ajagba, described tourism as a "vital tool for driving inclusive development and environmental sustainability," emphasizing the government's commitment to harnessing the sector's potential for economic prosperity. "There is nothing that has been intentionally discovered that hasn't added value to humanity. In Abia today, we are witnessing a transformation that proves that even strangers can spark positive change through productive ideas. Tourism, if well harnessed, can be a tool for economic prosperity," Otti said.

Delivering the keynote address, the Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Creative Economy, Hon. Matthew Ekwuribe, unveiled the state's plan to transform Abia into a premier cultural and eco-tourism destination.

According to him, the ministry has identified over 55 potential tourism sites spread across the state's 17 local government areas, each with unique cultural, ecological, and historical significance.

"Tourism is not just about sightseeing; it is soul-seeing. It helps us value what we have and transform it into opportunities. These identified sites are not just relics; they are economic assets waiting to be explored and maximized," Ekwuribe said.

He further outlined ongoing projects including the establishment of eco-tourism hubs, digitization of heritage sites, and empowerment programmes targeting women and youth within the creative economy.

"None of this would have been possible without the commitment of His Excellency. He is the enabler — the reason Abia can now dream boldly in tourism," the commissioner added.

In his goodwill message, Mr. Wilson Uche Ugwu, Vice President

(South East) of the Federation of Tourism Associations of Nigeria (FTAN), commended the Abia State government for its commitment to the sector and called for stronger collaboration between government institutions and tourism practitioners.

Transformation mandate being championed by FTAN, stressing the need for greater recognition and inclusion of practitioners in policy planning and implementation.

Mr. Ugwu, speaking on behalf of the Federation, announced the association's readiness to partner with the Abia State government through the Ministry of Arts, Culture and Creative Economy. He said FTAN is committed to working closely with the state to reposition tourism as a catalyst for inclusive growth and sustainable development across the South East.

He described the Umuahia event as "another step forward in our collective journey," adding that "the process of reimagining Abia through tourism has truly begun."

Other speakers, including the Vice Chancellor of Abia State University (ABSU), Prof. Ndukwe Okeudo (represented by Prof. Dick Uduma), Mr. Nashir Abubakar from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Mrs. Blessing Eziogu, the State Assistant Controller of Immigration, and Dr. Charles Ezeala, the State Chairman of Hotel Management, applauded Gov. Otti for his visionary leadership.

They also pledged institutional support to promote the state's cultural assets and advance responsible tourism development.

Similarly, the senior special assistant to the governor on entertainment and tourism, Hon. Justice Martins, described the celebration as a "call to action" for all stakeholders.

"World Tourism Day is more than a celebration. It's a call to action. Let's move from discovery to development, from heritage to hope, and from preservation to transformation," Martins urged.

The 2025 celebration ended with renewed optimism, as participants reaffirmed their commitment to building a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable tourism ecosystem in Abia and across the South East.

With government leadership, private sector participation, and community involvement, Abia appears set to become a leading example of how tourism can power cultural renewal and economic transformation.



Blessing with some of her siblings that survived the disaster



Some of the relief materials distributed to the flood victims

ARTS

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The Loan Shark of Gangnam District and Seoul's seething

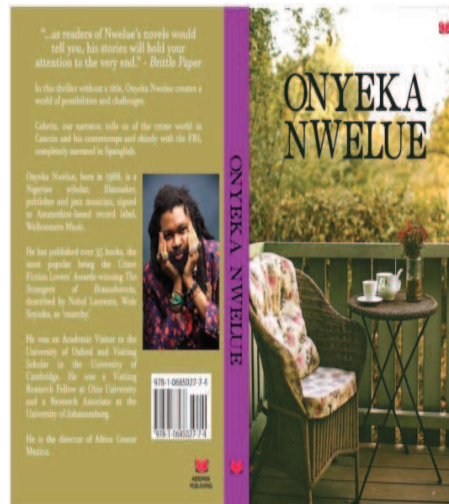
By **Oludare Richards****THE** Loan Shark of Gangnam District, Author: Onyeka Nwelu, Abibiman Publishing, United Kingdom, 2025, pp.187

In Onyeka Nwelu's latest offering, *The Loan Shark of Gangnam District*, the author masterfully peels back the glittering facade of Seoul's most affluent neighborhood to reveal a seething core of desperation, greed and the systemic corruption that preys on the vulnerable. This is not merely a crime thriller, it is a profound social commentary and a meditation on what it means to reclaim one's humanity in a world that seeks to commodify every aspect of life. Nwelu, with the same unflinching gaze that defined his earlier works, crafts a narrative that is both an intimate portrait of a father's grief and a blistering critique of a society where financial success is often built on the backs of the exploited.

The protagonist, Jin-ho, is a character etched in quiet sorrow and simmering resolve. A devoted husband whose world is shattered by the tragic death of his wife in a construction site accident, his grief

morphs into a desperate struggle for survival. He is ensnared in a web of debt, a financial abyss woven by the ruthless loan shark, Kang-min. Nwelu paints Kang-min not as a one-dimensional villain but as a figure of calculating malice, a man who views human lives as mere collateral in his insatiable quest for power. This personal tragedy, however, becomes the catalyst for a larger crusade, transforming Jin-ho from a solitary, grieving man into a symbol of a city's silent dissent. His fight against the loan shark is a microcosm of a societal battle against an invisible enemy—a corrupt system that operates with impunity from the shadows.

Nwelu's creative genius lies in his ability to craft a visceral and fast-paced narrative that moves with the brutal efficiency of a thriller. He uses vivid, almost cinematic descriptions to paint a picture of Gangnam, where towering skyscrapers gleam not with promise but with cold profit, and where corruption is a systemic virus. The prose is lean and purposeful, stripped of excess to capture the raw emotions of his characters. The tension builds relentlessly, from the quiet, psychological threat of debt collection to the explosive, rain-soaked confrontation that serves as the



novel's climax. The author's thematic exploration is equally potent, highlighting the stark contrast between the city's sleek exterior and the grimy reality of its criminal networks, where illegal lenders charge obscene interest rates and violence is a tool for control.

The novel is a masterclass in character development, with a supporting cast that is both believable and compelling. The loyal

friend Dae-jung, with his menacing cleaver and unwavering support, represents the solidarity of the working class against a shared oppressor. The retired mathematics teacher, Mr. Park, and the incorruptible Detective Lee add layers of complexity, showing that resistance can come from unexpected corners. Each character is a testament to the author's skill in depicting the human condition under duress, and their interconnected struggles underscore the novel's central theme: the power of collective action against a seemingly insurmountable foe.

In the end, *The Loan Shark of Gangnam District* is a powerful story of resistance, an unyielding testament to the idea that even in the face of overwhelming odds, a singular, defiant vision can challenge a system of injustice. The novel's ending, far from offering a tidy resolution, leaves the reader with a sense of lingering hope and a profound understanding of the cyclical nature of struggle and triumph. It is a work that both entertains and educates, forcing the reader to confront harsh realities with the same courage as its characters.

•Continued on www.thesun.ng

65 years of Nigerian music: Music legends honoured by Evergreen Music

By **Henry Akubuiro**

THEY were the cynosure of all eyes at the MUSON Centre, Victoria Island, Lagos, last Sunday. Age had taken a toll on some of them, others hovered around middle age, still full of life. For decades, crowds erupted with cheers as they mounted the stage. Fans danced, sang along and forgot their sorrows as the icons thrilled audiences home and abroad. Working as individual artistes, they added new, amazing chapters to the evolution of Nigerian music industry. Long before the Afrobeats era, where the Burna Boys, Davidos and Wizkids hold sway, they were the music chart toppers and the crowd pullers carolling about love, lores, unity, and lifting up our spirits. They were the real MacCoys.

In 65 years, Nigerian music has undergone a metamorphosis. The vanguards celebrated recently

in Lagos created highlife, juju, fuji, afrobeat, apala, pop and reggae genres, to mention a few. With the passage of time, some have bowed out of stage, but their legacies remain with us. Each time their music plays, it enkindles nostalgia.

On October 5, Evergreen Music, in conjunction with Lagos State Ministry of Tourism and Culture, organised the Ariya Eko Independence Music Festival, celebrating Nigerian entertainment legends of yesteryear who had impacted the music and cultural scenes in the last 65 years. It was a night like no other. Music bands, including MFM Highlife Band, Afowoside and Abinibi Groovy, Royal Bell Band, MFM Guitar Choir, Mentholkay and Nes Melody Makers Band, Modola and AJ Band serenaded the audience as they relived the hits of yesterdays and contemporary tunes. Everybody watching was gripped with awe, every face festooned with mirth. The award receipts were mostly musicians, but



• Governor Sanwo-Olu presenting award to Evangelist Ebenezer Obey

there also music producers, cultural visionaries, filmmakers and a music label in their midst. Together, they charted pathways for the Nigerian cultural entertainment industries.

Among the award recipients were the pop queen, Stella Monye; the Waka Queen, Salawa Abeni; 85-year-old Jossy Friday, and Dele Abiodun. Other legends who received awards included 85-year-old Evangelist Ebenezer Obey (Cultural Innovator), Alhaji Kolawole Ayinla Ilori, 81-year-old Ken Caleb Olumese (the Nightlife Legend Award), Funmi

Aragbai (Gospel Pioneers Award), and Tunde Kelani (Distinguished Filmmaker Award).

Other awardees were the pop star, Alex O; Lemi Ghariokwu Lemi Abiodun, the visual artist and serial album sleeve designer; Toye Ajagun, Dr. Ola Balogun, Dr. D.A. Fasoyin, Dr. Tee Mac Omatshola Iseli, former PMAN president; Laolu Akins, the legendary producer; Evang. J.A. Adalokun, Prince Cyril Bamidele, Pa Sulaiman Aremu, and Nigeria's oldest surviving music label, Premier Music.

The Special Guest of Honour, Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, took time off his busy schedule to honour the epochmaking event in celebration of the country's cultural custodians and visionaries. He lauded the noble initiative by Evergreen Music in creating the event and preserving Nigeria's musical legacies. He added colour to the event by presenting some of the awards to the recipients, including Evangelist Ebenezer Obey and Mama Sioni. The two artistes, who also performed on stage, compelled many to dance and sing along. Obey lionised Nigeria's President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, and the Lagos State Governor, Sanwo-Olu for promoting cultural preservation and building the nation.

Managing director of Evergreen Musical Company Limited and the initiator of the project, Bimbo Esho, while speaking at the event, noted it was important to celebrate cultural icons while still alive as an incentive to up-and-coming artistes.

According to her, "Recognising the stars of yesterday while they are still living is a great motivation, not only for them but also for upcoming artistes."

As she noted, Ariya Eko "serves as both a tribute to the icons of yesteryears and a tool for fostering deeper cultural ties, encouraging cross-generational

•Continued on www.thesun.ng

NCC condemns attack on anti-piracy officers at Sabo market

THE Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC) has condemned the violent and unprovoked attack on its enforcement officers and operatives of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) during an anti-piracy operation in Sagamu, Ogun State. The incident occurred on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at Sabo Market, where the commission's officers were carrying out a routine enforcement exercise against the sale of pirated books.

According to the commission, its enforcement team had successfully identified and impounded pirated books from an unmarked shop in the market when they were suddenly ambushed by unidentified persons. The attackers, in a

coordinated and brazen manner, attempted to obstruct the lawful activities of the officers, leading to chaos in the market.

In a statement released by the commission's management, the NCC commended its personnel and the supporting NSCDC officers for maintaining restraint in the face of provocation and for their gallantry in carrying out their duties under challenging circumstances.

"We salute their commitment to the renewed campaign against copyright piracy and their determination to disrupt unwholesome practices that threaten Nigeria's creative industries," the statement read.

The Commission reaffirmed that the attack would not deter its opera-

tions. It stressed that working in collaboration with relevant authorities and market executives, efforts were already underway to identify the perpetrators of the assault and bring them to justice. The NCC reminded the public that under the Copyright Act, it is a criminal offence to obstruct, hinder, assault, or impede a copyright officer in the lawful performance of his duties or in exercising powers conferred by law.

"The Nigerian Copyright Commission remains resolute in its mission to eradicate piracy and ensure that Nigerian creators fully enjoy the benefits of their intellectual labour," the management declared, adding, "We will

not relent in fulfilling our statutory mandate, particularly at this critical time when the Federal Government is prioritising the creative and copyright-based industries as engines

•Continued on www.thesun.ng



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TS WEEKEND

SPORTS FASHION MUSIC MOVIES CELEBRITIES INTERVIEWS EVENT

Laughter, life lessons as *Grandpa Must Obey* premieres in Lagos



By Johnson Adebawale

MOVIE lovers nationwide can look forward to a joyful blend of chaos, laughter and heartfelt life lessons as hilarious family dramedy, *Grandpa Must Obey*, hits cinemas via FilmOne Entertainment on November 21, 2025. Unveiled recently, the poster bursts with bold colours and playful energy,

perfectly capturing the film's blend of humour, love and the ever-relatable clash between generations.

At the film's centre is veteran Nollywood actor, Kanayo O. Kanayo (KOK), playing a grumpy yet endearing 70-year-old grandfather coping with grief.

Thrust into babysitting his two mischievous grandchildren, grandpa

finds himself in a comedic tug-of-war filled with pranks, laughter and unexpected moments of tenderness. What begins as a battle of wills gradually turns into a touching story about family, forgiveness and rediscovering joy after loss.

Directed by Chibuzor Afurobi and penned by Saviour Kings Bob, *Grandpa Must Obey* promises to resonate with audiences across ages, weaving heartfelt emotion with laugh-out-loud comedy.

The producer, Uche Okocha of Trino Motion Pictures, said of the movie: "We wanted to tell a story that feels deeply Nigerian but universally human - one that celebrates family, resilience, and the small moments that make life beautiful."

The cast brings together Nollywood's finest, KOK, alongside fast-rising talents like Darasimi Nadi and Fiyin Asenuga, who shine with youthful comedic brilliance, while Yvonne Jegede and Bimbo Akintola add emotional depth, enriching the multi-generational tale.

Lagos raves as Funbi's *Bus* storms Glover Hall

AFTER six successful editions of his signature comedy showcase, Funbi Funbi is set to reinvent the experience as *Funbi's Bus* returns for its seventh edition on November 2, 2025, at Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos.

Unlike previous years, this edition will trade jokes for jams, with Funbi Funbi announcing that the show will feature 90 percent music and 10 percent comedy, rebranded as 'Lagos Rave'.

"You'll hardly see a brand consistent for seven years," Funbi said. "Funbi's Bus is one of those few. So, this year, we're throwing a party. It's a rave - Lagos Rave!"

Since its launch, the show has become a Lagos cultural staple, combining live performances, skits and Funbi's street-smart humour.

Reflecting on past editions, he credited the audience's loyalty as the highlight: "Every episode has been unique. What stands out is how so many people turn out, buy tickets and show love."



Funbi

This year, the comedian says he's embracing Lagos' rhythm with a lineup of A-list artistes yet to be revealed. "Lagos is about dance and vibe, and that's what we're giving," he added.

The Gods Have Spoken: Lala rallies Lateef Adedimeji, Femi Branch, Omowunmi Dada for opera at Terra Kulture

ALL roads lead to Terra Kulture, Victoria Island, Lagos, on October 18 and 19, 2025, for a stage play, an opera titled 'The Gods Have Spoken'.

The classical musical penned by Dr. Taiye Adeola parades a stellar cast of Nollywood actors like Lateef Adedimeji, Femi Branch, Tunji Sotimirin, Omowunmi Dada and Lizzy Jay, among others.

Speaking at a media parley to unveil the opera, popular Nollywood director, Muyideen Oladapo, aka Lala, who also directed Ola Rotimi's stage play, *Kurunmi*, said the collection of stars in the opera was a deviation from the norm, as the actors will be seen in another element for the first time.

According to him, the play boasts a 40-page script and over 140 pages of music, while it would feature over 80 actors and crewmembers.

"Opera is a play in the form of music and art where the singers and instru-



mentalists perform in a theatrical way. Every line will be acted out in the form of a song. I chose to stage *The Gods Have Spoken* because the message mirrors society. It's a story that gives hope to the common man in the pursuit of their destiny," Lala stated.

In his remarks, Tunji Sotimirin assured theatre lovers of a spectacular experience, saying, "This is a tiny script

with a unique, significant message and dialogue being rendered for a spectacle to behold. This is to celebrate the common man's voice to equip themselves."

Choreography Director, Segun Adefila, explained that the story, which is about destiny and character, teaches how man can influence the voice of the gods to bring destiny to life.

At the rehearsal, Music Director,

Adeaga Mofopofoluwa, described *The Gods Have Spoken* as a peculiar play with a unique message for the audience. "We've been working on the music score sheet written by the writer and arranger of the play, orchestrating the performance of the play. I assure the audience of a captivating performance different from what they've experienced."

While assuring the audience of an engaging and exciting experience, the producer, Olamide Oladapo, urged them to be on the lookout for something special.

"This is a satire and total theatre: dancing, acting and singing, with actors saying their lines in the form of songs. This will captivate and engage the audience. And I would like to add that we have something special coming on stage. I want everyone to watch out," he declared.

Esigie album revives old Benin cultural heritage - Xstar Song



From Ighomuaye Lucky, Benin

FAST rising singer, Esther Osaro Ehinmwingbovo aka Xstar Song, has released a new album titled, *Esigie*.

Addressing journalists in Benin, Edo State recently, the songstress, who is signed under the management of Realknock Entertainment, said *Esigie* was released in May to the admiration of Nigerian music lovers.

True to Xstar Song's pronouncement, *Esigie* has already gained prominence among Nigerians, even as some music lovers are using it as their ringtones.

"*Esigie* is a song that revives old Benin cultural heritage," she said. "The song has caught the attention of many notable Nigerians like Omosede Igbinedion, Nosa Rex and others who are now making videos on TikTok with it."

However, Xstar Song is not resting on her oars. She will be hitting the airwaves hard with another album by December. The new album titled 'Eni' means 'elephant'. And because of her love for entertainment, she will also be featuring MC Edo Pinkin and MC Casino Games of Thrones in Eko Concert.

In his remarks, the Chief Executive Officer, Realknock Entertainment, Matthew Oshodin, described Xstar Song as an artiste to reckon with "because she has stepped in with great innovation capable of turning the entertainment industry around for good."

BBNaija's memorable moments with Terra's Taste Maze, Chicken Hunt challenges

WHILE it lasted, the Big Brother Naija reality TV show recorded several unforgettable moments.

One of them was the night Terra Seasoning Cube took over the stage with Taste Maze and Chicken Hunt challenges. The scene, indeed, created a whole new level of energy and excitement.

With a theme revolving around joy, taste and the spirit of competition, Terra presented two memorable challenges: Terra Taste Maze and Terra Chicken Hunt. These challenges left viewers in stitches and housemates gasping for breath, both from exertion and laughter.

Reflecting on the night's activities, the Chief Marketing Officer, TGI Group, Probal Bhattacharya, said: "With the Maze and the Chicken Hunt, we wanted to show that Terra is more than just cubes of seasoning. The Maze symbolized focus, teamwork and experientia-



tion, while the Chicken Hunt brought out laughter, curiosity and spontaneity. Together, they reflected what Terra Cube stands for, making every moment, whether in the kitchen or in life, richer with joy, flavour and shared experience."

The night began with Terra Taste Maze; a challenge that transformed the

Big Brother arena into a playground of twists and turns. Housemates were divided into two teams: Unwrap Joy and Unleash Taste, and tasked with navigating the maze on all fours. The objective was simple: each housemate had to pick a card at the start, crawl from beginning to end, and overcome wrong turns and

dead ends without losing focus.

The challenge brought out the competitive spirit of the housemates, making for an evening of entertainment and playful chaos. What unfolded was a test of patience and perseverance. Some housemates surprised viewers by gliding through with remarkable speed and precision, guided by sharp instincts and encouragement from their teammates.

Others, however, found themselves hilariously trapped in loops, bumping into walls and doubling back in frustration. Their missteps triggered waves of laughter from fellow housemates and viewers alike.

The Maze game was a metaphor. Each wrong turn and stumble highlighted the importance of resilience and teamwork, values that Terra stands for in kitchens and homes across Nigeria.

-Continued on www.thesun.ng

-Continued on www.thesun.ng

Bakassi: Unending narrative of diplomatic intrigues, oil revenue controversies

By Akpandem James

THE Bakassi Peninsula appears lost, as far as Nigeria is concerned. It was handed over to Cameroon on August 14, 2008. This followed a complex legal and diplomatic battle marked by an International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling in 2002 and the Green Tree Agreement (GTA) of June 12, 2006. Seventeen years later, the controversy that trailed the handover is yet to abate.

The handover not only altered Nigeria's geopolitical landscape but also sparked enduring controversies surrounding territorial sovereignty and, critically, oil revenue allocation. The challenges brought about by that development continue to emerge, each time resurfacing like the many heads of a hydra. Just when it seems that one issue is laid to rest, another contention floats, demanding critical attention.

The recent spat between the governments of Cross River and Akwa Ibom regarding the ownership of 76 oil wells along the eastern coastline, which has become a recurring decimal in the revenue pursuits of the two neighbouring states, has brought into the arena the big masquerades that are raising profound dust with their monumental dance steps. They are weighing in on the diplomatic and economic gymnastics that have continued to unveil the hidden trails of the unfortunate episode.

Obong Victor Attah, who was governor of Akwa Ibom State when the final decision to hand over the peninsula to Cameroon, and Etubom Anthony Ani, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in the Abacha regime and a High Chief of Cross River heritage, have recently escalated conversations on matters arising from the venture, which Chief Olusegun Obasanjo was the undertaker, as then Nigerian President.

While Obong Attah, who recently appeared on Channels Television, focused on the ownership of the oil wells, following renewed contention by the Cross River State government, Etubom Ani, in a recent publication, tactically evaded direct intervention on the intra-Nigerian dispute over oil wells. To him, the international legal and diplomatic outcomes on the ownership of the contentious peninsula have narrowed the potency of the internal disagreements. He rather expressed

strong indignation over what he termed "the diplomatic and administrative blunder" that resulted in the transfer of the peninsula to Cameroon.

However, Dr. Agwu Ukiwe Okali, a former Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, believes that the haste in the handover was obviously without consideration for the deeper sovereign, diplomatic and social implications. It must have been more of an ego-driven pursuit by Obasanjo.

Before the ICJ ruling, Cross River State was considered a littoral state, possessing direct access to the Atlantic Ocean through the Bakassi Peninsula. This status granted it control over the now-disputed 76 oil wells, a significant source of federal revenue. However, with Bakassi now in Cameroon, Cross River effectively lost its coastline and its claim to these oil wells. As a result, the federal government reallocated the wells to Akwa Ibom State.

This reallocation drastically reduced Cross River's share of oil derivation revenue, causing considerable dissatisfaction. The state contested the decision in the Supreme Court. However, in 2012, the court ruled in favour of Akwa Ibom, confirming that the petitioner was no longer considered a littoral state and, therefore, could not claim ownership of the oil wells. Despite this and other interventions, the two states returned to the trenches in the last two months, further escalating the conversation.

Obong Attah has been a prominent voice in this conversation. During the Channels Television interview, Attah reiterated that Cross River's littoral status was entirely dependent on access to the Atlantic Ocean via Bakassi. The apex court ruling confirmed the loss of that status. That left Cross River landlocked, with only a few islands, and no longer a littoral state.

Attah dismissed any claims that Akwa Ibom owes Cross River compensation for the oil wells, as well as any suggestion of negotiation. "Oil wells are not gifts; they are tied to land. Unless Nigeria's boundaries are to be redrawn, which is unthinkable, there is no basis for negotiation." He also dismissed payment of N500 million to Cross River during his tenure, emphasising that legal processes upheld Akwa Ibom's ownership and left no basis for any form of compensation.

"During my tenure, Cross River went to



Attah

court hoping to gain oil wells from the ICJ decision. But when the judgment went against them, they withdrew the case. I countersued and insisted that the Supreme Court and the Federal Government uphold the ICJ ruling. The court affirmed that Cross River is not a littoral state. Oil wells belong strictly to the state in whose territory they fall. Nobody has ever provided proof that Akwa Ibom is drawing revenue from Cross River's oil wells. Boundaries decide ownership, not sentiment."

He insisted that, by law and geography, Akwa Ibom is entitled to the wells. Obong Attah admitted, however, that he once suggested a political compromise, even proposing that portions could be shared, but Cross River rejected it and chose to rely on the courts. "To now suggest that Akwa Ibom should "dash" Cross River oil wells is like asking Zamfara to give away its gold mines."

Meanwhile, Etubom Anthony Ani, former Minister of State for Foreign Affairs during the Abacha administration and a High Chief of Cross River heritage, threw up a distinct but critical issue, which added a significant layer to the controversy. Rather than engaging directly in the intra-Nigerian oil wells dispute, Ani focused on the broader diplomatic, legal and administrative failures that led to Nigeria's

loss of Bakassi to Cameroon. In a press statement titled "Before the Sun Sets on Bakassi," he expressed strong indignation over what he called "the diplomatic and administrative blunder" that finalised the transfer.

In the more than 3500-word statement, Ani began by saying that "statesmen who have taken part in fundamental decisions affecting their country seldom write in the press, as they could say things that might jeopardise the very existence of their country. However, where the very existence of the country or a part of it is threatened, then it behoves all statesmen to speak out." He was therefore constrained to write, at least to put things in proper perspective. The statement, perhaps one of the most comprehensive on the legal tussle, provided a thorough analysis of the government's actions at the time. It discussed the establishment of a technical committee for coordinating efforts, as well as provision for Plan B, when it became apparent that Nigeria might lose out due to international political dynamics.

Members of the committee included Ani himself, as coordinating minister of Bakassi affairs, Dr. Ajato Amos, Ekpeyong Asuquo, Dr. Yogt (nee Akin Taylor) and Dr. Akiterinwa (both from the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs), Prof. Chukwura, Chief Richard Akinjide, Attorneys-General of the Federation and Cross River State and some senior staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ani, later the Finance Minister, indicated that Bakassi was historically administered as part of the Akpabuyo Council in Cross River State; even though Akwa Ibom also mounted territorial claims, which he considered weak. He recounts that during the creation of new local councils in 1997, Bakassi was briefly reassigned from Cross River to Akwa Ibom by lobbyists, but was returned to Cross River after his intervention. He, however, explained that the GTA ceded Bakassi, along with its rich oil and gas resources, to Cameroon, effectively depriving both states and Nigeria as a whole of significant oil wealth.

His strongest criticism was directed at Nigeria's political establishment, which he believes mishandled the case. Ani blames Obasanjo for

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

• Akpandem is a fellow of the Nigerian Guild of Editors

By Oseloka H. Obaze

RECENTLY, Nigerians watched on national television as some prominent South East politicians visited the Aspadma Market in the former Trade Fair Complex in Lagos over recent demolitions in that vicinity by Lagos State authorities. The visit spoke of the high-octane nature of an increasingly contentious issue, fraught with allegations of bigotry and recriminations. I watched, too, with bemused skepticism.

I have no sympathy for those whose buildings get demolished because they built out of zone, and in violation of extant building and land codes. That is as it should be. I say so as a technocrat and erstwhile policymaker and administrator. Laws are made to be respected. That's what rule of law is all about. Such persons should not complain about the consequences of their greed and stupidity.

Such things happen because the Nigerian society is now so unapologetically transactional and imbued with impunity that some affluent people believe that they can subjugate rules and regulations, violate statutory laws and still buy their way out of attendant reprisals. Nowhere is such an attitude more rampant than with acquisition of landed property in major cities. Green areas, public parks, golf courses and playgrounds have been carved up and sold to rich speculators. The same fate has befallen water causeways and even lands earmarked for special public projects. Invariably, the master plans of major cities, including Abuja, have been at risk.

Nevertheless, there comes a point when discretionary authority and powers need to apply in law enforcement matters. That's what adaptive leaders do. That's what good governance

Demolitions: When rule of law goes awry

does. Buildings should be demolished when they are unfit for habitation and pose clear and present danger to the general public. But buildings should not always be demolished simply because they violate zoning laws. And that's not to say that zoning laws should be disrespected or impunity not be punished.

Lately, there has been a spate of demolitions in Lagos State. Some suggest such demolitions are punitively targeted. The contention is debatable. Yet, as policy, demolitions cannot be used for the purposes of gerrymandering or disenfranchisement. But that is not the kernel of this writeup. The point here is that, in a nation with over 75 million housing deficit, of which 17 million of the shortfall is in Lagos, demolishing already completed buildings is defeatist and not the best policy option or punishment. Such a practice is also not in the best interest of the larger society. It is myopic, except there are ulterior motives. As a social scientist, I favour without apologies the use of history in present and future decision-making, especially in governance matters. That use of history may be applicable to the ongoing demolitions.

Many years back, in the late 1980s, there was an interesting and celebrated case in New York City that speaks to zoning, building code enforcement, respect for the rule of law and discretionary authority. It also speaks to arbitration and legal adjudication of such matters. In the New York case, a luxury high-rise building was approved for construction on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. The building's structure, height, floors, air rights and related codes were all sorted out and the approvals

and permits granted. The high-rise building was mixed commercial and residential. This meant that the ground and lower floors could house high-end stores and the rest of the 30-floor building would house various-sized apartments.

As it happened, the builder made a subjective internal adjustment to accommodate the then fashionable high ceilings in all the residential apartments. This meant additional three feet per floor outside the approved plan. This did not seem like a big deal but the additional three feet per floor resulted cumulatively to an extra 75 feet being added to the height of the building. Technically, this equated with adding an additional five floors to the original design. The high-rise building was still the stipulated 30 floors, but the height was far in excess of what was statutorily approved.

Consequently, the additional height of the building violated the air rights of some neighbouring buildings. It was also at variance with the approved design. The owners and occupants of the contiguous buildings filed complaints. The City's housing authorities that issue construction permits, investigated and found that the complaints were meritorious. There were deviations from the approved plan and, therefore, violations. What to do?

The high-rise building could not be certified for occupancy. The developers were losing money. The City was also losing money from property taxes via sales of the apartments. Litigation seemed likely, but would be time-consuming and financially costly for both sides. The parties submitted to arbitration. At

mediation, it was determined that the only practical remediation required to meet compliance, would be to knock off the equivalent of five floors in order to bring the building in line with extant codes and the approved building plan. That solution itself would be also costly for the developer. So, there was need to find common ground; a win-win solution, for the developer, the City authorities and potential investors/owners of the condominium apartments.

While the unapproved and uncertified building stood vacant for several months, arbitration commenced aimed at protecting public and private interests by allowing the law to adapt to some discretionary flexibility, away from rigid enforcement that would be totally punitive. In a city that badly needed more houses in order to meet growing demands and existing shortfalls, demolition, though an option, would be the final resort, and only if all else failed.

Two issues were critical to agreeing to arbitration. Both the developer and city supervisors were respectively found not to have been willfully negligent of the law. Nonetheless, the developers took some architectural and structural liberties; and the city building supervisors were lax in their due diligence, and, thus, had failed to catch the additional three-feet-per-floor adjustment at the foundational level, where it could have been stopped

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

• Obaze is MD/CEO, Selonnes Consult – a policy, governance and management consulting firm in Awka.

AREWA REPORT



•Pregnant women among other patients at the General Hospital, Langtang North

Joy is coming

•Plateau pregnant women get free screening, medication for Hepatitis B

From **Jude Dangwam, Jos**

PREGNANT women in Plateau State struggling with the effects of Hepatitis B may at last smile. This is because 8,106 of such pregnant women were recently screened by Azumi Ladi Danat Foundation.

Out of this, 1,063 of were reactive and were immediately placed on “Tenofovir vaccine,” a vaccine that protects babies from being infected by their mothers.

Azumi Ladi Danat, the proprietor, told Daily Sun: “Elimination and Transmission of Mother to Child Hepatitis B project is being supported by the Centre for Initiative Development (CID) and the Plateau State Ministry of Health. The project identified vulnerable pregnant women with reactive cases that require large scale mop off even as she added that those identified were placed on the full dose treatment drugs.”

She lamented the prevalence of the viral disease in the state and urged the state government, includ-



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ing health- focused institutions, to mitigate the situation, especially among pregnant women: “I have now come to realise that if we can prevent the mother-child transmission, then the impact of the disease will be minimised. I am trying to reduce the risk of liver infection. I’m trying to see how we can reduce the cases of liver cancer and I want to reduce the risk of liver failure.

“That is why I picked Plateau Specialists Hospital, Jos as the centre for the northern zone, Mangu General Hospital for the central zone and

Langtang North General Hospital as centre for the southern zone. Out of the 10 states in Nigeria listed for this project, we were the only one that had secured the drugs for our state and I urge you all to take the drugs judiciously.”

Medical Superintendent, Mangu General Hospital, Bekaye Joseph Femi, remarked that the project impacted positively on the lives of the people of the state, especially on the lives of the rural populace, who ordinarily could not have afforded the cost of the medication. He said the screening and treatment would be extended to younger ladies of child-bearing age so as to attain, in the nearest future, a generation free of the disease:

“The Elimination and Transmission of Mother to Child Hepatitis B project came in to being after data collected indicated that Plateau State generally has a high number of individuals that are affected by the disease. So, we are trying to reduce the mother to child transmission.

“As part of the national policy, it should be that every woman that

comes for antenatal should be tested for Hepatitis B. This project provides free testing kits, which reduce the financial burden of testing by these women. The system should be able to provide free medication to those that are positive or reactive to Hepatitis B.

“One of the factors that encourage transmission is when a woman or a mother has a high viral load—that means that she has a lot of loads to share. So, the aim of the treatment is not to cure per say, but to reduce the viral burden on the woman. In this way, we are able to reduce the chances of transmission

to the child. The child will also be immunized within the same 24 hours of delivery.

“Now, with these three components- the testing, proper medication of the mother and immunization of the baby on the same-day of birth-the chances of Mother-to-Child transmission is almost zero.”

Commissioner of Health, Nicholas Baamlong, said: “The burden of Hepatitis, be it B or C and even A is quite high in the state. Even among pregnant women, we know that it is quite high. We have collaborated

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

Police nab 15 suspected kidnappers, robbers in Kaduna

KADUNA State Police Command has apprehended 15 suspected kidnappers and armed robbers and recovered 45 stolen handsets from their hideout. Commissioner of Police, Mr Mohammed Rabiu, said: “I have to commend officers of their professionalism while discharging their duties. The state is too hard for criminals to operate in, because we are raiding their hideouts constantly.

“The command’s sustained community policing strategy and a non-kinetic approach are yielding results. Operatives arrested a 30-year-old man for supplying drugs to bandits. The suspect was found in possession of large quantities of Extol tablets worth millions of naira, intended for consumption by bandits in Kidandan and Giwa.

“The Anti-Kidnapping Unit arrested a suspect in Ilu village, Giwa Local Government. We recovered a fabricated AK 47 rifle, two rounds of 7.62mm live ammunition and an AK-47 magazine. Police acting on credible intelligence arrested three notorious suspected child traffickers while two victims were rescued. Sixty



Rabiu

cows and 25 sheep rustled from a repentant bandit were recovered.

“Operatives arrested six suspected armed robbers and recovered five receivers of stolen property and three others for unlawful possession of firearms. Police Fushin Kada Tracking and Response Team nabbed one notorious gang leader, along with his accomplice. They were intercepted while planning to attack a retired NNPC staff. The receivers allegedly aided them in disposing the stolen items.

“The arrest led to the recovery of 45 handsets and a laptop as well as the receivers.”

Kano: N1.6bn mass wedding booting

From **Desmond Mgbob, Kano**

KANO State Government has approved N1.6 billion for the sponsorship of mass wedding (Auren Zaurawa da ‘Yan mata) for intending couples. Commissioner of Information and Internal Affairs, Ibrahim Abdullahi Waiya, confirmed the approval yesterday.

Deputy director, Kano State Hisbah Board, Shiekh Mujahid Aminudeen, said: “We are planning to conduct a mass wedding of another batch of 2,000 couples, as directed by the state government. All such prospective couples who registered must go for medical screening to

•2,000 intending couples lined up

ascertain their general health status such as HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, genotype and drug test screening, among others.

“Medical screening is part of the prerequisite arrangement of the mass wedding proceedings. It is compulsory because anybody who fails to present himself or herself for the screening will be automatically disqualified.”

In 2023, the administration sponsored the wedding of 1,800 intending couples involving 3,600 men and women.



• Kano State governor, **Abba Yusuf**

Concerns over Statements by Hon. Benjamin Kalu and Implications for Peace and Security in Abia State

The Critical Intervention in the Politics of Abia

The Awareness Forum for Abia Development and Economic Advancement (AFA- Incorporated) was founded in 2019 (as Abia Freedom Alliance) at the peak of the decades-old governance crisis that stunted the economic and social development of our dear State. With support from professionals of Abia origin living and working in different parts of the world, AFA stepped in to mobilise resources and grassroots support for a new political order. Working with individuals and groups across political divides, the AFA was at the centre of the 2023 electoral campaign in different communities, sensitising the voting public on making the right choices at the poll. The central message was to elect a governor who will restore the lost glory of the State and set it on a new trajectory of rapid social and economic development. Having painstakingly evaluated the family background, professional accomplishments, manifesto, passion for development of the State, and political convictions / alliances, of the various gubernatorial candidates at the time, AFA adopted Dr. Alex Chioma Otti OFR of the Labour Party as the most credible choice of a leader for the New Abia. Over the course of the campaign, it became obvious that an overwhelming majority of Ndi Abia had seen the light too and were equally rooting for Dr Alex C. Otti, OFR to lead the charge of breaking the trajectory of an old and retrogressive system that had led the State to coma and made her a mockery amongst the comity of States.

Victory, Inauguration and the Unveiling of a New Governance Paradigm

Dr Otti's victory at the poll happened as predicted but not without desperate plots by entrenched political interests to overturn the landslide win at the last minute like they did on previous occasions. Thankfully, they were frustrated by the obvious determination of divinity to set Ndi Abia free from powers of darkness, and the iron-clad will of the people who stayed awake for nights on end until the poll was called right.

On inauguration, Dr Alex Otti who now became Governor Alex Otti, reiterated his unwavering commitment to the rapid development of the State. Right at the podium, he announced important initiatives to restore security to parts of the State that had fallen to different criminal franchises over the preceding years.

Following Governor Otti's assumption of office, changes began to happen almost immediately; the refuse heaps began to disappear, touts were sent parking as order returned to the streets and suddenly, driving became a pleasurable experience as the potholes and damaged stretches of roads became priority projects for the new administration. In less than 6 months, Aba became attractive once again to investors — property prices began to move north, confidence started building and in Umuahia and other parts of the State, people could see their State heading in the right direction for the first time in decades following the even spread of critical social infrastructure. Across communities, individuals and families moved freely, unafraid of threats or attacks from criminal elements who once held the communities to ransom. Salaries and pensions, hot-button issues during the campaigns, suddenly disappeared from the radar as the Governor kept his commitment to regular and prompt payment of the entitlements of workers and retirees. Through effective stakeholder engagement, respect for the rights of the common man and fairness in the allocation of public

resources, peace found a home in the State, insecurity and chaos of the old order became distant memories and amongst the populace, a new era has emerged — Abia and its children would be better for it.

The Threat

We are however saddened to note that the peace and sense of social and political order that had been enjoyed in the State since Gov. Alex Otti assumed office now face an imminent threat from the reckless and mindless utterances of no less a person than the Deputy Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu. Kalu, in the last few days, has made statements that are not only provocative and insulting to public sensibilities, but are also intended to throw the State into political turmoil by instigating crisis in an attempt to earn some dubious political capital. We consider it mischievous and insulting to discerning voters in the State that the Deputy Speaker would make statements portraying Abia a political fiefdom where the choices and expectations of the public are secondary to the whims and designs of desperate political camps which Rt. Honourable Benjamin Kalu appears to belong to. We insist that Ndi Abia shall not be bullied and must be respected by politicians who ought to know better than anyone else that this state has a long history of standing up to tyranny, intimidation and of course, responding harshly to attempts at public deceit.

Our Position

While the Awareness Forum for Abia Development and Economic Advancement (AFA) respects the rights of individual politicians to aspire to any political office that catches their fancy in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, such declarations must equally follow laid-down procedures, at the appropriate time. Seeking to arbitrarily heat up the polity for ultra-selfish gains in the guise of playing opposition politics must be rejected by all men and women of goodwill. AFA, as a body that played a central role in birthing the new era of progress and prosperity in Abia, shall stand as an effective bulwark against the unbecoming antics of individuals like Rt. Honourable Ben Kalu who apparently want power merely for the sake of it. Unfortunately, recklessness and political brinkmanship have no place in the New Abia.

We shall conclude by inviting well-meaning Nigerians to quickly call on Rt Hon. Benjamin Kalu to desist from making unguarded statements that are capable of instigating crisis and needless political tensions in the State. Let it be put on record that the Deputy Speaker and his political support group, mostly operatives of the old political order in the State, shall be held responsible for any act that could threaten the peace and stability that have set Abia apart in the current dispensation. As a group committed to the sustenance of the gains that have been made in the State over the last 2 years of the Otti administration, we shall not fold our arms and watch anyone undermine what we have collectively achieved, whatever be their motivation. We shall continue to use every legal means available to us to sue for peace, for that is the foundation of genuine development. Ndi Abia at home and in the diasporas are invited to join this crusade for peace by collectively renouncing anyone or group that attempts to compromise the current peaceful atmosphere in the State in pursuit of personal gains.

Signed:

For Awareness Forum for Abia Development and Economic Advancement (AFA)

Chief Joe Eze Aru

Prof. George C. Alozie

Dr. C.C. Okwuonu

Chief, Barr. Jackson Agbai

Activists, rabble rousers, and the opposition

MOTIVATION POWER
BY LADI AYODEJI
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(SMS only)



THE political scene is constantly overheating from media skirmishes involving so-called activists, opposition politicians and those currently in power. The result is a noisy political ecosystem driven more by clout and ego than by vision or national progress.

The current generation of activists launch wild, often unfounded, allegations against individuals and institutions. They weaponize hashtags and online mobs, not necessarily for justice, but for relevance. They instigate anti-government protests over petty or exaggerated issues, playing to the gallery to justify the foreign grants and sponsorships they depend on. They must continually demonstrate that they are “working,” even if that means fabricating crises or fuelling public resentment.

In contrast, icons like Gani Fawehinmi, Beko Ransome-Kuti and Tai Solarin were genuine advocates who spoke truth to power, regardless of consequence. They risked imprisonment, persecution and even their lives, not for self-promotion, but to advance the cause of justice and accountability. Their activism was anchored on principle, not personal gain. That is why they are still revered today. They stood on the streets, not for trending hashtags, but for tangible reforms on education, rule of law, democracy, and human rights.

Today’s so-called activists, on the other hand, often covet political appointments, contracts, or media relevance. They exploit public frustration as a bargaining chip. The line between advocacy and blackmail has become blurred. Subtle coercion and arm-twisting have replaced moral conviction. Many of them function more like political entrepreneurs, negotiating influence in exchange for silence or endorsements. They have become a new class of opportunists thriving on chaos.

Likewise, opposition politicians in the past provided sound, ideological alternatives. They acted as checks on those in power through intelligent debate, evidence-based criticism, and policy counter-proposals. Opposition politics then was not merely about seizing power, it was about holding power accountable. Leaders like Obafemi Awolowo and Aminu Kano differed from the ruling class in ideology and discipline, not just in party color. Their parties drafted development-oriented manifestos, focused on industrialization, education, and social welfare.

But the story is different today. Opposition politics has degenerated into personal vendetta and bitterness. Many politicians who lose elections simply rebrand as opposition leaders, not to offer better governance ideas, but to attack incumbents relentlessly. Criticism has become their

only currency. The goal is not reform but revenge.

This decay has poisoned our national discourse. Rather than engaging in policy debates, we now drown in endless arguments about tribe, religion, and region. Political discussions have been reduced to who gets what, not what works best. The public space, especially on social media is dominated by hate campaigns, character assassination, and conspiracy theories.

Nigeria seems permanently in crisis mode. Every week brings a new outrage, a new trending scandal, a new round of insults between rival camps. Meanwhile, the real issues are sidelined. The people, whom both activists and politicians claim to represent, remain trapped in poverty and disillusionment.

The media has also become complicit. Instead of acting as a watchdog, it has turned into an echo chamber for sensationalism. Outrage sells, and calm analysis doesn’t. Newsrooms amplify baseless claims, while genuine developmental stories get buried. Activists and politicians feed off this toxic cycle with one shouting louder to remain relevant, the other responding to maintain dominance.

What Nigeria needs now is not noise, but nation builders. People who can rise above partisanship and self-interest. We need a new class of intellectual activists

who can combine moral courage with strategic thinking, who understand both governance and accountability, who criticize to reform, not to destabilize.

Constructive opposition should not mean blind antagonism. It should mean designing better alternatives, preparing shadow cabinets, monitoring implementation, and presenting data-driven solutions. True activism should not be a hustle; it should be a disciplined commitment to justice, transparency, and sustainable progress.

Until that happens, our democracy will remain fragile. We will continue recycling noise without progress, passion without purpose, activism without integrity, and opposition without vision. The nation deserves better. The people deserve voices that uplift, not incite; leaders that build, not exploit.

Real change does not come from trending hashtags or televised outrage. It comes from deliberate, consistent work, quiet reforms, honest leadership, and citizens who refuse to be manipulated by theatrics. Only then will Nigeria move from endless agitation to actual transformation.

• Ayodeji is an author, speaker, counselor. He can be reached on 09059243004 (SMS only)

Hakeem Bello: Brother through tides and seasons

By Tunde Olusunle

YOU could well describe it as a “smart campus” if we were to deploy a contemporary description for an academic space which packed so much within its moderate geographical land area. The University of Ilorin when it was birthed in 1975, germinated from the facilities of the erstwhile Government Technical College, Ilorin. It equally appropriated adjoining parcels of land around and about it, where it sat between the thighs of Agbo-Oba and Adewole Estate, in the capital of Kwara State. While a futuristically planned, idyllic, eye-catching campus spread across a land area of more than 10,000 hectares was gradually in the works elsewhere in Ilorin, academic activities began decisively in the primal mini campus of the institution. By the time I was admitted into the institution in 1982, the faculties of Arts, Social Sciences, Education and Clinical Medicine were already domiciled in the fledgling school. So compact was that academe that you could actually walk through the entire expanse in about an hour.

Extracurricular activities flourished side by side with approved academic curricula. I was always inclined towards performing and creative arts, including acting and creative writing. Indeed, I acted the role of King Odewale in the classic play ‘The Gods Are Not to Blame,’ written by the renowned Nigerian first generation playwright, Ola Rotimi. It was the convocation performance of the Kwara State College of Technology (Kwaratech), Ilorin, just months before. As a student in the School of Basic Studies (SBS) of the school where I wrote the Higher School Certificate Examination, moderated by the University of Cambridge, I was auditioned for the role and selected. The University of Ilorin, which we abridged as Unilorin, was going to provide more opportunities for the blossoming of this flair.

The Unilorin Creative Writers Group and the Ajon Players Drama Troupe were two extracurricular bodies that brought students together outside the classroom space. David Cook, the venerated British scholar who nurtured several East African writers, including Ngugi wa Thiong’o, during his stint in Makerere University, Uganda, re-enacted his baby project in Unilorin. He developed a creative writing course for final-year students of English, in addition to the writers’ group. The writers’ group drew enthusiasts predominantly from the Department of Modern European Languages, which prosecuted courses in English and French. The department has since been unbundled into separate departments for both pursuits. Notable members of the Unilorin Creative Writers Group included Sola Babatunde, Tivlumun Nyitse, Blessing Wikina, Mopah Aileku, Sunnie Ododo, Wumi Raji, Rasheed Na’Allah, Hakeem Bello, and Olufunmilayo Olusunle (then Adedeji), among others. Guided by Cook and some of our other teachers, including Prayag Tripathi (Indian); Russell Chambers (American); Stephen Hesbon Lubega (Ugandan); and Olu Obafemi, we met every week to discuss our teething efforts as cub writers. Some of us were concurrent members of Ajon Players, which further cemented our friendships and relationships.

It was from this background that Hakeem Babatunde Bello and I met and became good friends and brothers. I was in my final year when he was in the first year, but this was no barrier between Hakeem and I. Indeed, I graduated in 1985 but returned two years later for a master’s when he was in his final year. Once I completed my postgraduate work in 1989, my eyes were focused on a career in the media, where a number of my classmates were already cutting their teeth. I got a job in the Daily Times of Nigeria in Lagos in 1990, when the revolutionary, charismatic Dr. Yemi Ogunbiyi was managing director. Hakeem was rounding

off his master’s at the University of Ibadan at the time and he equally had abiding interest in the media. A second class upper honours degree graduate in English, I was sure he could contribute to the Ogunbiyi rebuild project in the Daily Times.

In 1991, I was redeployed from the Sunday Times, my first stop in the newspaper octopus, to the Daily Times, the flagship of the organisation. My reassignment left a vacuum in the Sunday Times and I was desirous that Hakeem replaced me. I sure didn’t have the political or administrative leverage to bring him in at my level. But I had ideas, which I believed we could explore. I tutored Hakeem to get referrals from any two of Ogunbiyi’s contemporaries who Ogunbiyi held in very high esteem. I told him to speak with Professors Femi Osofisan, Niyi Osundare and Olu Obafemi. I assured him that recommendations from any two of these literary giants, all emeritus professors now, and all recipients of the Nigerian National Order of Merit, (NNOM), would easily sway Ogunbiyi. My suggestion worked. Hakeem was engaged. Ayo Akinkuotu, Wole Olatimehin, Maurice Ogar, Edwin Baiye, Gbenga Ayeni, all alumni of Unilorin, were already embedded in the Daily Times system. Tunde Rahman joined us along the line. It was my privilege to help Hakeem acclimatise in his new official address.

Hakeem was deployed to the same responsibilities I handled in Sunday Times. The brief necessitated standing astride the features and arts desks, and Hakeem acquitted himself competently. You couldn’t be a product of that premier university in the whole of present-day Kwara, Kogi and Niger states without being a standout in your vocation. The University of Ilorin was the archetypal ‘ilo-irin,’ the flaming forge where metals were beaten into shape. Hakeem and I had several editorial collaborations along the way. I was, for instance, assigned a full page in the Daily Times on Tuesdays, begin-

ning from early 1994, for topical interviews with a broad spectrum of societal concerns. The series was titled Dialogue this Week. Hakeem and I conducted a few such engagements, including a very explosive one with Ken Saro-Wiwa, the famous Ogoni rights activist and prolific author. It was so insightful that it was serialised over two editions of the newspaper.

I dared the “lion’s den,” literally on one occasion, with Hakeem in tow. I wrote to Major General Mohammed Christopher Alli, the first Chief of Army Staff, during the administration of General Sani Abacha, asking him for an interview. Alli acknowledged my correspondence, surprisingly and fixed a date for our engagement. I laugh out loud to myself whenever I remember how fear-frozen Hakeem was on that visit. From the gate of the Army Headquarters in Lagos at the time, through the reception area on the ground floor of the complex, all the way to the floor of the COAS, we were confronted with the sight of armed-to-the-teeth, helmeted, mean-looking uniformed soldiers. Hakeem held very tightly to my dress all the way, seeking comfort and reassurance in me!

Sat Guru Marahaji, a self-styled sect leader who was based in Ibadan, who was always in the news those days, once caught our attention. Hakeem and I invited him to our office in the *Agidingbi, Ikeja,* Lagos office, for an interview. Yes we expected *Sat Guru Maharaji* would be accompanied by a few devotees of his sect, we didn’t expect the wholesale takeover of the sprawling expanse of our official space, by his adherents. How would our bosses react to this invasion? The Managing Director of *Daily Times* had offices in our *Kakawa,* corporate headquarters on Lagos Island,

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

• Olusunle is an adjunct professor of Creative Writing at the University of Abuja

Christopher Kolade: Boardroom sage, diplomat, broadcaster bows out at 93

By Uche Usim

BUSINESS luminary, diplomat, teacher and integrity icon, Dr. Christopher Kolade, passed on on Thursday at the age of 93.

According to the Nigerian business community where he remains a colossus, his death, though at a ripe age, robs the country of the services of an astute leader, a teacher and a pillar.

Commenting on his passing, the director-general, Centre for the Promotion of Private Enterprise (CPPE), Dr. Muda Yusuf, said: "He was a role model, a pillar, custodian of great moral values, versatile and focused. I'll really miss him."

He added that Dr. Kolade left towering legacies, just as his life remains a shining light that will illuminate the path the younger generation will tread.

Early life

Kolade was born on December 28, 1932, in Erin-Oke, Osun State, Nigeria.

His father was an Anglican missionary and he grew up in an environment shaped by Christian values and education.

For his early education, he attended Emmanuel School, Ado-Ekiti (1939-1943), and Christ's School, Ado-Ekiti (1944-1945).

He proceeded to Government College, Ibadan, for his secondary education (1946-1951). For university, he went to Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts (1954) and a Diploma in Education in 1955.

Career

Dr. Kolade's career spans multiple sectors: education, broadcasting, business, diplomacy, academia and ethics and leadership.

After university, he returned to Nigeria (circa 1955) as a colonial-era education officer.

He transitioned into broadcasting in the 1960s.

Held various roles, eventually becoming director-general of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), from 1972 to 1978, where he had substantial influence on radio/television in Nigeria.

In 1978, after leaving NBC, Kolade joined Cadbury Nigeria Plc. He rose through the ranks, eventually becoming chief executive, then chairman of Cadbury Nigeria Plc, before retiring from that position in 2002.

Thereafter, he was appointed High Commissioner of Nigeria to the United Kingdom, a role in which he served until 2007.

Between 1999 and 2002, he lectured at Lagos Business School on Corporate Governance, Leadership, Human Resource Management.

After diplomatic service, he resumed academic and educational roles, including being pro-chancellor and chairman of the Governing Council of Pan-Atlantic University (formerly Pan-African University).

He is also chancellor of McPherson University, Ogun State.

He has been strongly associated with promoting integrity, good governance

...His life and times



Kolade

and ethical leadership.

The late business mogul founded the Christopher Kolade Foundation (CKF), 1997, focusing on education (especially girl-child), leadership and governance, theological education and inter-faith relations.

He is also associated with the Christopher Kolade Centre for Research in Leadership and Ethics (CKCRLE), an institution devoted to leadership/ethics research in Africa.

He chaired or was involved in organisations like Integrity Organisation Ltd, The Convention on Business Integrity Ltd and other bodies promoting honest governance.

Awards

In 2000, he was awarded the national honour Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON).

He received the Medal of the Order of St. Augustine from the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1981.

He is Lay Canon Emeritus of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Guildford, UK.

Honorary doctorate degrees, e.g. from McPherson University (2016) and University of Sierra Leone (1976).

He was president, Nigerian Institute of Management (1985-1988); president, Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (1988-1993); president, International Institute for Communications (1973-1975); and

the title "Ambassador of Anti-corruption."

Legacy

Integrity is perhaps the central value associated with Kolade. He is often referred to in media reports and by peers as "Mr. Integrity."

Despite holding high positions, his reputation was for humility, restraint and a commitment to principle rather than personal gain.

He consistently emphasised the importance of education, leadership training and preparing younger generations to lead ethically.

One distinguishing feature of his life was how he excelled in a variety of fields, education, broadcasting, business management, diplomacy, academics and civil society, among others.

His leadership of NBC at a time when broadcasting shaped cultural and national identity in independent Nigeria meant that he played a role in how information, culture and public discourse were framed.

Under his stewardship at Cadbury Nigeria, and in his guidance in corporate governance roles, he helped set standards for how ethical, effective business leadership could look in Nigeria.

As High Commissioner to the UK, he represented Nigeria's interests abroad, contributing to its diplomatic relationships.

His work with Lagos Business School, Pan-Atlantic University, and as chancellor of McPherson University fostered education and leadership in younger leaders, especially in corporate governance and ethics.

Through organisations he supported or chaired, such as the Christopher Kolade Foundation, and integrity organisations, his example and institutional contributions helped in promoting ethical public life in Nigeria.

Moving from colonial education systems and early Nigeria into post-independence broadcasting and business was likely challenging; Kolade navigated periods of political turmoil, changing media and corporate environments and demands for institutional reform.

Moving between sectors suggests strong learning ability, flexibility and a breadth of competence.

Deeply religious, committed to the Christian faith, yet also respectful of inter-faith relations.

Final years

He continued to be active in academic circles and in leadership and ethics well into his later years.

Dr. Kolade leaves a multi-faceted legacy. He was an icon of integrity and service across sectors.

Institutions bearing his influence, foundations, universities, ethics/leadership centres that will continue to influence public life.

He was a model for younger leaders and exemplified how to live with discipline, faith, humility and courage in public roles.

He made indelible contributions to shaping Nigerian media, corporate standards, education and diplomacy.

Despite holding high positions, his reputation was for humility, restraint and a commitment to principle rather than personal gain. He consistently emphasised the importance of education, leadership training and preparing younger generations to lead ethically.

president, World Association for Christian Communication (1975-1982).

In 2015, he was honoured by the Nigerian Institute of Management with

NCAA warns airlines against passenger rights violations

THE Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has warned domestic and international airlines operating in the country against breaching the Montreal Convention. The Authority said any airline that defaults especially as regards the law on baggage compensation and passenger protection will be sanctioned.

The Authority said that the Montreal Convention which is a global treaty signed in 1999, unifies international rules on the liability of airlines and covers areas such as passenger injury or death, baggage and cargo loss or damage, and flight delays, ensuring fairness in air travel claims. The NCAA said that Nigeria is a signatory to the Montreal Convention and has domesticated the treaty through the Civil Aviation Act (CAA) 2022 and as such, all operators are expected to adhere to its provisions when dealing with passengers and their property.

The Authority in a notification sent to all the airlines stated that domestic carriers can no longer rely on outdated conventions such as the Warsaw Convention or use baggage weight as a benchmark for compensation. The Director General NCAA, Captain Chris Najomo said: "Domestic operators must desist from applying the outdated Warsaw Convention or calculating compensation based on baggage weight. Such practices violate the Civil Aviation Act and will attract severe penalties."

The Authority also noted that the Civil Aviation Act (CAA) 2022 and the Nigeria Civil Aviation Regulations (Nig. CARs) 2023 are the legal frameworks governing aviation in Nigeria and reiterated that strict compliance is mandatory, especially concerning passenger rights, airline liability, and safety standards, warning that airlines that do not comply will face the consequences. "Any airline that fails to apply the correct legal framework when addressing passenger or baggage issues will be heavily penalized going forward. The NCAA will not tolerate any deviation from globally accepted standards set by the Montreal Convention. Passengers have a right to compensation in cases of delay, loss, or damage under the Montreal Convention. Airlines must ensure compliance at all times," the DG said.

Nigeria advances Africa-Indian region aeronautical project

THE Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has said that the project for the development of aeronautical meteorological services for the Africa-Indian Ocean (AFI) region programme is progressing well in Nigeria.

The Director General of NCAA, Capt. Chris Najomo made this known in his keynote address during the sixth meeting of the steering Committee of the Project for the Development of Aeronautical Meteorological Services for the AFI Region (CODEVMET-AFI) held in Abuja this week.

Najomo, who was represented by the Director of Aerodrome and Airspace Standards, Godwin Balang, said the CODEVMET AFI was designed to address longtime critical air navigation deficiencies in the MET field in AFI member states. He said the programme focuses on enhancing the capabilities of State CAAs in carrying out safety oversight in the MET field and establishing a mechanism aimed at enabling MET services providers to comply with ICAO's aviation safety standards related to MET.

He said: "Nigeria is one of the nine African countries that initiated the CODEVMET project following a call made to ICAO to assess the level of implementation of meteorological infrastructure and services in their regions. The recommendations resulting from this assessment led to the establishment of a structured mechanism to assist States in addressing deficiencies in air navigation in the MET domain through the CODEVMET Project, which Nigeria joined in February 2017.

"The CODEVMET project seeks to enable AEROMET service providers in member states to achieve compliance with international safety standards related to the provision of timely, reliable and accurate meteorological information to aviation users in an efficient manner, as well as to enhance the capability of member state regulatory authorities in carrying out safety oversight of aeronautical meteorological services through the adoption of a comprehensive system approach.

"Nigeria is happy to note that so far, the project is progressing well, targeting the key objectives including the support for the alignment of national MET legislation with ICAO SARPs, the enhancement of capacity of states to ensure compliance with aviation meteorological requirements, the support to States in the implementation of MET QMS in support of SMS and the support to states in the implementation of the ASBU elements of the AMET."

Aviation sector contributes N1.3trn to GDP in 10 years

Stories by **Chinelo Obogo**
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NIGERIA'S aviation industry has long been a subject of debate regarding its impact on the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Over the past decade, the sector's official contribution has remained relatively modest when measured against the performance of other key industries, despite its vital role in connectivity, trade and economic growth.

Daily Sun's analysis from data compiled from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) from 2013 to 2023 shows that the contribution of the sector to the nation's GDP is over N1.3 trillion and within this time frame has hovered below 0.5 per cent.

It is, however, important to note that the aviation sector plays a pivotal role in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), which has continued to grow steadily over the years. FDIs are essential drivers of economic expansion, and a strong, efficient air transport system often determines the volume and ease of investment inflows into any country. This highlights the fact that the significance of Nigeria's aviation sector extends well beyond its direct contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Aviation sector's contribution to Nigeria's GDP from 2013 to 2024

2013: The NBS report from 2018 indicates that the aviation sector contributed NGN 119 billion (0.4 per cent) to Nigeria's GDP in 2013.

2014: This was a period when the Nigerian economy was undergoing GDP re-basing and this impacted reported economic figures, hence there was no official report from the NBS on the contribution of aviation to the economy. However, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Nigeria's aviation sector's direct contribution to its GDP in 2014 was \$702.0 million, or 0.2 per cent of the total GDP.

2015: According to Philips Consulting, Nigeria's aviation industry directly contributed N90.8 billion received from airports, airlines, and ground services, to the nation's GDP in 2015. An analysis by IATA estimated the aviation sector's contribution to be 0.4 per cent of Nigeria's GDP in 2015. According to the report, the direct contribution of the sector is estimated at \$462 million (N90.8 billion), while the indirect contribution is estimated at \$464 million (N91.2 billion) from the supply chain.

2016: The figure released by the NBS as the sector's contribution was NGN 119 billion which represents 0.4 per cent of the national GDP.

2017: No direct GDP contribution figure for 2017 is provided by the National Bureau of Statistics for the aviation industry though the NBS published the GDP



•Keyamo

growth rates for the air transportation and storage sector, showing an increase to 10.22 per cent in Q1 2018 from 4.71 per cent in Q4 2017 and 0.48 per cent in Q3 2017.

2018: The NBS said the industry contributed N149.35bn to the GDP in 2018, which is 0.12 per cent.

2019: The NBS reported that the industry contributed N198.62bn to the GDP as of the end of 2019 which is 0.14 per cent.

2020: According to the NBS, the sector contributed N101.1 billion to the GDP in 2020, a figure impacted by the pandemic.

2021: According to the NBS, the sector contributed N145.5 billion to the country's GDP in 2021. This figure represents the sector's direct contribution and was valued at a different exchange rate than other reports that provide a higher dollar-based contribution.

2022: The NBS reported that the sector contributed N178.4 billion to the GDP in 2022.

2023: The NBS report showed that the sector contributed N215.6 billion to Nigeria's GDP in 2023.

Aviation sector vs others

Daily Sun had earlier analysed Nigeria's GDP report from Q1 2022 to Q4 2023 as released by the NBS and it showed that the transportation sector (which includes, air, road, rail, water transport, post and courier services), has not been among the top contributors to real GDP growth since Q1 2022. This suggests that while transportation is crucial for economic activity, its direct contribution to GDP growth has been limited. Real GDP is the value of a country's goods and services produced in a specific period, adjusted for inflation or deflation. It is an important indicator of a country's economic health.

The contribution of the transportation sector to Nigeria's GDP declined in Q2 2024 compared to both the previous year and the previous quarter. For the real GDP, the sector contributed just 0.74

percent in the same quarter (Q2 2024), lower than the 0.89 percent recorded in the preceding year and lower than 1.18 percent recorded in the first quarter of 2024. This negative growth rate indicates a decline in output adjusted for inflation. In contrast, Daily Sun's analysis shows that information and communication, trade and real estate, has consistently been a major driver of Nigeria's economic growth. While agriculture has maintained a significant contribution, that of the manufacturing sector has been stable.

In the first nine months of 2024, the finance and insurance sector led Nigeria's 3.2 percent GDP growth with the industry contributing 30.3 percent, followed by water supply, waste management and remediation at 8.3 percent. The mining and quarrying sector contributed 5.7 percent, with the information and communication sector following closely at 5.2 percent, arts, entertainment and recreation, 3.8 percent, while energy supply is at 3.4 percent, accommodation, food and services, 3.3 percent, health and social services, 2.6 percent, public administration, 2.2 percent and education, 1.9 percent.

Analysis of top GDP contributors from 2022-2023

Q1 2022: Agriculture (22.36 percent), Trade (16.13 percent), Information and Communication (16.20 percent), Real Estate Services (5.34 percent), Finance and Insurance (4.51 percent), Construction (4.18 percent), Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (3.23 percent), Public Administration (1.63 percent), Education (1.92 percent) and other services (4.05 percent).

Q2 2022: Agriculture (23.24 percent), Information and Communication (18.44 percent), Trade (6.81 percent), real estate services (5.33 percent), finance and insurance (4.25 percent), mining and quarrying (6.51 percent), construction (3.21 percent), professional, scientific and technical services (3.04 percent),

other services (2.74 percent) and public administration (2.17 percent)

Q3 2022: Agriculture (29.67 percent), information and communication (15.35 percent), trade (15.35 percent), real estate services (5.61 percent), finance and insurance (3.49 percent), mining and quarrying (5.90 percent), Construction (3.32 percent), professional, scientific and technical services (3.23 percent), other services (2.23 percent), public administration (2.05 percent).

Q4 2022: Agriculture (26.46 percent), information and communication (16.22 percent), trade (15.82 percent), real estate services (6.18 percent), finance and insurance (3.95 percent), mining and quarrying (4.71 percent), construction (3.47 percent), professional, scientific and technical services (3.34 percent), other services (2.23 percent) and public administration (2.05 percent).

Q1 2023: Trade (15.97 percent), Information and Communication (17.47 percent), Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (3.25 percent), Real Estate Services (5.31 percent) Construction (4.22 percent), Financial and Insurance (5.35 percent), Manufacturing (10.13), Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply (0.20 percent), Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation (0.23), Public Administration (1.63 percent).

Q2 2023: Information and Communication (19.54 percent), Trade (16.80 percent), Agriculture (23.01), Manufacturing (8.62 percent), Real Estate Services (5.29), Financial and Insurance (5.26 percent), Construction (3.23 percent), Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (3.05 percent), Public Administration (2.17 percent), Other Services (2.72 percent)

Q3 2023: Services Sector (52.70 percent), mining and quarrying (5.64 percent), agriculture (29.31 percent), manufacturing (8.42 percent), electricity, gas, steam and air Conditioning supply (0.37 percent), water supply, sewage, waste management and Remediation (0.20 percent), construction (3.36 percent) and trade (15.19 percent).

Q4 2023: Agriculture (26.11 percent), Trade (15.50 percent), Information and Communication (16.66 percent), Real Estate Services (6.06 percent), Finance and Insurance (4.95 percent), Mining and Quarrying (4.91 percent), Manufacturing (8.23 percent), Construction (3.47 percent), Public Administration (2.10 percent), Education (2.05 percent), Human Health and Social Services (0.66 percent).

The sectoral breakdown shows that overall, finance and insurance, agriculture and information and communication have been consistent drivers of Nigeria's GDP growth, while the aviation sector has struggled to make any meaningful impact.

Experts slam FG over infrastructure neglect amid urban growth

By Maduka Nweke and Ikwunne Precious Chinasa

STAKEHOLDERS in the built environment have chided the lackluster attitude of the Federal Government in the area of infrastructure development. The stakeholders that spoke to Daily Sun noted that with the increase in urbanisation and population growth and poor infrastructure, the government should match the difference with the corresponding infrastructure development in the interest of the economy.

A pioneer engineer at the National Steel Plant of the Ministry of Science & Technology in Research Development and innovation, Razaq Babatunde Lawal, in his assessment of urbanisation observed that by the late 1960s and early 1970s, Nigeria was experiencing rapid urbanization and industrial growth, especially in cities like Lagos, Ibadan, Onitsha and Kano. He noted that the expansion came with a surge in land disputes, land speculation, and unequal access to land.

According to him, "Wealthy individuals and corporations were able to amass large tracts of land, while ordinary Nigerians faced barriers to ownership, further entrenching inequality. It became clear that the government needed to create a unified framework that would standardize land ownership and make land accessible for development, agriculture, and residential purposes. This laid the groundwork for the creation of the Land Use Act. The Land Use Act of 1978 was introduced with several key objectives in mind. The Nigerian government intended to centralize land administration, ensure that land was used for the public good, and simplify the complex land tenure systems that had previously existed," he stated.

Dr. Chiedu Nweke Chairs Periwinkle Residences Limited and MD/CEO Swampsea Construction Company Limited while discussing management of urbanization said that if you look at Lagos, at the end of Lekki Phase 1 here, you start going to Epe; the area is not urbanized because anybody can do any road, anybody can do anything. So the only place that looks like an urban town is Lekki, Victoria Island and Ikoyi. Once you go down to Ikate, Chevron, this and that, sometimes you see a road. But do you know these things are what the government should have done? The government should have provided those infrastructures before even the developers entered those areas up to that Epe. But they left it and after people have built roads, constructed homes around the areas then they come and start squeezing new roads. That is very poor urbanisation and that is the challenge we are having. So, most areas are not properly planned. He noted that with urbanization increasing, more and many infrastructures will be needed to contend with the population surge.

Mr. Joash Enendu, a real estate developer asserted that these factors if provided will help to drive increased demand for both residential and commercial properties. "Rapid population growth and urbanization put a huge pressure on housing and infrastructure in Nigeria. While they can drive demand for real estate, they also maintain the need for sustainable development plans to ensure that growth is managed effectively and that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support it. Here in Lagos State, the epicenter of Nigeria's urbanization and home to a rapidly growing population, the demand for housing continues to outpace supply by significant margins. The resulting housing deficit poses a critical challenge, one that the current administration feels determined to address head-on. But are they matching it with infrastructural development? He queried.



•Sanwo-Olu unveiling the Ajara Housing Estate in Badagry

Stakeholders demand special courts to fast-track land, real estate disputes

Stories by Maduka Nweke
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STAKEHOLDERS in Nigeria's real estate and environmental sectors have called for the creation of special courts dedicated to handling environmental and land-related cases. They described it as a crucial step toward unlocking growth in the real estate industry.

They also argued that since land remains the foundation of real estate, disputes arising from its use and ownership must be resolved quickly and efficiently to sustain sectoral growth.

The Environmental Defenders Network (EDEN) led the call, urging the Chief Justice of Nigeria to direct the establishment of environmental courts within existing Federal and State High Courts across the country.

According to EDEN, environmental issues are matters of "life and death" and should therefore receive urgent judicial attention. The group stressed that creating such courts would ensure faster resolution of land and environmental disputes, encourage

investment, and strengthen the protection of natural resources.

The Executive Director, EDEN, a non-governmental organisation (NGO), Chima Williams, made the submission in a memorandum presented in Lagos during one of the Zonal Public Hearings on the Proposed Alteration to the Provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as Amended. The forum was organised by the House of Representatives Committee on the review of the 1999 Constitution.

Williams of the Environmental Defenders Network (EDEN) expressed concern over the slow pace of environmental litigation in Nigeria, lamenting that many citizens seeking justice often die before their cases are concluded. He explained that the long delays in court proceedings make it almost impossible for affected communities to get timely redress.

"What we see today is that the time lag in litigation makes most citizens who are clamouring for the protection of their environment through litigation die before the court delivers its judgment," Wil-

liams said.

He described the extractive industries as "the greatest destroyers of the environment," noting that environmental degradation from these sectors persists largely because extractive issues fall under the Exclusive Legislative List of the Constitution.

EDEN, he said, wants such matters moved to the Concurrent List "so that both states and the federal can legislate, and both federal and state high courts can have authority to litigate over environmental issues."

Williams further highlighted the challenges in land ownership, blaming the Land Use Act of 1978 for creating excessive bureaucracy and delays. "The Land Use Act, which vests land ownership in the hands of state governors, often creates red tape and delays. Many lands have unclear titles or are subject to disputes, making transactions risky and tiring," he noted.

He added that poor infrastructure, including inadequate roads, electricity and water supply, continue to increase the cost of development and discourage investment in real estate.

EDEN has also called for environmental protection to be recognised as a constitutional right. "The environment is captured in Section 20 of the 1999 Constitution under Chapter 2, which is merely a statement of intent of the government," Williams explained. "Because of the pivotal place of the environment, as life depends on it, it should be moved from Chapter 2 into Chapter 4, the fundamental rights section of the Constitution, to make it enforceable."

Corroborating, a civil law practitioner Mr. Paul Udo Nweke explained that the Land Use Act gives governors control over all land in their states, allowing them to grant only rights of occupancy rather than outright ownership. He said the legal system provides for specialized courts, tribunals, and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms such as arbitration and mediation, but noted that delays in these processes still hinder progress.

"The important thing here is that while these cases are going on, there is no development in those areas, and people continue to suffer," Nweke observed.

Sanwo-Olu unveils Sunny Ajose Estate in Badagry

LAGOS State Governor, Bbajide Sanwo-Olu, on Wednesday in Ajara, Badagry, launched the 420 modern home units that marked the opening of its 24th housing estate brought to life by his administration.

Sanwo-Olu said that his administration is dedicated to nurturing the spirit of joy through effective governance, building trust in institutions and ensuring political stability. He noted that Badagry has reaped the benefits of targeted investments in road infrastructure, public hospitals, schools, and other vital facilities adding that these initiatives have opened up the historic town to the world, positioning it as a rising hotspot for eco-tourism, culture, and commerce.

He said that this particular project has created over 1,300 jobs, both directly and indirectly, during its construction phase stressing that even more jobs would come from managing the facilities and other estate services once everything is fully occupied. "Although

...Lays foundation for Phase 2

this initiative was started by the previous administration, we have breathed new life and purpose into it by transforming the gateway to this great city and enhancing the newly expanded Lagos-Badagry Expressway. Today, we are excited to launch Phase I, which includes 420 housing units that are now fully completed and ready for residents.

"Our dedication to thoughtful city planning, quality living, and sustainable development has also led us to kick off the groundbreaking for Phase II of this project. This new phase will dramatically change Badagry's skyline with high-rise buildings that will be at least seven stories tall. It is a strategic move to make the most of our land resources, accommodate more families, and highlight the vast investment potential and untapped opportunities that exist in this corridor. In the past six years, we have successfully rolled out

23 housing estates, creating over 10,000 homes for people across all income levels low, middle, and high throughout the five divisions of Lagos. As we near the end of this administration, our commitment to closing the housing gap remains strong, focusing on smart infrastructure investments that push development beyond just the city center.

"We are also working to complete four additional housing schemes across the State, which are at various stages of completion; Lagos State Housing Estate, Ibeshe Phase II (192 units); Egan-Igando Mixed Housing Scheme, Clusters 2 & 3 (587 units); Epe Housing Scheme, Ita Marun (112 units) and LagosHOMS Sangotedo Phase II, Eti-Osa (524 units). Each of these developments highlights our strong belief that every Lagosian, no matter where they live or their income level, deserves a place they can truly

call home. This new estate in Badagry is a testament to our dedication to creating livable communities. It comes fully equipped with modern amenities — well-paved roads, a water treatment facility with both overhead and underground storage, an efficient drainage system, secure perimeter fencing, a gatehouse, a sewage treatment plant, ample parking spaces, walkways, and a comprehensive electrification network complete with transformers.

"We take pride in aligning our efforts with the Federal Government's Renewed Hope Housing Agenda, aiming to provide affordable and sustainable homes for our citizens. We are also in talks with financing organizations eager to partner with Lagos State to deliver mass housing and introduce innovative solutions that make home ownership more attainable and accessible. To enhance affordabil-

ity, we plan to subsidize the selling prices of the housing units. Twenty percent (20%) of the homes will be set aside for members of the Medical Guild, the Nigerian Union of Teachers (Lagos State Chapter), and other public and private sector unions. Additionally, public servants will receive rebates as a token of appreciation for their dedicated service to our State. The project commenced in the year 2013 by the New Towns Development Authority (NTDA) and was later transferred to the Ministry of Housing for completion in the Year 2017. The present administration under your leadership directed that the project should be resuscitated and that the Ministry must ensure its completion," He said.

Earlier in his welcome address, the Commissioner for Housing, Mr. Moruf Akinde-ru-Fatai noted that the 420 Lagos State Housing Estate Ajara, was a bold testament to the vision and the expected deliverables of Sanwo-Olu administration in realization

of the goals set out under the T.H.E.M.E.S Plus agenda. "This goal as encapsulated in the pillar of Making Lagos a 21st Century Economy viz-a-viz the overriding strategic resolve to improve physical infrastructure, housing and security, are all evident in this brand new estate. The Ajara housing scheme comprises phase 1 & 2 and is situated on a land area of 18.9 hectares, the phase one which will be commissioned today comprises 35 blocks of 12-1n-1 residential buildings.

"Each building contains a combination of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom semi furnished apartments with complimentary facilities such as a kitchen, kitchen cabinets, light fixtures, wardrobes. The proposed second phase is planned to consist of high-rise buildings on seven floors, with all modern amenities. This is to further maximize our very limited land resources by expanding vertically to accommodate more housing units for the people of Lagos.

BUSINESS



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BUSINESS NEWS



Some students of Orogwe Secondary School, Owerri, Imo State, with Glo officials and facilitators at the health talk organised by Globacom as part of events marking this year's edition of the International Day of the Girl Child.

Stakeholders meet as National Single Window Project nears deployment

By Steve Agbota

KEY industry stakeholders convened in Lagos on Thursday to fine-tune the implementation of the National Single Window (NSW) project as Nigeria moves closer to deploying the digital trade facilitation platform aimed at streamlining import and export processes, enhancing transparency and boosting revenue generation. The deployment is slated for 2026.

The event attracted the Nigeria Customs Service, freight forwarders, clearing agents, importers and exporters, among others.

Speaking at the event, the Zone A Coordinator of the Nigeria Customs Service, Mohammed Babandede, said that the event marks a significant milestone in the service's journey towards trade facilitation and economic transformation in Nigeria.

He added that the National Single Window platform is not just another government project, adding that it represents a fundamental shift in how cross-border trade is conducted in the country.

"For too long, businesses have had to navigate multiple agencies, submit the same documents repeatedly to different offices, and endure delays that make our ports less competitive. NSW comes to change all of that. The NSW platform will allow importers and exporters to submit all their documents through one digital portal. Instead of moving from office to office, agency to agency, you will interact with a single system that connects all relevant government bodies," he said.

He, however, underscored the importance of stakeholders' collaboration to ensure the platform works optimally.

"The success of this project does not rest on the shoulders of the government alone. It requires all of us in this room to play our part. It requires openness to change, willingness to adopt new ways of working, and patience as we navigate the inevitable challenges that come with any major transformation. That is why forums like this one are so critical," he stated.

Continued on www.thesun.ng

Onyema didn't lie about paying N100m for land in Anambra -Air Peace

By Chinelo Obogo

AIR Peace has said that its chairman, Allen Onyema didn't make any false claims regarding the payment for land intended for a Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility at the Anambra State airport.

Reacting to a statement credited to the traditional ruler of Umueri Community, Igwe Emeka, the airline said Onyema didn't make false claims or misrepresentations and that at no time was any statement issued suggesting that the community refused land allocation, received money, or was in dispute with Air Peace over the MRO project.

"For the avoidance of doubt, Air Peace's dealings on the MRO project were solely with the then Anambra State Government, not with any community or group. Payment for the designated land was made directly to the Anambra State Government, and an official receipt for the sum of N100m paid by Air Peace for the land was issued on 26/08/2021 to confirm this transaction. In addition, a Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) covering the same parcel of land was issued on the 14th of September, 2021, thereby completing the legitimate process of allocation and ownership of the land.

"It must be clearly stated that Dr. Onyema does not lie about anything. The statement being circulated in the press that he lied is deliberately calculated to mislead, defame, and malign him. The publication is, therefore, false, malicious, defamatory, and entirely without merit.

Continued on www.thesun.ng

FG, FHFL to transform students accommodation nationwide

THE Federal Government, through Family Homes Funds Limited (FHFL), has launched a national public-private partnership initiative to transform student accommodation across Nigeria's tertiary institutions under the Renewed Hope Student Housing Programme, a flagship project of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration.

The ambitious initiative aims to deliver 38,400 world-class hostel bed spaces across 24 tertiary institutions, including 12 universities, six polytechnics, and six colleges of education. Each project site will feature 1,600-bed hostels with ensuite rooms, reading and study spaces, cafeterias, laundromats, grocery shops, salons, and other modern facilities designed to enhance student welfare and academic performance.

The Renewed Hope Student Housing Programme is being implemented in partnership with the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) and Africa Plus Partners Nigeria Limited, in line with President Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda to modernise infrastructure and attract sustainable private investment into the education sector.

Construction has commenced in six institutions spread evenly across the country's Northern and Southern regions. These include Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi; FCT College of Education, Zuba; Sikiru Adetona College of Education, Science and Technology, Ogun; Akwa Ibom State University; and the College of Education, Warri.

The hostels at the College of Education, Warri, and Akwa Ibom State University are nearing completion and are expected to be commissioned in December 2025.

Continued on www.thesun.ng

Gas scarcity: Less than 3,000 plants serving over 200m Nigerians -NMDPRA

By Adewale Sanyaolu

THE Nigerian Midstream Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) has disclosed that less than 3,000 cooking gas refilling plants are serving over 200 million Nigerians.

The disclosure may not be unconnected with current cooking gas scarcity being experienced in some parts of the country as this affects gas penetration.

Authority Chief Executive (ACE), NMDPRA, Farouk Ahmed, stated this at the National Association of Energy Correspondents (NAEC) Energy Conference 2025 held in Lagos, yesterday with the theme; "Nigeria's Energy Future: Exploring Opportunities and Addressing Risks for Sustainable Growth."

Represented by the Head of Public Affairs, George Ene Ita, Ahmed said as a country, Nigeria is in urgent need of

a diversified investment approach in our energy mix to further drive an expansion in the economy beyond the traditional focus on fossils.

He added that as the country invests in gas infrastructure, we must also ensure we diversify our energy sources and reduce dependency on any single fuel.

"It is important to note that the number of LPG refilling plants in the country is less than 3000 while the CNG compression station is less than 50 for a country of over 200 million citizens," he said.

He noted that constructive approach to developing our other energy sources would have the potential to enable sustained growth in our economy, create jobs and expand the country's revenue base and offer a diversified basket of multiple streams of revenues for the government to enable multilateral growth to scale national development.

Recently, he stated that the NMDPRA in collaboration with S & P Global, held an inaugural international conference on the West African Refined Fuel Market where critical stakeholders from international petroleum products refiners, traders, suppliers, regulators and investors in piping and transportation infrastructures all came together to examine the potential of establishing a reference market for refined petroleum

products and price benchmarking in the subregion with Nigeria, specifically Lagos, as the hub.

"This conference, with the resultant outcomes, succeeded in identifying critical roadmaps in the energy downstream, that could lead towards potential investments and expansion into the petroleum liquids and gas markets in the subregion and the larger continent of Africa.

Continued on www.thesun.ng

NDIC, CIBN deepen partnership to tackle banking sector risks

THE Managing Director/Chief Executive of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), Mr. Thompson Sunday, has called for stronger collaboration between the NDIC and the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN) to effectively address emerging

risks and disruptions in the financial sector.

Mr. Sunday made the call during a recent courtesy visit by the President/Chairman of Council of the CIBN, Prof. Pius Olanrewaju and members of his executive team to the NDIC head office in Abuja.

He stressed the importance of deepening institutional partnerships in tackling new challenges facing the financial industry, particularly in digital banking, cybersecurity, fraud prevention, and risk management.

According to him, "while the phenomena of these emerging issues are on the rise, regulators and operators must come together to proffer solutions that build a stronger financial ecosystem capable of withstanding the vagaries of innovation and delivering value to the economy."

The NDIC boss also commended the CIBN for its consistent contribution to the growth and professionalism of Nigeria's banking sector, urging the Institute to work more closely with regulators in developing innovative failure resolution strategies that would enhance the sector's overall resilience.

Mr. Sunday reaffirmed NDIC's commitment to supporting professional institutions like the CIBN in designing and implementing initiatives that promote innovation, strengthen risk management frameworks, and ensure long-term financial system stability.

Continued on www.thesun.ng

TAJBank's N20bn Sukuk oversubscribed by 185%

TAJBANK Limited's latest N20 billion Mudarabah Sukuk bond offer recorded 185.15 per cent oversubscription rate.

The data just released by the investment market authorities on the performance of the bond indicated that the debt instrument, with annual profit rate at 20.5 per cent per annum, recorded N57,029,771 billion allotment, representing 185.15 per cent oversubscription and highlighting the growing investor confidence in the bank

Speaking on the performance of the bond, TAJBank's Founder/Managing Director, Mr. Hamid Joda, described the N20 billion Mudarabah Sukuk bond subscription rate, which is the second tranche of the bank's N100 billion Sukuk bond programme, as impressive given the current micro and macroeconomic factors in the economy, which continue to rob off on the real income of Nigerians and other residents in the country.

He said: "Let me say that this outstanding performance

of the Sukuk bond is a clear demonstration that the bank is enjoying growing investor confidence and this can only be attributed to the quality of innovative products and services, value addition TAJBank is delivering in the non-interest banking subsector of the banking system, especially when analyzed within the context of the current realities in the debt instrument market today.

"I want to thank the board, management and staff of the bank, the regulatory authorities and the investors for their contributions to the success of the bond issuance. I also assure them that TAJBank shall continue to protect their interest to ensure a win-win experience for all stakeholders as we sustain our drive to sustain the bank as the leading player in the nation's non-interest subsector of the banking system", he added.

In his remarks, the bank's Co-Founder/Executive Director, Mr. Sherif Idi, enthused: "This investment feat is a clear demonstration that in-

vestors' trust in TAJBank and we will continue to do our best to surpass their expectations through world-class products and services. As we always, our interest in the customers and investors."

Analysts in the investment market believe that with the outstanding success of the latest TAJBank's N20 billion Mudarabah Sukuk bond, more investors, businesses and bank customers will be encouraged to do business with the bank for the purposes of exploring the opportunities in its innovative products and services and good returns on their investments.

Since the TAJBank debuted in the non-interest banking space in Nigeria about five years ago, it has, through investor-customer centric products and services delivery, been promoting world-class ethical non-interest banking in line with the management's vision to transform the bank into one of Nigeria's first top 20 banks by year 2029.

Continued on www.thesun.ng

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W'Bank verdict: ADC mocks Tinubu

• Claims economic policies've ruined lives

From **Ndubuisi Orji**, Abuja

THE African Democratic Congress (ADC) has said the October 2025 report of the World Bank, which indicated that 139 million Nigerians are living below poverty was a confirmation that the economic policies of President Bola Tinubu administration have ruined the lives of the majority of Nigerians.

The ADC, in a statement by its interim national publicity secretary, Bolaji Abdullahi, accused the All Progressives Congress (APC) controlled Federal Government of allegedly "masking its domestic economic failures with creative statistics."

According to the party, the report exposed the disconnect about the rhetoric of the government's claim of economic progress. It stated that while the Tinubu administration is celebrating increased revenue, more citizens are slipping into abject poverty. The ADC recalled that the President, in his Independence Day broadcast, had declared that "the worst is over," stating that the

statistics revealed by Tinubu "have now been proven to be calculated whitewash to serve the government's narrative of progress."

It stated that, "the October 2025 World Bank Report, which states that 139 million Nigerians now live below the poverty line, up from 81 million in 2019. That figure, representing 61 percent of the population, is clear evidence that the economic policies of the Tinubu-led APC government have actually sent more Nigerians into abject poverty, contrary to the government's performance propaganda and claims of progress."

"The World Bank numbers tell a simple but painful story: under the APC and President Bola Tinubu's government, more Nigerians have fallen into poverty than at any other time in our history. In 2019, four out of 10 Nigerians were poor. Today, it is, at least, six out of 10."

"We recall that President Tinubu, in his recent Independence Day address to the nation, declared triumphantly that 'the worst is over,' while bandying statistics which have

now been proven to be calculated whitewash to serve the government's narrative of progress. "However, what is important is the reality that those numbers were meant to hide. Behind President Tinubu's shiny statistics are the grim realities of historic human suffering, families skipping meals, children dropping out of school and households selling assets just to buy

food and basic drugs to survive."

Furthermore, the APC stated that under the APC led Federal Government, almost 30 million Nigerians have joined the ranks of the ultra-poor, who, even if they spend every Naira they earn on food, still cannot afford enough calories to survive.

"While the government celebrates record revenue collection and the illusion of economic stability, the World Bank's data shows that Nigerians are actually growing poorer

by the day. Food inflation has gone through the roof, with the price of a bag of rice multiplying five times in just four years. Poor families now spend roughly 70 percent of their income on food, leaving nothing for rent, school fees or medicine.

"The so-called social safety nets that should protect the vulnerable have also collapsed. Coverage has fallen from 20 percent in 2019 to just six percent in 2025. Government support to the poorest citizens is

almost non-existent, amounting to a mere 0.14 percent of GDP compared to a global average of 1.5 percent.

"What all this means is that Nigerians are worse off under the APC and President Bola Tinubu's government. And contrary to the President's claim, the worst is not over; instead, it appears that the worst has actually not arrived. Rather than continuing to dig in to defend its propaganda, the government should accept the unbiased verdict from its partner, the World Bank, and try to make amends before it is too late.

• **Continued on www.thesun.ng**

Hashim alleges smear campaign ahead 2027 race

FORMER presidential candidate, Dr. Gbenga Olawepo-Hashim, has alleged elements within the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) are sponsoring smear campaigns against him.

He described renewed allegations against him, through his estranged wife, as smear efforts to discredit him ahead of the 2027 general election.

In a detailed statement, Olawepo-Hashim alleged that his ex-wife's recent claims in the media were orchestrated by remnants of the same political handlers who, he said, plotted to stop his 2019 presidential bid.

"She had been recruited by some elements in the United Kingdom. Apart from other sinister things they did, they tried to frame me up for funding terrorism. I was questioned in the UK and released when no evidence was found. She was the one who gave the information to the UK authorities."

The politician alleged that the

same group seized two of his oil assets during the period, forcing him into a prolonged legal battle. He recalled that in November 2020, the Federal High Court, Abuja, presided over by Justice Taiwo Taiwo, restored the Hely Creek and Abigborodo marginal oil fields to his company, Transnational Energy Limited (TEL), after ruling that the government's revocation of the fields was illegal. The court also awarded \$20 million in damages against the federal institutions involved.

Olawepo-Hashim claimed that his ex-wife's legal battle in the UK was "part of that broader scheme."

He explained that she obtained an undefended divorce judgment in England in which she was awarded £18 million (about ₦36 billion) but the judgment was later annulled by a Nigerian court since their marriage was conducted under the Nigerian law.

• **Continued on www.thesun.ng**

Presidency kicks against Sowore's call for 'Free Nnamdi Kanu' Protest

From **Juliana Taiwo-Obalonye**, Abuja

THE Presidency has kicked against plans by Omoyele Sowore to hold a protest march to the Presidential Villa in Abuja, demanding the release of the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Nnamdi Kanu, from detention.

Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, condemned the protest in a statement on his official X account @aonanuga1956. He labelled Sowore "an anarchist masquerading as a rights activist."

Sowore announced that the #FreeNnamdiKanuNow protest will take place on October 20 at 7 a.m., calling the march "historic" in seeking Kanu's freedom.

Onanuga insisted that the planned demonstration threatens law and order, emphasising that Kanu is currently undergoing trial on treason charges that must proceed without interference.

He said, "you are nothing more than an anarchist masquerading as a rights activist. You very well know that Nnamdi Kanu is facing trial for treason, and you want to cause a breakdown of

law and order by mobilising for a protest?"

He challenged Sowore's notion of revolution, asking, "is this the kind of revolution you envisage for Nigeria, where the rule of law will be violated and your idea of justice would be the law of the jungle?"

Onanuga also criticised former Vice President Atiku Abubakar for endorsing the protest, accusing him of opportunism.

• **Continued on www.thesun.ng**

Osinbajo urges restructuring of Nigeria's legal, judicial philosophy

FORMER vice president, Prof Yemi Osinbajo, has called for a fundamental restructuring of Nigeria's legal and judicial philosophy, especially the tendency of courts prioritising technicalities over substantive justice.

Osinbajo made the call at the second Prof Yusuf Ali's annual lecture organised by the Kwara State University (KWASU), Malet in Ilorin, Kwara State.

He said the essence of any justice system is to serve the people, not to glorify procedural formalities.

He expressed concern that many judicial decisions, including those of the Supreme Court, often leaned



L-R: Senator Mao Oluwabunwa, former Ekiti State governor, Ayodele Fayose, FCT Minister, Nyesom Wike, Alphonsus Baba, PDP National Secretary, Senator Samuel Anyanwu, Senator George Sekibo, former Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Chibudom Nwuche, at the flag off of the construction of collector road CN2 (Emmanuel Ogala Street) from Yemi Osinbajo Way to Wole Soyinka Way within Katampe District in Abuja, yesterday.

2026 budget presentation may stall as Senate demands performance reports

From **Adesuwa Tsan**, Abuja

THERE are strong indications that President Bola Tinubu may not present the 2026 budget to the National Assembly anytime soon as the Senate has directed the economic management team to submit a detailed performance report on the 2024 budget and projections for the implementation of the 2025 capital component within two weeks.

The directive was issued by the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, Senator Mohammed Sani Musa, after an executive session that lasted about one and a half hours with the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun, Accountant-General of the Federation, Samsudeen Ogunjimi; and the Director-General of the

Budget Office, Tanimu Yakubu.

Musa said the committee resolved that the presentation of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and Fiscal Strategy Paper (FSP) for 2026–2029 would only follow after the submission of the requested reports on October 23.

"We have had the position at which the 2024 budget is, and what the position also of the 2025 budget. And the expectations we are having for the ministry to, as a matter of urgency, bring the MTEF for 2026 to 2029. The minister has briefed us, and we have collectively agreed that we are making progress, but we need to make more progress."

"We have heard from the Accountant-General and the Director of Budget where we are with the budgets—the payments that have so

far been released, the warrants that have so far been signed, and also the 2025 authority to incur expenditure for agencies to release their capital projects.

"We have all agreed that we will want documented evidence of the performance of 2024 and our expectations for the 2025 budget before we start talking about the MTEF for 2026."

"The Honourable Minister of Finance has agreed to oblige us with that progress report. We have agreed to reconvene on the 23rd of October."

He added that the committee also took note of President Tinubu's recent request to the National Assembly for additional loan approvals to support the 2025 budget implementation.

Earlier, Edun informed the committee that the government was

recording high performance in the implementation of the capital component of the 2024 budget and was on course for improved performance in 2025.

However, Director-General of the Budget Office, Tanimu Yakubu, presented a more cautious assessment, saying both the 2024 and 2025 fiscal years had been "turbulent," as many of the assumptions underpinning the budgets did not materialise.

"We have indeed had a turbulent year—one in which most of the assumptions underpinning the 2024 and 2025 budgets turned out differently from projections."

"Oil revenue, assumed at \$75 per barrel, fell short by between \$10 and \$15 due to global price fluctuations."

• **Continued on www.thesun.ng**

Reps probe \$18bn expenditure on refineries maintenance

From **Ndubuisi Orji**, Abuja

THE House of Representatives has resolved to investigate an estimated expenditure of \$18 billion in the Turn-Around Maintenance (TAM) of Warri, Port Harcourt and Kaduna refineries to ascertain the exact fund appropriated and disbursed for the rehabilitation of the refineries, their current status and identify agencies responsible for infractions or their

mismanagement.

This was sequel to the adoption of a motion by Sesi Whingan on the non-functionality of the state-owned refineries. The probe is expected to cover the period between 2010 and 2014. Whingan, in the motion, informed the House that the Warri, Port Harcourt and Kaduna refineries have not been functional in the last two decades, despite huge expenditure on their maintenance.

The lawmaker recalled that "in 2007, during the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo, Alhaji Dangote and other private investors acquired the refineries, but the succeeding administration of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua reversed the transaction, opting instead for rehabilitation using public funds, a decision that has yielded no significant operational improvements."

According to him, the Group Chief

Executive Officer of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), in a recent interview, confirmed that the refineries were not functional, "despite significant investments estimated at \$18 billion, and proposed the potential sale of these assets."

The lawmaker said this has raised "critical questions about fiscal responsibility, strategic asset management, and the long-term implications for Nigeria's energy security and economic stability."

"Despite consistent annual budgetary allocations over the years, there is no verifiable evidence of substantial rehabilitation outcomes, representing a gross misuse of public funds and a betrayal of public trust."

He argued that, "Nigeria's economic stability and energy security are inextricably linked to a functional and accountable downstream petroleum sector, particularly following the removal of the petrol subsidy by the current administration, which underscores the urgent need for operational refineries to mitigate economic hardship."

He stressed that the country's legal framework still bore the imprint of the colonial intrusion and needed to be changed.

• **Continued on www.thesun.ng**

• **Continued on www.thesun.ng**

SSANU, NASU protest over delay in implementation of 2009 negotiation

THE Joint Action Committee (JAC) of the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU) and Non-Academic Staff Union (NASU) staged a nationwide protest over unresolved issues affecting non-teaching staff.

The unions said the protest was to draw attention to decades of unmet demands and government's continuous neglect of workers' welfare in universities and inter-university centres.

Chairman of SSANU and JAC, Mr. Nurudeen Yusuf, told newsmen during the protest at the Yakubu Gowon University, Abuja, yesterday, that the protest was over the delay by the Federal Government to implement the 2009 negotiation.

The protesters carried placards with inscriptions such as, "Honour your agreement," "Pay us our sweat" and "No more empty promises."

Yusuf said the action reflected renewed agitation for justice and fairness in the university system after years of failed negotiations.

He said the government was yet to honour their agreements since 2009 in spite of repeated talks and several committees, including the Babalakin, Yayale Ahmed and expanded committees, without concrete results.

"This is the longest labour negotiation in history. The non-academic staff have continued to suffer from government's insensitivity," he said.

He listed their key grievances

• Bemoan suffering of members

to include unfair disbursement of N50 billion earned allowances, non-payment of two months' salaries in 2022, the unremitted third-party deductions and unpaid 25 percent to 35 percent wage award arrears.

According to him, meetings with the Minister of Education on September 19 and October 6, yielded no positive result, prompting JAC's peaceful protest nationwide.

"We have extended our ultimatum twice to allow dialogue, but no meaningful response has come from the government," he said.

NASU president, Dr Makulu Hasan, said the issues had lingered for years, in spite of repeated strike warnings and appeals for dialogue.

Hasan condemned the unfair sharing of the N50 billion allowances, saying that NASU and SSANU received only 20 percent, while some members were completely excluded.

He demanded the payment of withheld salaries and wage awards and urged the government to honour its promises to restore peace and fairness in the university system.

At the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), the protesters marched through the campus, carrying placards with inscription like, "We worked, you withheld, release our wages;" "Enough is enough, pay our two months salaries" and "No more empty promises, Action now," among

others.

The SSANU chairman, Ademola Junaid said JAC's struggles between 2021 and 2022 led to signing of the agreement between the JAC and the Federal Government on August 20, 2022. He bemoaned the suffering of its members, saying that the Federal Government has not been sincere about the plight of SSANU/NASU members.

Junaid also said that the contentious issues were the alleged disbursement of N50 billion earned allowances and delay in renegotiation of the 2009 FGN and NASU/SSANU agreements, among others.

Also, the SSANU vice-chairman, Mrs. Stella Adebisi, said the Federal Government had been playing pranks with the associations by promising them and failing on all their demands since 2009 till date, in spite of all the ultimatum given.

Adebisi said the protest was the only avenue to show their grievances, stressing that that is the only language the government understands.

She explained that the Federal Government has failed to pay their two months salaries as well as that of the 25 and 35 percent salary arrears.

According to her, the majority of their members have retired and are unable to get their third party deductions of the two months' salaries, which is unfair.

The SSANU vice-chairman appealed to the Federal Government to listen to their voices and stop sabotaging their efforts by paying their promotion arrears for them to live a meaningful life.

In the same vein, Mr. Dayo Oyediwura, chairman, Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU), recalled that the Federal Government signed a non-victimisation clause with them in 2022, after paying two months salary out of four.

Oyediwura said the Federal Government promised not to victimise anyone that participated in the strike then, but non-payment of their salaries was victimisation, which meant that the Federal Government had violated its pledge.

He explained that the third party deductions for two months were not included, meaning that the two months salary paid to them was nothing to them.

Oyediwura appealed to the Federal Government to pay the arrears of two months salary of their third party deductions and to pay their promotion arrears from 2015/2019 till date.

According to him, the disbursement of N50 billion was unjust, for the money was paid to one union and FG promised to pay SSANU and NASU, but nothing has been done about it till date.

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

N868m loan: Firm writes CBN, demands sanctions against bank over alleged unlawful conduct

From **Godwin Tsa Abuja**

AN indigenous firm, Kenchez Nigeria Limited, has asked the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to take immediate regulatory sanctions against Polaris Bank for deliberately and unlawfully withholding a loan facility of N868 million belonging to it in clear breach of guarantee terms.

The company in its letter to the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and its Director of Consumer Protection, chronicled the numerous unethical conducts of Polaris Bank amounting to violations of banking laws and regulatory safeguards put in place for the stability of the banking sector.

The letter dated October 2 and written by its lawyer and former Attorney General of Imo State, Chuckwuma-Machukwu Ume, noted that the unethical conduct of Polaris Bank by unlawfully withholding N868m, which was duly disbursed into its custody by Lecon Finance Company Limited on the strength of Polaris' own guarantee, transcends mere breach of contracts, but amounts to an attempted economic murder and financial strangulation of Kenchez Nigeria Limited, that has maintained 22 years of an unbroken banking loyalty with the bank.

Ume explained that his client, Kenchez Nigeria Limited, which has been banking with Polaris Bank limited for 22 years, had applied and obtained the loan from Lecon Finance Company Limited to acquire

a 160-ton Terex Demag AC160-2 Crane for its operational activities.

Specifically, on March 6, 2025, Kenchez Nigeria Limited applied to Lecon Finance Company Limited for a direct finance lease facility of N902, 720, 000 to acquire a 160-ton Terex Demag AC160-2 Crane for its operational activities.

That by a Revised Indicative offer dated May 19, 2025 and subsequent letter of offer dated June 30, 2025, Lecon Finance approved the facility subject to some conditions, including the provision of a bank guarantee from a commercial bank acceptable to Lecon, to secure the principal, accruing interest and end-of-lease payments.

In addition, on July 8, 2025, Polaris Bank limited issued an offer letter approving a bank guarantee facility in the sum of N902, 720, 000 to Kenchez Nigeria Limited.

In the said offer letter, Polaris expressly stated the purpose of the facility as follows: "To secure equipment lease facility of equivalent sum at Lecon Finance Company; to finance the leasing of one unit of Terex Demag AC160-2 ton Crane, which will be deployed for the company's use."

However, long after the loan facility of N868 million was paid to Polaris Bank, which acted as the guarantee bank for the loan, it has refused to release same to its owner, Kenchez Nigeria Limited, even after

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

REA powers 10m Nigerians, targets 17.5m in 3 years

From **Godwin Tsa Abuja**

THE Rural Electrification Agency (REA) said it has delivered electricity access to over 10 million Nigerians under the Nigeria Electrification Project, adding that 17.5 million others are expected to benefit over the next three years.

Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the agency, Mr Abba Aliyu, disclosed this in Abuja while celebrating its customer service week.

"There are reports that many Nigerians don't have access to electricity. But under the Nigeria Electrification Project, we have provided electricity to eight million Nigerians. We also have a programme that is targeting 17.5 million people. So, in three years, 17.5 million people will also be out of darkness," Aliyu said.

According to Aliyu, the REAs mandate is targeted at closing this energy deficit by providing electricity to 80 million Nigerians in line with President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda, particularly in communities distant from the national grid.

"It's a week that helps us to reflect, ask ourselves questions, hold ourselves accountable and determine the level of service that we are giving customers. Rural Electrification Agency's mandate is to provide electricity access to over 80 million Nigerians. Which means literally we have 80 million customers.

"So, this is a week for us to now sit down and ask ourselves, are we providing this service? Are we providing quality service? Are we providing the service in a timely manner? Are we providing services in a way that our customers can afford? That is why we are doing this. That is why we are reflecting and asking ourselves. And to the best of our ability, we are happy with the level of what we have achieved.

"The number of mini-grids, the

number of access that we have created in the country and the audacious programme that we are now implementing. We are working on that one programme to provide electricity access to 17.5 million Nigerians. That is audacious. That is one of the key drives of Mr. President in the drive to create electricity access in Nigeria."

Aliyu said the agency is implementing solar-powered mini-grids and has already electrified eight universities, adding that 42 interconnected mini-grids were planned, with six already operational in Osun, Plateau, Cross River and Niger states.

"We are currently working on deploying 42 interconnected mini-grids and six have already been completed.

"From our record, we have impacted over 10 million Nigerians and we are counting more based on the new programmes we are designing and implementing," Aliyu said.

He highlighted that the initiative is private-sector driven, with capital grants used to incentivise operators.

"We are moving away from the traditional concept of government issuing contracts. What we are doing is incentivising the private sector to deploy infrastructure. This ensures sustainability because they have their own money at stake.

"We went to a community in Gombe, Balanga, which has not had electricity for over 30 years. This is a community that has a fertile land, over 11,000 hectares of wheat farming land. We went there with the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and we are working now to provide them with 620 kilowatts of electricity.

"Their feedback to us is their gesture to give a traditional title to me as the representative of the Rural Electrification Agency. This to me is one of the greatest feedbacks that we keep on receiving from our customers."

• Continued on www.thesun.ng



L-R: Sam Amuka, Publisher, Vanguard Newspaper; Rider Ibi Sofekun, Chairman Board of Trustee, Boys Scout, Lagos; Dr. Bode Olajumoke and others at the homecoming event of Ibi Sofekun aka Firekiss, who completed his 40 countries in 99 days advocacy ride for the mental health of the boy child on power-bike in Lagos.

NGF, UNDP strengthen alliance to boost investment, economic growth in states

From **Juliana Taiwo-Obalonye, Abuja**

THE Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) has hosted a delegation from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at its Abuja Secretariat, as part of its strategy to accelerate sustainable economic growth and investments at the state levels.

The meeting with the delegation led by UNDP Resident Representative in Nigeria, Elsie Attafua, alongside UNDP's Chief Economist for Africa and Head of the Economists' Network, Raymond Gilpin, focused on fostering innovative financing mechanisms, reinforced the commitment to enhancing the fiscal capacity and infrastructure development across Nigeria's 36 states.

A statement by the Director, Media and Strategic Communications, Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), Yunusa Abdullahi, said the initiative is poised to help subnational governments attract and manage investment portfolios that directly impact socio-economic development.

Welcoming the UNDP team, NGF Director General, Abdulateef Shittu, described the visit as "a timely step in deepening Nigeria's subnational development agenda."

He emphasised the value of the partnership in helping states become more competitive and ready for investment. "Our goal is to create a pathway, where subnational governments can independently attract, manage and sustain investments that directly impact lives and livelihoods," Shittu explained.

As part of ongoing efforts, the NGF recently launched Investopedia, a digital platform featuring over 269 investment-ready projects from all states, showcasing their readiness to drive transformation when backed by the right tools and collaborations.

The NGF DG outlined three key areas of focus for the next phase: strengthening states' fiscal and institutional capacity, establishing frameworks for blended and innovative finance and building a pipeline of bankable projects aligned with

sustainability goals.

Highlighting the significance of the collaboration, he asserted, "We see this partnership as catalytic. With UNDP's technical support and the Forum's coordination, subnational governments can become key drivers of Nigeria's development narrative.

"Together, we can convert Nigeria's immense opportunities into transformative investments that uplift lives and strengthen local economies."

Also speaking, Attafua described the meeting as a continuation of UNDP's long-standing partnership with NGF to promote inclusive and equitable growth.

She stressed, "Our collaboration with the NGF represents a strategic partnership to ensure that no state is left behind in Nigeria's development story."

Attafua reaffirmed UNDP's support in key sectors, including agriculture, energy transition, healthcare, education and the digital economy, sectors critical for visible impact on

citizens' lives.

Gilpin on his part praised the NGF's innovative platforms that enable states to engage global investors effectively.

He underscored UNDP's role in supporting frameworks that integrate capital mobilisation with governance reforms and data-driven planning. "Nigerian states are essential building blocks of national development," he noted.

Gilpin added that the partnership aims to establish sustainable financing mechanisms, combining public and private capital, while ensuring transparency and inclusivity.

Both organisations agreed to formalise their collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to outline technical assistance and pilot interventions in selected states. Planned initiatives include the creation of a Subnational Development Finance Lab, a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Competency Framework and a State Investment Readiness Index to benchmark competitiveness.

AA crisis: No court ordered arrest of ex-INEC chair -Udeze

From **Godwin Tsa, Abuja**

THE National Chairman of the Action Alliance (AA), Chief Kenneth Udeze, has urged Nigerians to disregard the purported judgment ordering the arrest and imprisonment of the immediate past chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof Mahmood Yakubu.

It was reported that Justice Ad-efunmilola Demi-Ajayi of the Federal High Court, Osogbo, Osun State, has ordered the arrest and imprisonment of Professor Yakubu for disobeying the court's judgement, arising from a suit purportedly filed by Adegunle Rufai Omoaje and his cohorts in their desperate move to arm-twist INEC to recognise them as leaders of the

party.

Yakubu was said to have failed to implement the court's order to re-list the national officers of the Action Alliance on its website.

Omoaje was reported to have filed a suit marked FHC/OS/194/2024 for an order from the court to compel INEC and Professor Yakubu, to re-enlist their names, which had been illegally removed from the Commission's portal.

However, in a statement yesterday, the National Chairman of Action Alliance, Chief Kenneth Udeze, urged members of the public and party faithful to disregard the purported court order and remain calm.

"On the issue of a purported

• Continued on www.thesun.ng



R-L: Senator Adams Oshiomhole, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim and Mr. Louis Odion at the National Assembly after his screening as Executive Commissioner (Operations) of Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) by the Senate Committee on Industry and Trade in Abuja, yesterday.

Tinubu, Uzodimma, Aliyu for COWLSO's 25th national women's conference

By **Lukman Olabiyi**

SENATOR Oluremi Tinubu, governors of Imo and Sokoto states, Senator Hope Uzodimma and Alhaji Ahmed Aliyu, are among the dignitaries that will grace the 25th edition of the National Women's Conference organised by the Committee of Wives of Lagos State Officials (COWLSO).

The conference, themed, "Twenty-five years of visionary legacy: Inspiring the next generation," will be held between Tuesday, October 28 and Thursday, October 30, in Victoria Island, Lagos.

Speaking at a pre-conference media briefing in Alausa, chairperson of COWLSO and wife of the Lagos State Governor, Dr. Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu, described the annual gathering as a vital platform for the empowerment, advancement and transformation of women not only in Lagos but also across Nigeria.

She said this year's edition of the conference would mark 25 years of COWLSO's sustained commitment to the empowerment and social development of women.

The event is expected to attract over 5,000 participants, both physi-

cally and virtually, from across the country.

Dr. Sanwo-Olu highlighted the organisation's numerous humanitarian efforts over the years, including medical outreaches, widow support schemes and entrepreneurship programmes.

She reaffirmed COWLSO's commitment to uplifting women and families through impactful initiatives.

Also speaking, Chairperson of the 2025 Conference Planning Committee, Dr. Olayemi Oke-Osanyintolu, revealed that this year's event would feature engaging and intellectually stimulating sessions focused on leadership, career development, entrepreneurship, marriage and relationships.

Oke-Osanyintolu described the event as a celebration of COWLSO's enduring mission.

"This Silver Jubilee edition promises to be engaging, entertaining and intellectually enriching. Participants can expect thought-provoking sessions on leadership, entrepreneurship, marriage, relationships and career development," she said.

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

Kogi govt grows cucumbers in greenhouse, harvests 260kg weekly

By **Sunday Ani**

KOGI State Government has recorded a significant milestone in its agricultural revolution with the successful weekly harvest of 260kg greenhouse-grown cucumbers.

The maiden harvest, grown at the Federal University, Lokoja, yielded 260kg of cucumber, with weekly harvests expected for the next three months.

Commissioner for Environment and Ecological Management, Mr Olusegun Joseph, represented Gov. Ahmed Ododo, supervised the harvest yesterday.

The commissioner said the achievement was part of the Agro-

Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) initiative, aimed at boosting food security, promoting smart farming and empowering women and youths.

According to him, the beneficiaries of the programme include women farmers from the host communities, as well as staff and students of the institution. The State ACReSAL Project Coordinator, Mrs Ladi Ahmed-Jatto, said the project was implemented across the three senatorial zones of Kogi State.

She emphasised that it has empowered thousands of farmers, with women farmers from Falele and Crusher communities benefiting...

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

Lagos NIPR unveils committees, framework for LaPRIGA 2025

THE Lagos State Chapter of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) has officially unveiled the committees and award framework for the 10th edition of the Lagos Public Relations Industry Gala and Awards (LaPRIGA) 2025, during a well-attended press conference held at the State Secretariat, 19 Town Planning Way, Ilupeju, Lagos.

Chairman of the Lagos State Chapter, Dr. Samuel Ayetutu, fniipr, frpa, described LaPRIGA as the "gold standard" for recognising excellence in public relations and communication practice in Nigeria. He

announced that this milestone 10th edition will be celebrated under the theme "Nox Excellentia" – The Night of Excellence, signifying a luminous celebration of brilliance, creativity and integrity in the profession.

"Over the past decade, LaPRIGA has grown beyond an award ceremony; it has evolved into a movement that celebrates innovation, professionalism and the enduring impact of strategic communication," Dr. Ayetutu stated.

He emphasised that LaPRIGA 2025 will honour professionals and organisations whose works

Reps probe govt expenditure on power sector reforms

From **Ndubuisi Orji, Abuja**

THE House of Representatives has resolved to probe the Federal Government's expenditure on the Power Sector Reform Programme (PSRP) from 2007 to 2024.

The House also resolved to set up an Ad-hoc Committee to undertake the probe and report back to the House within 12 weeks for further legislative action.

The panel was mandated to invite the Minister of Power, Bayo Adedun, the Nigeria Bulk Electricity Trading (NBET), Nigeria Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), the

Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), Rural Electrification Agency and other relevant agencies to provide details of the funds they received under the PSRP and their utilisation.

This followed the adoption of a motion by Bassey Ekpenyong, at yesterday's plenary, calling for an audit into government expenditure on the power sector reforms between 2007 to 2024.

Ekpenyong, in his lead debate, noted that while so much fund was expended on the PSRP, there had been no audit to ascertain how the fund was utilised.

Therefore, he implored the parlia-

ment to investigate all budgetary allocations, grants, loans and subsidies, channeled into the probe, in line with Section 88 and 89 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended).

According to him, "The Federal Government of Nigeria initiated the Electric Power Sector Reform Programme via the Electric Power Sector Reform Act of 2005, which has now been repealed and re-enacted as Electricity Act of 2023, with the primary goal of creating a more efficient, reliable and sustainable power sector.

This Act led to the unbundling of the National Electric Power Authority and the subsequent private privatisa-

tions of its successor, the Power Holding Company of Nigeria, into several generation, transmission and distribution companies.

"Over the last 18 years from 2007 to 2024 before its successor Electricity Act of 2023 was enacted, significant public fund was appropriated, allocated and disbursed to the power sector to support this reform process, including direct budgetary allocation, loans, grants and subsidies and no proper audit has been conducted by this House on the impact assessment and expenditure by the MFA implementing the programme."

Tinubu, Sanwo-Olu mourn Kolade

From **Juliana Taiwo-Obalonye, Abuja**

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu has expressed deep sorrow over the death of Christopher Kolade, describing the late 92-year-old broadcaster and corporate leader as a "representation of the true Nigerian, selfless and resilient," whose enduring legacy will continue to inspire future generations.

This is as Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu said the death of the respected diplomat, teacher and veteran broadcaster marked the end of an era.

Kolade, former Nigeria's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, died on Wednesday.

In a statement issued by the Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, President Tinubu paid tribute to Kolade as one of Nigeria's intellectual treasures and a custodian of the nation's corporate governance history. He highlighted Kolade's exceptional brilliance, integrity, and dedication to public service and human advancement.

President Tinubu celebrated Kolade not only for his pivotal roles in

the business sector—as former chief executive and chairman of Cadbury Nigeria Plc and a key figure at Lagos Business School—but also for his unwavering patriotism.

He served the nation in various capacities, including as Nigeria's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and Director-General of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation.

The president recalled Kolade's humanitarian work, especially his foundation's support for sickle cell patients, reflecting a lifetime commitment to social causes.

"His passing is agonising, yet we must celebrate his life and legacy," President Tinubu said. "He lived an exemplary life and immortalised

himself in his uncommon service to our nation and humanity."

He prayed for divine rest for the departed leader who had served God and country faithfully.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu described the death of the elder statesman and doyen of the boardroom, Dr Christopher Kolade, who made a positive impact during his lifetime," he said.

He said Kolade's passing was a colossal loss to the nation and an irreplaceable void for his family, friends and associates.

"Dr Kolade was one of Nigeria's most celebrated boardroom gurus and a tireless advocate for integrity and corporate governance."

Sanwo-Olu added that Kolade's record of service as a teacher, broad-

caster, technocrat and administrator would remain indelible for generations to come.

"On behalf of my family, the government and the people of Lagos State, we celebrate the life of a legend and doyen of the boardroom, Dr Christopher Kolade, who made a positive impact during his lifetime," he said.

According to him, Kolade's legacy cannot be forgotten because of his extraordinary life of service to humanity and his contributions to both the private and public sectors locally and internationally.

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

Wike vows to go after saboteurs of 'Light Up Abuja'

From **Juliana Taiwo-Obalonye, Abuja**

MINISTER of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, has warned against efforts to undermine the 'Light Up Abuja' initiative, part of the territory's broader infrastructure development campaign.

Both committees, he said, were selected for their proven track records and deep commitment to excellence.

Delivering his address, Mr. Nwakanma revealed that the LaPRIGA Awards Panel has introduced a refined framework that consolidates award categories from 22 to 18, to maintain focus, transparency and prestige. The categories, he explained, reflect evolving industry trends such as technology integration, sustainability communication and data-driven storytelling.

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

The caution followed the recent failure of street lights on Airport Road as President Bola Tinubu returned to Abuja.

Speaking yesterday during the groundbreaking ceremony for the Collector Road CN2, a vital link between Yemi Osinbajo Way and Wole Soyinka Way, the minister vowed to resist opposition to the project.

"I laughed, I already forewarned you that there will be a fight, but we are equal to the task," Wike said. "Once you are alive, there will be a fight. It is only the dead that don't fight. The living will always fight. People will come and fight you, you will also fight back."

He revealed that he had called the contractors, CCECC, for explanations and acknowledged their ongoing efforts. He urged all stakeholders to persevere, underscoring his administration's dedication to the project.

"Know that all those things are just to distract us and weaken us. But I can assure you, my team and I are very determined. We are very determined. If there is one project

we must achieve, it is the 'Light Up Abuja' project," he stated firmly.

He explained that the Collector Road CN2 forms part of a comprehensive infrastructure upgrade aimed at marking President Tinubu's third anniversary in office and the FCT's 50th anniversary in 2026. The road will complement the recently commissioned Gishiri-Maitama Road and interchange, providing crucial connectivity.

"Recollect that sometime in July this year, Mr. President came and commissioned that interchange. So, when we came, we found that without this road being linked up, it would not make sense," Wike said.

He commended the China Geo-Engineering Corporation (CGC) for beginning work based on trust, reflecting confidence in the current administration.

Projecting the economic benefits, Wike predicted a sharp rise in property values around the

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

FG's ban on raw shea nut exports spurs industrial growth

THE Nigerian shea sector is experiencing renewed growth as local processing of shea nuts increases, following the Federal Government's ban on exporting raw shea nuts. After an initial dip in prices, market data shows a strong recovery, with prices approaching pre-ban levels due to greater demand from domestic processors.

Before the ban, shea nuts sold for about N850 per kilogram but dropped to N570 immediately after the policy was introduced. By late September, prices had climbed back to between N800 and N1,000, signalling renewed stability. Local processing plants, many previously operating below 30 percent capacity, are now ramping up production as raw materials remain within the country.

This shift supports Nigeria's goal to increase value addition in its commodities sector and expand industrial growth. Nigeria currently

supplies over one-third of the world's shea butter but earns less than one percent of the US\$6.5 billion global market, mainly due to limited local processing.

Industry insiders report improved planning and investment in processing facilities, which boosts employment opportunities, particularly for rural women and farmers. Ongoing legislative efforts, including the 30 percent Value Addition Bill, aim to mandate substantial domestic processing before export to foster industrialisation.

Government agencies are engaging stakeholders to ensure smooth implementation as they prepare for a nationwide assessment of the shea industry in key producing states. These efforts align with broader economic policies aimed at strengthening Nigeria's industrial base and enhancing its share in the global shea market

Oba Market fire caused by Solar panel, LG chairman

From **Tony Osauzo**, Benin

THE fire that gutted part of Oba Market in Benin, Oredo Local Government Area on Wednesday night, was caused by a solar panel. Chairman of Oredo Local Government Council, Gabriel Iduseri, clarified yesterday.

Speaking to journalists after inspecting the market, Iduseri said only one shop was affected by the fire incident.

He disclosed that fire fighters, security agencies promptly responded to ensure the fire did not spread to other parts of the market.

Iduseri stated that following the incident, traders would be stopped from installing solar panels inside

the market to prevent future fire outbreaks.

"We learnt that the solar panel caused the fire. We are going to stop installation of solar panels and check all the electrical wiring in the market.

"I want to assure that we will support the affected trader to get back to business. There is not so much damage. No lives were lost. Oredo local government was here and we put measures in place to prevent thieves," he said. The affected trader was said to have collapsed last night, following the fire incident, the second in Oba Market in five years.

Reconstruction work has already begun in the burnt part of the market.

Uzodimma unveils MyImoApp tomorrow

IMO State Governor, Senator Hope Uzodimma, will tomorrow unveil a novel digital device known as MyImoApp, which will enable citizens and other Nigerians to track developments in the state real-time.

He will also present startup kits to 10,000 Imo youths who have completed their digital training under Cohort 3 of SkillUp Imo project.

Commissioner for Information, Public Orientation and Strategy, Declan Emelumba described the event to be held at the newly commissioned Emmanuel Iwuanyanwu International Conference Centre, Owerri as part of the state's renewed commitment to digital technology.

He said the 10,000 youths would add to the already trained and equipped 40,000 Imo youths, who are either gainfully employed in digital technology or are self-employed.

"In empowering our youths through the SkillUp Imo project,

Governor Uzodimma wants to equip young Imolites with the digital skills that drive the world today."

He disclosed that the youths have received training across various tech fields, including cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, mobile app development, software engineering, blockchain, fintech, entrepreneurship and digital marketing.

On the other hand, the Commissioner said the MyImoApp was designed as "a monument of innovation, a masterpiece of collaboration and a milestone in governance transformation. For the first time in our state's history, every Imo person, wherever you are in the world, can now connect directly with your government."

Emelumba attributed the digital foundation being laid by Uzodimma as a means of launching the state to the digital world.

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

Firms unveil new energy solutions in Nigeria

By **Zika Bobby**

SIMBA Group, in partnership with Luminous Power Technologies, has launched a new range of solar inverters and lithium batteries in Nigeria.

The event, held in Lagos, brought together top channel partners and industry stakeholders to witness the unveiling of the innovative products.

The new lithium and inverter systems are designed to provide reliable and intelligent power solutions for Nigerian homes and businesses.

According to Vinay Grover, Group Managing Director of Simba Group in Nigeria, "Nigerians need power solutions that are not just reliable, but also intelligent and capable of sup-

porting modern lifestyles, from home offices to family entertainment."

Simba Group executives also underlined how solar and lithium technologies are reshaping the global energy landscape and opening new opportunities in Nigeria for energy independence, reliability and cost efficiency.

The newly launched products reflect Luminous's continued focus on innovation and tailoring solutions for regional requirements, while leveraging Simba's longstanding reputation for trust, reach and dependable service. Together, the companies reaffirm their commitment to delivering sustainable, high-quality and future-ready energy solutions for Nigerian homes and businesses.

Council of State approves 1% deduction from FAAC for Police trust fund

From **Juliana Taiwo-Obalonye**, Abuja

THE Council of State presided over by President Bola Tinubu has approved an upward revision of the statutory allocation to the Nigeria Police Trust Fund (NPTF) from 0.5 percent to 1 percent of the Federation Account.

This development was confirmed by the Minister of Police Affairs, Ibrahim Gaidam, following a crucial Police Council meeting at the council chambers at the State House, Abuja.

Gaidam disclosed that the Nigeria Police Trust Fund, established by the Federal Government in 2019, has a renewable lifespan clause of six years.

The purpose of establishing the Nigerian Police Trust Fund was to support training and retraining of police personnel. The second one is to provide financial resources to enhance police equipment, logistics

and infrastructure.

"It was established also to support modernisation of the police through investments in technology, vehicles, communications and crime fighting tools. It is also to improve welfare and morale of police personnel, promote accountability, transparency and governance, and enhance crime prevention and public safety."

The minister lamented that the Fund's original design contained what he termed a constraining "sunset clause," limiting the Fund's lifespan to six years.

"The sunset clause in the current Act limits the lifespan of the Nigerian Police Trust Fund and impedes long-term planning, thereby constraining sustainable police reform," he noted.

In light of these challenges, Gaidam stated that the Council of State approved a proposal to repeal and re-enact the Nigeria Police Trust Fund Establishment Act,

2025, so as to remove the sunset clause and transition the Fund into a permanent agency.

He highlighted the importance of a sustainable financing mechanism and urged for a revision in the percentage allocation. "We prayed to the Council that the deduction of 0.5% from the Federation account needs to be reviewed upward to 1 percent of the Federation account," he said, stressing that this increase is critical for enduring funding of police reforms.

According to the Minister, the enhanced allocation will empower the Fund "to more effectively execute its mandate in critical areas such as the training and retraining of police personnel, procurement of modern crime-fighting equipment, enhancement of welfare packages, and investment in technology-driven policing initiatives."

He mentioned key areas of focus: "The Fund was established to advance the modernisation of the

Nigeria Police Force by enhancing communication systems, upgrading surveillance capabilities, and strengthening emergency response operations."

Gaidam also underscored the Fund's role in promoting private sector engagement. "The NPTF fosters public spiritedness and private sector engagement, channeling contributions through individuals, corporations, and civil society into police enhancement programmes," he said.

On the operational impact of the Fund's interventions, he explained: "The one percent allocation from the Federation Account will provide a financial buffer for critical police functions, especially during budgetary delays or constraints." He added that sustainable financing is essential to consolidate gains made so far in police welfare and effectiveness.

• Continued on www.thesun.ng

Oil leak from OML 29 crude delivery line pollutes Bayelsa communities

AN oil spill from an eight-inch crude delivery pipeline at Oil Mining Lease 29 (OML 29) has polluted Nembe communities around the Santa Barbara River in Bayelsa State.

The OML 29 asset is operated by Nembe Exploration and Production Company Limited, formerly Aiteo Eastern Exploration and Production Company Limited.

The leak at Tora area in Nembe occurred on October 1 discharging a yet to be ascertained volume of Crude stress into the Santa Barbara River and adjoining areas.

According to a letter to the operator of OML 29 by the legal counsel to the Opu Nembe Kingdom signed by Mr Inriuo Wills, Managing Partner of Ntephe Smith and Wills, the spill has adversely impacted the people who depend on the Santa Barbara River.

The letter sighted by a NAN Correspondent was in response to an invitation to a Joint Investigation Visit (JIV) to the spill site to ascertain the cause and volume of the spill.

The oil firm had confirmed the oil spill in a letter Ref:NEPCO/HSE-JIV/2025/04 dated October 5, which

proposed a JIV for October 6.

The Nembe communities in a response to the letter kicked against the October 6 date and opted for October 9.

"We remind you, as you are quite aware of already that the Community requires and deserves decent notice to assemble a competent JIV team, some of whom usually come from Lagos, Port Harcourt and/or Yenagoa, in order to ensure due diligence and avoid or counteract the perennial practice of manipulating the JIV process and suppressing critical information.

"Please note that our clients demand a thorough and competent investigation of this spill, and adequate management (including swift post-spill assessment and remediation).

"Beyond this spill, for the records, we demand on behalf of our clients again for a top-level engagement (Company, Community Technical Team, and Regulators) for a lasting overall framework to put a stop to this unbearable and continual burden." the letter read in part.

Union reads riot act to private firms over minimum wage, casual labour

By **Lukman Olabiye and Marvelous Udoruisi**

THE Employers Association for Private Employment Agents of Nigeria (EAPEAN) has vowed to clamp down on private companies that fail to comply with the national minimum wage and violate decent work standards.

Speaking at the 14th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the union in Lagos, the newly elected President of EAPEAN, Mr. Nzege Okegbue, pledged to partner with the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity to uphold workers' rights, especially in enforcing the N70,000 minimum wage.

Okegbue emphasised that his administration is committed to strengthening EAPEAN's internal structures and deepening its collaboration with regulatory and international labour bodies.

"My plan is to reinforce our existing structure and relationship with the Federal Ministry of Labour, and other social partners like the ILO, IOM, NSC, and relevant government agencies. We will also encourage our members to go the extra mile in compliance and capacity building through regular training," he stated.

Expressing concern over reports

of some companies still paying workers as low as N20,000 to N50,000 monthly, the EAPEAN president said the union would no longer remain silent on the issue.

"For me, decent work starts with decent pay. You cannot talk about decent work when workers earn far below the N70,000 minimum wage. That is unacceptable. Decent work also means ensuring worker safety and a healthy work environment," Okegbue declared.

Immediate past president of EAPEAN, Mr. Olufemi Ogunlowo, highlighted the growing challenges facing Nigeria's private employment sector. He cited rising labour costs, inflation, restrictive government policies, and a weak infrastructure base as some of the major hurdles employers face.

"The new minimum wage has driven up costs while inflation continues to erode profit margins. Despite these challenges, we remain

focused on promoting ethical recruitment, digitalizing employment processes, and ensuring compliance with labour laws. Protecting job seekers and migrant workers remains a top priority," Ogunlowo said.

Both leaders reiterated EAPEAN's commitment to advocating for ethical standards in Nigeria's labour market and working closely with stakeholders to ensure fair and decent employment practices across the private sector.

Students' Coalition lauds Ogun gov for launch of Gateway International Airport

By **Omotunde Alawode**

THE Coalition of Ogun State Students and Youths (COSSY) has extended a warm commendation to Governor Dapo Abiodun for the successful commencement of operations at the Gateway International Airport. This achievement marks a significant milestone in Ogun State's infrastructural development and economic growth.

In a statement by COSSY national convener, Oladimeji Uthman, the group said the achievement stands as a testament to the governor's visionary leadership, steadfast commitment to infrastructural development, and his continuous drive to position Ogun as an economic hub not only in

Nigeria but across West Africa.

"The Gateway International Airport will no doubt enhance trade, tourism, and industrial growth while creating more opportunities for citizens; especially the youth.

"As a coalition deeply rooted in the progress and aspirations of Ogun State's young people, we express our profound appreciation for this remarkable milestone. The completion and operationalisation of the Gateway Airport is a bold step towards modern development and global relevance for our dear state.

"However, while acknowledging this laudable stride, we also use this medium to appeal to the youth and students-friendly governor to give due consideration to the youth

constituency, particularly through the prompt appointment of a Commissioner for Youth. The said office has remained vacant since the beginning of the second term administration. Filling this crucial position will further strengthen youth inclusion, empowerment, and participation in governance, aligning with the state government's progressive vision.

"We believe that the engagement and empowerment of the young people in Ogun State will remain vital to sustaining the developmental momentum already set in motion by the present administration. This significant achievement marks the official flight operations in the Gateway State, a milestone that symbolizes years of dedication and planning"

Indomie celebrates consumers' loyalty on World Noodles Day

INDOMIE Instant Noodles has expressed gratitude to consumers for their unwavering loyalty.

Speaking at an event to mark World Indomie Day, Tope Sule, brand manager, said: "World Indomie Day is more than a celebration of a brand; it's a celebration of the people who have made Indomie a part of their everyday lives. It represents family, friendship and shared moments around a meal that brings comfort and joy to millions."

The three-day nationwide experi-

ence united fans, families, customers in the markets and Indomie lovers in a tribute to the brand that has become a household name across generations.

Held at the Ikeja City Mall located in Lagos, the celebration transformed the venue into a vibrant carnival hub filled with music, dance, games and endless servings of Indomie. The atmosphere brimmed with excitement as children participated in fun activities, families shared meals and fans of all ages reconnected with

the nostalgic taste of their favourite noodles.

One of the most talked-about attractions was the Upside-Down Indomie House, a specially designed photo experience where furniture and plates appeared suspended from the ceiling. The interactive zone drew hundreds of visitors eager to capture creative photos and share their Indomie moments online.

Adding star power to the festivities, popular media personality, Tomike Adeoye, made a special

appearance, engaging with fans, dancing with children and celebrating the brand's enduring bond with Nigerian families.

Beyond the mall, Indomie extended the celebration to the streets of Lagos through a community outreach led by content creator, Asherkin, who connected directly with fans in neighbourhoods and local markets.

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Edo global football fiesta's inaugural edition gains support from FA chairman

From Ighomuaye Lucky, Benin

The inaugural Edo Global Football Fiesta, an Under-16 tournament organised by Naija Global Sports Enterprise Solution, has secured significant support following a courtesy visit to Edo State Football Association Chairman, Fred Newton Erhumwense.

Led by the Local Organising Committee Chairmen, Itietie Omojevwe J and Mr. Ikuomase Edosa, the organizers shared plans for the December 2025 tournament, highlighting backing from the Edo State Civil Society Organisations (EDOCSO).

Erhumwense expressed enthusiasm for the event, pledging

the FA's full support to ensure its success.

He praised the organisers' efforts to advance youth football in Edo State.

Beyond football, the tournament aims to address social issues like cultism and drug abuse, reflecting the organisers' commitment to youth well-being.

They commended Erhumwense's contributions to football development and promised regular updates.

The meeting concluded with the presentation of a branded t-shirt to the Chairman and a photo session. With this support, the Edo Global Football Fiesta is poised for success.

Super Eagles open 2025 AFCON camp December 10

Officials have informed SCORENigeria that the Super Eagles training camp for this year's AFCON in Morocco will open on December 10.

The 2025 AFCON will kick off on December 21.

The Super Eagles, who were

beaten by hosts Cote d'Ivoire in the final of the 2023 AFCON, are drawn in Group D along with Tunisia, Uganda and Tanzania.

They begin their campaign for a fourth continental crown on December 23 against Tanzania in Fez.

LBA announces nominations for Coach and Player of the Month Awards

Nigeria's foremost league awards panel, the League Bloggers Awards, has released nominations for its first Coach and Player of the Month awards.

The LBA, managed by Match-Room Sports & Media Limited, has been recognizing and celebrating top performers in the League since 2009.

With only two match days in August, the LBA combined August and September for its first monthly awards in the 2025/26 Nigeria Premier Football League season.

Rivers United's Finidi George, Enyimba's Stanley Eguma, Nasarawa United's Mbwas Mangut and Niger Tomadoes' Majin Mohammed were listed for recognition.

George and Eguma finished the period under review unbeaten, while Mangut was on top of the log after finishing the most wins. Mohammed equally guided his side to fourth position.

It was a period in which three goalkeepers earned nominations for the prestigious awards. They are: Osagie Onisodumeya (Rivers

United), Kelvin Ogunga (Enyimba) and Godwin Ameh (Nasarawa United).

Barau's Yahaya Ibrahim is the only outfield player who made the list.

The presence of Onisodumeya, Ogunga and Ameh underscored their impact for their teams in goal and a huge boost for goalkeepers.

Onisodumeya conceded once in four matches as his team was busy in the continent. He had clean sheets against Kwara United, Shooting Stars and El-Kanemi Warriors.

Ogunga's four consecutive clean sheets; two on the road at Barau and Bayelsa as well as two at home against Niger Tomadoes and Nasarawa United were key indices for his selection.

Nasarawa United fans will be excited with Ameh for his heroics in goal with four clean sheets against Abia Warriors, Enyimba, Wikki Tourists and Katsina United.

Ibrahim's brace in the 3-1 road trip win at Kun Khalifa and a goal at home against Bendel Insurance boosted his nomination.

Eguavoen denies replacing Chelle as Super Eagles coach

Technical Director of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Augustine Eguavoen, has dismissed as unfounded reports linking him to the Super Eagles' head coach position amid uncertainty over Eric Chelle's future, Soccernet.ng reports.

Media reports on Wednesday claimed Eguavoen and U-20 boss Ladan Bosso were being lined up to take over if Eric Chelle failed to secure World Cup qualification.

But Eguavoen has swiftly distanced himself from the speculation, describing it as 'hurtful' and 'unhelpful.'

Eguavoen handled the Super

Eagles on an interim basis during the last few months in 2024 before Chelle was appointed in January.

"I feel very hurt by these baseless rumours because I really have no idea where they are coming from," Eguavoen said in an NFF statement on Thursday.

"I have a very good working relationship with Coach Eric Chelle, and I have absolutely no interest in taking over the squad. I am praying for him to succeed."

The former Super Eagles coach stressed the need for unity within Nigeria's football structure, warning against divisive rumours that could derail the team's focus ahead of key fixtures.

Super Eagles

WCQ: Super Eagles' ready to tame Crocodile—Ndidi

The Super Eagles of Nigeria are set to take on the Crocodiles of Lesotho at the Peter Makoba Stadium in Polokwane, South Africa, this evening, Soccernet.ng reports.

Former Leicester City midfielder, Ndidi, has been a pivotal figure in Nigeria's midfield for nearly ten years and is eyeing another appearance at a World Cup.

With South Africa's points deduction confirmed, Benin now top of Group C, and need wins against Rwanda and Nigeria to seal a spot in next year's Mundial on North American soil.

On the flip side, Nigeria also has a glimpse of hope, although they'll

Isak's Eritrea could influence Super Eagles' World Cup ticket chase

Eritrea, the homeland of Alexander Isak, might just become the unseen reason the Super Eagles qualify for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, Soccernet.ng reports.

Earlier, Eritrea withdrew from the 2026 World Cup qualifiers, as confirmed by FIFA in 2023, reducing the number of teams in Group E to five: Morocco, Zambia, Congo, Tanzania, and Niger.

Meanwhile, the East African country may not be competing in the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, but its absence could impact Nigeria's route to the tournament. Interestingly, the small African nation also happens to be the ancestral home of Liverpool's striker.

Eritrea's withdrawal has disrupted the balance of the CAF qualifying format, which creates a situation that could indirectly favour the Super Eagles as they chase one of Africa's limited World Cup spots. Eritrea pulled out of Group E before the CAF qualifiers began, leaving that group with only five teams, while the other eight groups have six. To maintain fairness when ranking the best second-placed teams, as previously done in 2012, CAF is expected to exclude results against bottom-placed teams in the six-team groups.

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hope Bafana Bafana drop points in their remaining games against Zimbabwe and Rwanda.

With 180 minutes set to decide Nigeria's fate at the Mundial, Wilfred Ndidi has set his focus on victory against Lesotho first, before they play against a Benin Republic

U-20 World Cup: Why we lost to Argentina — Flying Eagles boss

Flying Eagles head coach, Aliyu Zubairu, has identified five key factors that led to Nigeria's 4-0 defeat to Argentina in the Round of 16 of the 2025 FIFA U20 World Cup in Chile, Soccernet.ng reports.

The Flying Eagles suffered a heavy loss to the Albiceleste at the Estadio Nacional Julio Martínez Prádanos in Santiago.

This result, however, ended Nigeria's hopes of replicating their famous 2-0 triumph over Argentina in the same stage of the 2023 edition.

Reflecting on the defeat, Zubairu admitted that his team lost their tactical shape early in the game after conceding two quick goals, which shattered their confidence and game plan.

"I think the early goal was part of what destabilized us. We conceded a goal at the very early stage

Zenith Bank/Delta Principals' Cup:

New champion to emerge as Ogbe-Ijoh G/S, Otokutu G/S earn final berths

For the third year running, a new winner is set to emerge at the 2025 Zenith Bank/Delta Principals' Cup after two new schools, Ogbe-Ijoh Grammar School Warri South West and Otokutu Grammar School, Ughelli South, secured their places in the final of this year's tournament.

On September 18, 2025, the annual competition kicked off in Asaba, the Delta State capital, and now the finalist have emerged.

In one of the semifinals

side now coached by their former coach, Gernot Rohr.

"We know where we are at the moment, and these two games are very crucial," the former Leicester City midfielder told NFF TV.

"First, we look forward to the game against Lesotho, before

of the game. Even the second goal came not too far from the first goal. I think that was what brought about the instability in the whole of our approach," he said.

The coach also questioned his players' mental response, insisting they failed to show the kind of fighting spirit expected at such a crucial stage.

"I think the boys did not display a positive character," he admitted.

Speaking further, Zubairu revealed that the team's lack of intensity when out of possession gave Argentina space to dominate and create chances.

"When we don't have the ball, the way we are fighting for the ball I think it's not enough. That was what was giving the Argentines the opportunities. They saw a lot of places to operate. Anytime we lose the ball, we are not fighting back

quickly."

From Zubairu's post-match remarks, five key issues were the early goals conceded, instability in approach, lack of character, poor off-ball work rate, and slow recovery after losing possession, which combined to hand Argentina a comfortable win.

Despite the disappointment, Zubairu took full responsibility for the defeat, refusing to blame his players.

"That's football; sometimes it's like that. I take the blame. I take the responsibility, not the boys. The day they win, they won; the day they lose, I take the responsibility," he concluded.

The result means Argentina advance to the quarter-finals, while Nigeria bow out of the tournament.

game on Thursday, October 9, played at Notre Dame College, Ozoro, the game between Ogbe-Ijoh Grammar School Warri South West and Justice Peace & Success Academy, Aniocha South ended 2-2 with the game going into penalties.

The pulsating penalty kicks saw Ogbe-Ijoh emerging winner as the spot kicks ended 5-4 in their favour.

The second semifinal at the Government College, Ughelli

between Urhobo College, Uvwie and Otokutu Grammar School, Ughelli South, was a straight forward result as Otokutu thrashed their opponents 3-0.

The final will take place at the Stephen Keshi Stadium, Asaba, on Thursday, October 16, with the day starting with the third place game between Justice Peace & Success Academy and Urhobo College, Uvwie before the main event of the day.

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20 Teams jostle for 3rd Navaney Foundation Women Soccer tourney

Twenty female grassroots football teams, has been tasked to jostle for glory at the 3rd edition of Navaney Foundation Women soccer tournament billed to kick-off November 9, 2025.

The week-long soccer fiesta scheduled to take place at Nathaniel Idoju Football Pitch, Ajegunle, Lagos, will see rising female stars lace-up their boots for action before their taming spectators.

Speaking at the tournament draw and trophy presentation, Chairman of the foundation, Chief John Akpan, via a communique, hinted all is set to stage a memorable competition which will supersede previous editions.

Speaking further, the philanthropist unveiled eye-popping monetary reward will be dashed out to inspire top finishers and individual brilliance while nothing his organization won't relent in their bid to promote women's endeavors.

The communique reads: "On behalf of the Chairman and the entire board of Navaney Charity Foundation, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the official draws for our 3rd Annual Female Football Tournament — an event that continues to shine as a beacon of empowerment, unity, and opportunity for young women across Nigeria."

"Since the inception of this initiative, our goal has been simple yet powerful — to empower girls through football. We believe that sports, especially football, is not just a game; it's a platform for building confidence, leadership, discipline, and resilience. Through this tournament, we have watched dreams take shape, talents discov-

ered, and communities inspired." "This year's edition promises to be even bigger and better. With teams participating from different regions, we are witnessing firsthand how passion and purpose can unite people beyond background or circumstance."

"At Navaney Charity Foundation, we remain committed to supporting young women to realize their full potential — both on and off the field. Our initiatives in education, health, and community development all tie back to our mission: to build a society where every girl has the chance to thrive, to be heard, and to shine."

"As we conduct today's draws, let us remember that every team here represents courage, determination, and hope. We wish all participants the very best as we count down to another exciting and impactful tournament."

"To our sponsors, partners, and supporters — we say thank you. Your continued faith in our vision fuels our work and enables us to keep making a difference."

"Once again, on behalf of the Chairman and the entire Navaney Charity Foundation team, I welcome you all to today's draws. May this event mark yet another milestone in our collective journey of empowering girls through football."

Meanwhile, top four finishers has been billed to bag medals, N500,000, N300,000, N200,000 and N50,000 respectively while individuals such as best goalie, striker, most valuable player and others will also chart away N50,000 each.

Super Eagles' World Cup struggles highlight deeper gaps in football structure, player management

As Nigeria's Super Eagles approach the final two matches of the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, the mood among fans and analysts is one of deep concern. Even with victories in their remaining fixtures against Lesotho and the Benin Republic, qualification is not guaranteed. If South Africa secures just four points from their final games, Nigeria's dream of returning to the global stage would end once again, a scenario that would mark back-to-back World Cup absences for one of Africa's traditional football giants.

Beyond the immediate disappointment, many in the football community are beginning to question the broader systems that have led to Nigeria's decline in consistency and competitiveness. Observers argue that the issues go beyond tactics or coaching and are rooted in the country's player development, management, and structural frameworks.

In the midst of this reflection, a new generation of football professionals is emerging with a different approach to addressing these long-standing gaps. One of them is Awesometayo Global Management, a Nigerian sports agency led by football agent Tayo Adeyemi Oloniyo, which has been quietly building credibility in player management and representation across Nigeria and West Africa.

Oloniyo, who founded the

agency to bring structure and professionalism to the careers of young footballers, believes that the challenges currently seen at the national level reflect the absence of coordinated development pathways from grassroots to professional football.

"Each time Nigeria struggles on the international stage, it's a reminder that talent alone is not enough," Oloniyo said. "We have world-class players, but without structure, mentorship, and proper management, their full potential is rarely achieved. That lack of development structure eventually shows at the national team level." Awesometayo Global Management represents several emerging players in Nigeria and the neighbouring Benin Republic, including Alalade Yusuf, Bamaiyi Innocent, Anichukwu Stanley, Okeanokiete Collins, Leon Collins, Olawale Adegoke, Gambo Saidu, Owolabi Waris Oluwasegun, and Yusuf Yau. The agency's work goes beyond contract negotiations, focusing on career guidance, performance monitoring, and off-field mentorship, areas Oloniyo describes as "essential for long-term football success."

CHANGE OF NAME
ODETOYE: I, formerly known as ODETOYE ADEPEJU COMFORT, now wish to be known and addressed as AYODELE ADEPEJU COMFORT. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

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EFFIONG: I, formerly known as **MISS NKOYO EKANEM EFFIONG**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS. NKOYO EKANEM UMOH**. All Former documents remain valid. ATTN: AMLSCN, Madonna University and the general public.

UMENZEKWE: I, formerly known as **UMENZEKWE IFEYINWA MARYROSE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **UMEAKUNNE IFEYINWA MARYROSE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public please take note.

ELECHARANYA: I, formerly known as **ELECHARANYA ONYINYECHI CHRISTIANA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **OBI CHRISTIANA ONYINYECHI**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

AKUKALIA: I, formerly known as **IKENNA NNADOZIE AKUKALIA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **IKENNA EMMANUEL NNADOZIE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

OSUJI: I formerly Known as **MISS OSUJI JENNIFER CHINEYE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs AKUDIKE JENNIFER CHINEYE**. WITH 11/ 11/1996 as date of birth. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I, **Ikulawisi Ifedayo Oladunni**, wishes to state that I am the above named person. I was informed by my parents, that I was born on May 7, 1978, in Lagos. At the time of my birth, my birth certificate was obtained, but later got lost. Civil service and general public should note.

AMUNUBA: I, formerly known as **MISS AMUNUBA KELECHUKWU OGADI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs AGUZIE KELECHI OGADIMMA**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

UDENSI: I, formerly known as **MISS UDENSI NGOZI JOSEPHINE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS AZUMA NGOZI JOSEPHINE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

ORJI: I, formerly known as **ORJI GODSON ONYEMAECHE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **A MAECHI GODSON ONYEMAECHE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

OGUNBAMBI: I, formerly known as **MISS OGUNBAMBI TITILOPE SUSSAN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS IGWILO TITILOPE SUSSAN**. All former documents remain valid. Banks and the general public should take note.

CHUKWU: I, formerly known as **MISS EVELYN CHUKWU**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS EVELYN TUBOTUWAERE CHUKWU**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

OLUIKPE: I, formerly known as **OLUIKPE QUEENMARY EZIAKU**, now wish to be known and addressed as **OKECHUKWU QUEENMARY EZIAKU**. All former documents remain valid. Banks and authorities concerned should take note.

NWANKWO: I, formerly known as **NWANKWO CHINAZAEKPERE PRECIOUS**, now wish to be known and addressed as **CHIMA CHINAZAEKPERE PRECIOUS**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

OFONAGORO: I, formerly known as **CHINWE HOPE OFONAGORO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS CHINWE HOPE ONWUSULU**. All former documents remain valid. The general public please take note.

SHIMOB: I, formerly known as **MISS. PEACE CHINECHEREM SHIMOB**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS. PEACE CHINECHEREM OFURUM**. All former documents remain valid, banks and general public should take note.

OGBONNA: I, formerly known as **OGBONNA ODINAKA WISDOM**, now wish to be known and addressed as **OGBONNA ODIRICHUKWU WISDOM**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

NWABUEZE: I, formerly known as **NWABUEZE KELECHI MIKE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **NWABUEZE KELECHI MICHEAL**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

OKPAPI: I, formerly known as **MISS CYNTHIA OKPAPI**, now wish to be known and address as **MRS. CYNTHIA UWAWUIKE EMEAGI**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

OKORIE: I, formerly known as **OKORIE CHINENYE CONFIDENCE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **UNOKA CHINENYE CONFIDENCE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

EDWARD: I, formerly known as **EDWARD MICHEAL**, now wish to be known and addressed as **EDWARD ELISHA MICHAEL-AGBONZEKE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

Okwaraezezie: I, formerly known as Miss Okwaraezezie Susan Akunna and Miss Okwaraezezie Precious Akunna, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS NNADI SUSAN AKUNNA**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

That in my name was Wrongly arrange as Nwokeaka Chukwudi Chinemerem, instead of **NWOKEAKA CHINEMEREM CHUKWUDI**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

This is to certify that Atuka Anulika Grace and Atuka Grace Anulika are one and the same person now wish to be known as **NWONU ANULI GRACE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

AJAGWU: I, formerly known as **MISS A JAGWU OLUCHUKWU EMMACULATA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS IWUCHUKWU MICHELLE OLUCHI**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

My name **ONYEAMA NICKSON OBUMNEME** was wrongly written in my Baptism Ledger/ my Baptism card issued by **ST. MICHAELS' CATHOLIC CHURCH, ASATA, ENUGU**. Henceforth wish to be corrected and addressed as **ONYEAMA NIXON OBUMNEME**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

Ohajiego: I, formerly known as Miss Ohajiego Chibuzor Martha and Mrs Leonard Chibuzor Martha, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS CHINEDU CHIBUZOR MARTHA**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

ANUSI: I, formerly known as **CHINAEMELUM DELPHINE ANUSI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **CHINAEMELUM DELPHINE IBEANU**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

SAMUEL: I, formerly known as **SAMUEL CHUKWUEBUKA ANYADORO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **ANYADOROH DONALD CHUKWUEBUKA**. Also, my correct date of birth is 30/04/1996 and not 01/01/1996. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

OPARA: I, formerly known as **MISS OPARA NGOZICHUKWUKA UDOKA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS NWAOKOH-EMMANUEL NGOZICHUKWUKA UDOKA**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note.

OGBONNA: I, formerly known as **MISS OGBONNA MARGARET OLUCHUKWU**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS OKU MARGARET OLUCHUKWU**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note.

OKEREKE: I, formerly known as **CHUKWUEMEKA MICHAEL OKEREKE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **CHUKWUEMEKA MICHAEL MADUAKOLAM**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

OKLIE: I, formerly known as **MISS OKLIE JULIET CHINYERE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS EBELCHUKWU JULIET CHINYERE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

KALU: I, formerly known as **KALU OGBONNE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **KALU OGBONNE OBUBA**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

OGO: I, formerly known as **OGO NGOZI CHIGOZIE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **CHIGOZIE NGOZI**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

AGWU: I, formerly known as **AGWU KALU**, now wish to be known and addressed as **AGWU UGOCHI KALU**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

NWANKWO: I, formerly known as **NWANKWO BLESSING**, now wish to be known and addressed as **IFEANYI BLESSING OGECHI** my correct date of birth is 26/5/1977 the general public please take note

ONWUKA: I, formerly known as **ONWUKA COMFORT**, now wish to be known and addressed as **KALU COMFORT ONWUKA**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

IHUOMA: I, formerly known as **MISS IHUOMA NWAUBANI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS UKANDU IHUOMA KINGSLEY**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I, ONUIRI MAUREEN HAPURUCHI (Nee Anya), wish to state that my correct date of birth is 9th January, 1981. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

UDEH: I, formerly known as **UDEH EBERECHUKWU**, now wish to be known and addressed as **NNABUIHE EBERE** my correct date of birth is 02/04/1975. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

IWUOHA: I, formerly known as **IFEYINWA IJEOMA IWUOHA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **IFEYINWA IJEOMA SAMPSON-IWUOHA**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

SOLOMON: I, formerly known as **MERCY INNOCENT SOLOMON**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MERCY OJOI ASIBA ESSIEN**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

ODIMEGWU: I, formerly known as **MISS ODIMEGWU HENRIETTA CHIBUZO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs EBBE HENRIETTA CHIBUZO**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

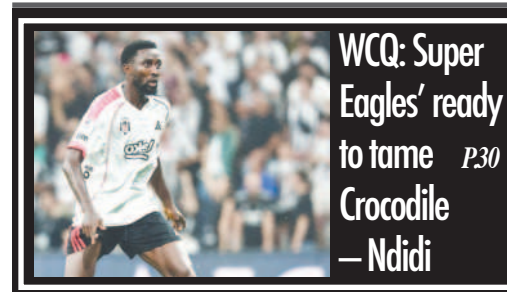
UZOAGBADO: I, formerly known as **UZOAGBADO STELLA CHINWEIFENILE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **UZOAGBADO STELLA ADAOBI** my correct date of birth is 26/5/1977. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

ODILICHUKWU: I, formerly known as **MISS ODILICHUKWU OLUEBUBE MIRACLE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS ANENE OLUEBUBE MIRACLE**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

ONUORAH: I, formerly known as **EBERECHUKWU SCHOLASTICA ONUORAH**, now wish to be known and addressed as **EBERECHUKWU SCHOLASTICA ONYEKA**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

MARTINS: I, formerly known as **MISS MARTINS PRECIOUS AMARACHI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS AMANZE PRECIOUS AMARACHI**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I known as Akeredolu Oluwole Ojo wish to state that the name Akeredolu Oluwole Ojo and Akeredolu Oluwole refers to the same person, now wish to be known and addressed as **Akeredolu Oluwole Ojo**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.



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Air Peace, global aviation industry and prestige to Nigeria

Fred Chukwuelobe
Guest Columnist

On October 26, 2025, Air Peace Airlines Limited will add the lucrative Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja (IATA code, ABV), and the London Heathrow (LHR) route to its network. The airline will also in 48 hours after add the ABV-London Gatwick (LGW) route. This will bring to three the number of UK destinations Air Peace will be flying into, that is, in addition to the highly successful Murtala Muhammed International Airport (LOS), Lagos, to London Gatwick (LGW) it currently operates.

Last August, Air Peace received another Boeing 777-200ER aircraft with registration number 5N-CEG, bringing to four the number of wide-body aircraft in its fleet to service these new routes. The upcoming London routes will increase their share of passenger volume into London, a market that had for years been dominated by foreign “big players” in the aviation industry.

As Air Peace expands its horizons with new Abuja-London routes, it will now operate direct flights from Abuja to London's Heathrow and Gatwick airports.

Following the Abuja-London routes take-off, Air Peace is taking passengers directly from Nigerian airports straight to the UK. It is also offering round-trip tickets starting from ₦1 million, which is significantly lower than the average fares offered by other airlines on that route. Passengers will be flown in Air Peace's wide-body Boeing 777-200 aircraft, providing them with enhanced comfort and a premium cabin experience, and feted with Nigerian dishes.

The new routes will offer seamless connections to multiple destinations across Nigeria, including Lagos, Port Harcourt, Enugu, Benin, Warri, Owerri, Kano, Yola, Gombe and Asaba, a significant milestone for Air Peace, which will undoubtedly solidify its position as a leader in local, regional and intercontinental aviation in Nigeria. It will increase the travel options available to the flying public, reduce costs and enhance connectivity between Nigeria and the UK.

The launch of the two routes is a result of persistent efforts by the President Bola Tinubu administration to secure slots for Air Peace at Heathrow Airport. Chairman/CEO of the airline, Chief Allen Ifechukwu Onyema, CON, has acknowledged this and has also expressed gratitude to the British government and the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, SAN, for their support in making this route a reality.

Speaking on the impending international routes while receiving the latest addition to the airline's fleet, Chief Onyema said: “Air Peace will also begin direct flights from Lagos to São Paulo, Brazil; Lagos to Antigua and Barbuda, in the Caribbean.” Its Lagos-Brazil direct flights will cut down on the number of hours passengers spend from Lagos to the Samba City to just seven and a half.

He added that, right from 2014 when it began



commercial operations, Air Peace resolved to become a big player in not just the Nigerian aviation sector but internationally, telling the world that “Nigeria was tired of playing second fiddle and is determined to become a big player in the industry.”

From its record seven aircraft upon its debut on October 24, 2014, Air Peace has today transcended the Nigerian aviation skies into the West African sub-region and has continued to soar into international skies where it is spreading its wings, to the admiration of Nigerians who had waited with bated breath for an airline to call their own.

As a new airline, Air Peace began with a fleet of three Dornier 328 aircraft for charter services and four Boeing 737-500 aircraft with a capacity of 114 seats for both passenger and cargo services. As demand for air travel grew over the years, it became evident that more aircraft were needed to satisfy the flying public. Between 2015 and 2017, the airline acquired eight additional Boeing 737-300 aircraft, each with a capacity of 136 seats. Inundated with pleas by members of the flying public to extend its services to many unserved and underserved domestic and regional routes, Air Peace procured six 50-seater Embraer 145 jets in 2018 to drive its ‘No-City-Left-Behind’ project under its subsidiary, Air Peace Hopper.

Within two years of operations, Air Peace got its International Air Transport Association Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) certificate in 2016 and was admitted as a member of IATA shortly after.

Last month, it received its second Embraer 190 aircraft, boosting its fleet and strengthening capacity for domestic and regional operations. The airline had received its first E190 last June, highlighting its strategic investment in modern, right-sized aircraft for Nigeria's aviation sector. The 96-seater jet, with registration mark 5N-CER, will be joined by additional Embraer units expected next year. This in addition to 10 Boeing 737-Max on order fully paid and awaiting delivery. At the reception of the new aircraft in Lagos recently, Air Peace said

Air Peace is the leading light in Nigeria's quest to become a key player in the industry. Notwithstanding some challenges occasioned by international aeropolitics, some orchestrated plots to sabotage the airline and others, Air Peace has maintained a commanding presence in the skies, with no single fatality crash since its inception. This is a result of a conscious and intentional effort to make the safety of passengers and equipment a priority.

its fleet expansion was intentional and in line with its mission to ease air travel in Nigeria and beyond its borders.

In a decade of flight operations, Air Peace has surpassed its target and today occupies the enviable position as the biggest airline in West and Central Africa, with an encouraging fleet size.

The recent laying of the foundation stone for the airline's maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) facility in Lagos has further solidified Air Peace not just as a challenger to foreign dominance of

our skies, but also as a key player in the billions of dollars controlled by foreign airlines. At the foundation-laying ceremony, Chief Onyema indicated that the MRO has the capacity to cut down on the about \$2.5 billion that Nigerian airlines spend annually on services in South Africa; Ethiopia; Boeing, USA; Israel; Embraer, Brazil; and the United Kingdom, among others.

Upon completion, the MRO will create more jobs and conserve the nation's scarce foreign reserves by checking capital flight. Chief Onyema is leading Air Peace to challenge the status quo and it is a matter of time before Nigerians will start enjoying lower ticket fares on international routes as their flag carrier challenges the skies.

More than 11 years after that idea was born, it has germinated and exceeded expectations. As of today, over 3,000 people are employed by Air Peace directly, with millions of others taken care of indirectly and through ancillary services.

With 38 aircraft conveying passengers to 20 local destinations and 10 regional and international airports, Air Peace is the largest Nigerian and West African airline today. It is not stopping at that, as it is set to add more international destinations to its impressive network.

According to an aviation expert, “The value the airline has added to Nigeria's image, through its corporate social responsibility projects, in airlifting Nigerians from troubled regions of the world, South Africa, Libya, Sudan, Ukraine, is unquantifiable.”

At the moment, Air Peace is the leading light in Nigeria's quest to become a key player in the industry. Notwithstanding some challenges occasioned by international aeropolitics, some orchestrated plots to sabotage the airline and others, Air Peace has maintained a commanding presence in the skies, with no single fatality crash since its inception. This is a result of a conscious and intentional effort to make the safety of passengers and equipment a priority and, of course, the Tinubu administration's determination to shield the aviation sector from questionable investors and allow Nigerian-owned airlines to soar.

Fortunately, with the Tinubu administration's support, Air Peace is reaching farther into the skies. With Keyamo as the minister of aviation and aerospace development, the nation's entry points are receiving the desired facelift and burgeoning airlines like Air Peace will key into the new impetus and ensure that Nigeria cuts a big pie of the lucrative aviation revenue, which is currently being dominated by the likes of Ethiopian Airlines, British Airways, Qatar Airlines, Turkish Airlines, Air France, KLM and Virgin Atlantic, among others.

Air Peace is soaring in peace and safety, higher into the skies, giving Nigerians bragging rights and offering passengers the opportunity to choose their own and be treated as stakeholders rather than as foreigners.

•Chukwuelobe is a Lagos-based journalist and aviation analyst