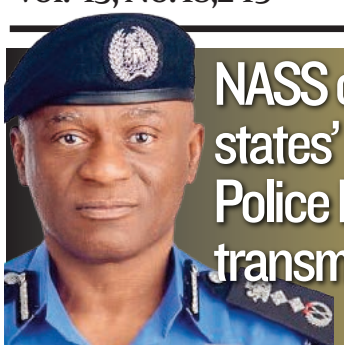
The Guardian

Conscience, Nurtured by Truth

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Opposition decry shrinking campaign space, threaten boycott





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Atiku, PDP, Obi raise alarm over alleged plot to weaken opposition

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Senate threatens review of China's BASA deal amid illegal mining concerns

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World Bank criticises states for prioritising roads over social services

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Panorama

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SPOTLIGHT

Dangote Refinery targets December listing as NGX market value eyes N230tr

By **Helen Oji**

DANGOTE Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals is targeting an early December listing on the Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX), following the closure of its N2.15 trillion initial public offering (IPO), a development that could significantly increase the value of equities listed on the Exchange.

The refinery was preparing to officially list its shares on the NGX in early December, with the development potentially pushing the equities market capitalisation to N230 trillion.

The expected listing comes after the refinery closed its public offer on October 27, following an extension of the subscription period from the initial October 13 deadline.

The offer involved 4.1 billion ordinary shares at N525 each, giving a potential gross capital raise of N2.1525 trillion if fully subscribed.

According to the revised offer timetable, registrars are expected to complete the collation of applications by November 3, while the proposed basis of allotment is scheduled to be submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on November 10.

NBS: Enugu records lowest tax revenue-to-IGR ratio

ENUGU State recorded the lowest tax revenue-to-Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) ratio in 2025, StatiSense has said, quoting figures from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

According to statistics published on StatiSense's verified X handle, only N51.52 billion, or 12.67 per cent of the N406.7 billion in IGR generated by Enugu State in 2025, came from tax revenues, while the rest came from non-tax revenues.

Recall that the NBS had earlier in the year rated Enugu State as number one in IGR growth among the 36 states and the FCT, coming only behind Lagos and Rivers States, in that order.

However, in terms of the tax component of IGR, the state recorded the lowest tax-to-IGR ratio, while Abia State led with 100 per cent of its N70.41 billion IGR in 2025 coming from taxes.

Abia was followed by the FCT, which had 100 per cent of its N356.34 billion 2025 IGR coming from tax revenues.

Bayelsa (99.39 per cent), Rivers (96.72 per cent) and Sokoto (92.44 per cent) make up the top five tax-dependent states for IGR.

N17 trillion lost to abandoned projects, says FG

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

THE Federal Government has claimed that it lost an estimated N17 trillion to abandoned projects.

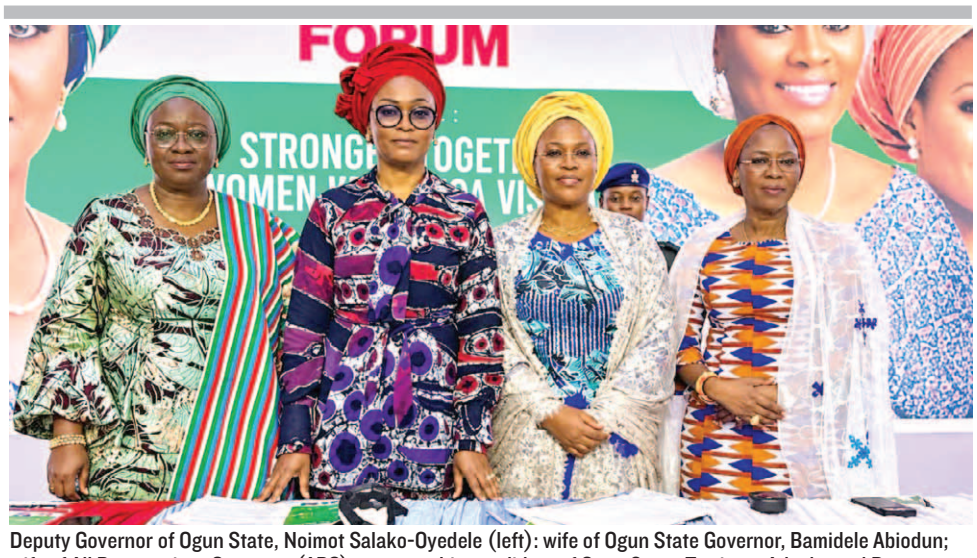
The Minister of State for Industry, Trade and Investment, John Owan Enoh, represented by the Permanent Secretary of the ministry, Dr Chris Osa Isokpunwu, described project management as indispensable to translating government policies and development strategies into tangible results.

The minister raised the alarm at the 8th annual induction and conference ceremony of the Chartered Institute of Project Managers of Nigeria (CIPMN).

He said Nigeria's recurring problem of abandoned and uncompleted projects had continued to tie down enormous public resources that could otherwise have been invested in infrastructure, industrial development, employment generation and social services.

Meanwhile, CIPMN has developed a project management curriculum for Nigerian universities as part of efforts to address the country's abandoned projects, estimated by the institute at over N17 trillion.

The Registrar-General and Chief Executive Officer of CIPMN, Henry Ifeanyi Mbadiwe, disclosed this at the institute's 8th annual induction and conference ceremony, where the Federal Government also called for stronger professional standards and accountability in project execution.



Deputy Governor of Ogun State, Noimot Salako-Oyedele (left): wife of Ogun State Governor, Bamidele Abiodun; wife of All Progressives Congress (APC) governorship candidate of Ogun State, Temitope Adeola, and Deputy Governorship Candidate, APC, Ogun State, Kudirat Adegunwa-Balogun, during the Ogun State Political Women Stakeholders' Forum held at the Cultural Centre, Kuto, Abeokuta, yesterday.

Toluwanisings' burial: Police broker peace between wife, father, others

THE Oyo State Police Command has brokered peace between the family and associates of late gospel singer, Olayemi Bolaji, popularly known as Toluwanisings, following disagreements over his burial arrangements.

The command said the parties signed a peace undertaking on Tuesday at its headquarters in Eleyele, Ibadan, after being invited by the Commissioner of Police, Abimbola Olugbenga.

The intervention followed concerns over allegations of conspiracy, defamation of character and conduct capable of causing a breach of the peace amid public exchanges over the singer's death and burial. The intervention, as made known in a statement by the Police Public Relations Officer, Ayanlade Olayinka, was necessitated by allegations of conspiracy, defamation of character and conduct likely to cause a breach of peace between the feuding parties in Ibadan on Tuesday.

The burial arrangement of Toluwanisings, who died on October 14 2026, has generated heated argument over a reported plan not to bury him in his house in Adegbayi in Egbeda Local Government Area.

... DAY 4574

OUR GIRLS STILL MISSING

Tope Templer Olaiya,
News Editor
@TopeTempler

RANDOM FACTS

- Sophomaniac (noun): A person who believes they're a lot smarter than they actually are.
- The chills you get when listening to music are caused by your brain releasing dopamine, a neurotransmitter that causes pleasure.
- For those born on November 22, 1989, you have a special birthday in the year 2033. Why? On 11/22/33, you are turning 44.
- Love Island, the British reality show is coming to Nigeria. It is the second version of the show in Africa, after Love Island South Africa.

TODAY'S QUOTE

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

We are reminded that, in the fleeting time we have on this Earth, what matters is not wealth, or status, or power, or fame, but rather how well we have loved and what small part we have played in making the lives of other people better."

BARACK OBAMA

The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet.

ARISTOTLE

TODAY IN HISTORY

• 2024 - Nigeria
Pres. Bola Tinubu sworn in seven new ministers to his cabinet. They are Nentawe Yilwatda (Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction); Muhammadu Dingyadi (Labour & Employment); Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu (Foreign Affairs); Jumoke Oduwole (Industry, Trade & Investment); Idi Maiha (Livestock Development); Yusuf Ata (Housing & Urban Development) and Suwaiba Ahmad (Education)

• 2015 - Nigeria
Ebola survivor and official of First Consultant Medical Centre, Lagos, Dr. Ada Igonoh, gave birth to a baby girl in the United States.

• 2014 - Iraq
Thousands commemorated slaying of Prophet Mohammad's grandson Hussein at battle of Kerbala in AD680 an event that defines Shi'ite rift with Sunni Islam. At the ritual, Shi'ites beat their chests and gash their heads with swords to show their grief and echo the Imam's suffering.

• 2008 - USA
The United States Presidential race was called for Barack Obama at 11p.m. An hour later, Obama was on stage at Grant Park in Chicago, speaking to thousands of supporters. Obama beat McCain 52 to 46% in the popular vote and 365 to 173 in the electoral college. He became the first person of biracial or African descent to be elected President of the United States of America.

• 2005 - S/Africa
South Africa's ex-deputy president was indicted on corruption charge. Jacob Zuma, who had been seen as Pres. Thabo Mbeki's successor, was fired in June after being implicated in the scandal involving his financial adviser and friend, Schabir Shaik.

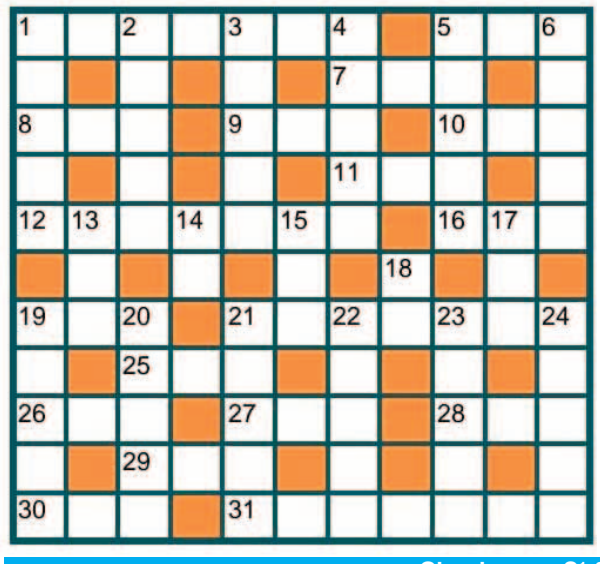
• 2005 - Sri Lanka
Victor Hettigoda, wealthy presidential candidate, said he will use his personal fortune to buy a cow for every home if he is elected in the Nov 17 elections.

• 2004 - USA
Elizabeth Edwards, wife of Democratic vice-presidential candidate, John Edwards was diagnosed with breast cancer the day her husband and Senator John Kerry conceded the presidential race to George W. Bush.

• 2004 - Nigeria
A contingent of 50 Nigerian soldiers arrived in Darfur, Sudan, the first of 3,000 extra African Union troops deployed to monitor a shaky cease-fire.

• 1998 - South Africa
The 3,500 page report of the Truth & Reconciliation Committee was handed over from Desmond Tutu to Pres. Mandela.

CROSS WORD PUZZLE



• ACROSS
1. Sleeveless undergarment, (7).
5. Call for help, (3).
7. Chew, (3).
8. Give help to somebody, (3).
9. Male offspring, (3).
10. Feel regret for, (3).
11. Whirlpool bath, (3).
12. Part of the ear, (7).
16. Animal kept at home, (3).
19. Stake, (3).
21. LGA in Ekiti State, (7).
25. Burnish, (3).
26. Town in Ondo State, (3).
27. 'Arm' in Edo language, (3).
28. Corp. Affairs Commission, abbr., (3).
29. The atmosphere we breathe, (3).
30. Came across, (3).
31. Ekiti State ex-Governor, (7).

• DOWN
1. Cover, (5).
2. Lowest point, (5).
3. Noose, (5).
4. Nervous, (5).
5. Flexible strip for binding, (5).
6. Cloth used on bed, (5).
13. The Egbaland, (3).
14. Pound, abbr., (2).
15. Large passenger vehicle, (3).
17. Yoruba 'palm wine', (3).
18. Depart, (2).
19. Sweeping implement, (5).
20. Care for, (5).
21. Area in Abeokuta, (5).
22. Cleverly escape, (5).
23. Town in Nasarawa State, (5).
24. Indicating 'dead body', (5).

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Check page 31 for solution to the puzzle

News

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NASS confirms 28 states' nod to State Police Bill, begins transmission process

From **Azimazi Momoh Jimoh, John Akubo** and **Joel Oladele**, Abuja

THE National Assembly has confirmed that 28 Houses of Assembly have approved the Constitution amendment bill seeking to establish State Police Services.

This paves the way for the bill's transmission to President Bola Tinubu for assent.

In a statement yesterday, the Office of the Clerk to the National Assembly disclosed that the number of approvals exceeded the constitutionally prescribed threshold of 24 states, representing not less than two-thirds of the 36 Houses of Assembly.

The development marks a significant step towards establishing state police in Nigeria, following years of debate over the need to decentralise the country's policing structure to address growing security challenges.

However, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Gen. Olufemi Oluyede, emphasised the critical importance of robust inter-service collaboration and strategic synergy across all branches of the Armed Forces to counter evolving national security threats.

According to the statement signed by the Clerk, Kamoru Ogunlana, the office received and verified reports from 28 state legislatures confirming their approval of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (Sixth Alteration) Bill.

The bill, which seeks to provide for the establishment of State Police Services and related matters, was transmitted to the 36 Houses of Assembly on September 16, 2026, for consideration and approval. The state legislatures were requested to communicate their decisions to the National Assembly within 30 days, with the stipulated period expiring on October 15.

Meanwhile, the Clerk said his office would continue to receive reports from state assemblies until the bill was transmitted for presidential assent.

He explained that the 28 approvals satisfied the requirement under Section 9 of the 1999 Constitution, which stipulates that a constitutional alteration must be approved by not less than two-thirds of all Houses of Assembly.

The statement added that the Office of the Clerk had undertaken the necessary administrative verification of the reports and accompanying Votes and Proceedings to establish their authenticity and ensure that the records accurately reflected the decisions of the respective legislatures.

Ogunlana also clarified that Section 9 of the Constitution did not expressly prescribe a Third Reading for a Constitution Alteration Bill, unlike the procedure applicable to ordinary bills.

He said, having secured the required number of state approvals, the National Assembly was undertaking the necessary administrative processes to facilitate the transmission of the bill to President Tinubu for assent.

The process, he noted, would be carried out in accordance with the Acts Authentication Act, CAP A2 (LFN) 2004.

The National Assembly commended the state legislatures for their cooperation and response in considering the proposed constitutional amendment.

It described the development as an important step in ongoing efforts to strengthen Nigeria's security architecture and deepen the country's federal system.

The establishment of state police has remained a major subject of national debate, particularly amid persistent security challenges, including banditry, kidnapping, terrorism and communal violence.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

CDS urges enhanced inter-service synergy against insecurity, civilian support, intel sharing

Police declare readiness for 2027 election as Ezekwesili seeks voter register cleanup

From **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

THE Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Olatunji Disu, has said the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is ready for the successful conduct of the 2027 general elections.

Disu gave this assurance in Abuja yesterday when a delegation led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel paid him a courtesy visit.

With the police readiness, former Vice President of the World Bank, Dr Obiageli Ezekwesili, called for the immediate constitution of an independent Citizens' Electoral Rescue Team to oversee the clean-up of the voter register and restore public confidence in the elections.

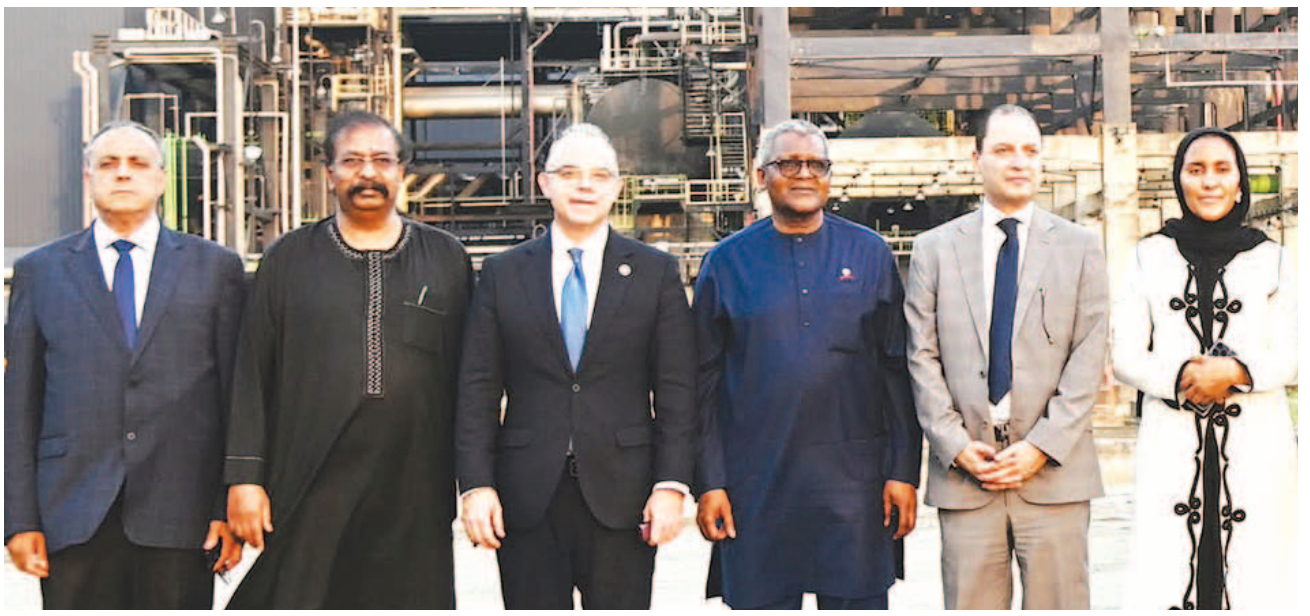
The IGP told the delegation, led by Dr Leonardo Simao, that the NPF had adequately been prepared for the elections.

"As I speak with you, we have embarked on the training of our officers and have updated their knowledge about the elections. We have taken note of peculiar issues that will be related to the 2027 general elections.

"Even though NPF is in charge of the internal security of the country and the elections, we know that we cannot do it alone. We can only succeed with the assistance of our sister security agencies. So, we have been having collaborative meetings and trainings together," he said.

Disu said the force had held a series of training sessions with personnel of the Army, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) and the Department of State Services (DSS) in preparation for the election.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng



Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Arab Republic of Egypt, Karim Badawi (left); Group Vice President, Oil & Gas and Fertiliser, Dangote Industries Limited, Devakumar Edwin; Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade of Egypt, Dr Mohamed Farid; President, Dangote Industries Limited, Aliko Dangote; Vice Chairman of Investment Authority, Egypt, Walid Anwar; Group Executive Director, Oil & Gas and Fertiliser, Dangote Industries Limited, Fatima Aliko Dangote during the visit of Senior Government Delegation from Egypt to Dangote Petroleum Refinery & Petrochemicals and Fertiliser, in Lagos, on Monday.

Lagos, Enugu, Bayelsa top BudgIT's fiscal performance ranking

From **Terhemba Daka**, Abuja

- World Bank, others fault states' failure to use revenue windfall judiciously
- Reveal FAAC transfers accounted for 73% of states' revenues

LAGOS State has emerged Nigeria's most fiscally sustainable state, while Cross River ranked last among the 35 states assessed in BudgIT's 2026 State of States report.

However, the World Bank, BudgIT Foundation and Ford Foundation faulted state governments over their failure to translate increased revenue allocations into improved welfare and better public services.

In the 11th edition of the BudgIT report, launched yesterday under the theme 'From Allocation to Impact: Rethinking State Spending Priorities', the civic tech non-profit said Enugu and Bayelsa ranked second and third, respectively, while Delta and Kebbi completed the top five.

The organisation said Plateau, Kogi, Osun, and Ogun ranked 34th, 33rd, 32nd and 31st, respectively, as Lagos scored 66.97 points, ahead of Enugu (65.45) and Bayelsa (64.3 points).

BudgIT said the assessment examined states' ability to generate revenue, manage operating costs, invest in critical sectors, and control debt.

"The fiscal dividend of macroeconomic reform must be assessed by its developmental consequences, not merely by the nominal growth of government receipts," the organisation said.

It pointed out that the assessment was based on four pillars: revenue performance (40 per cent); fiscal viability (30 per cent), debt sustainability (15 per cent), and spending on selected critical sectors (15 per cent).

The report said the selected sectors are agriculture, health, education, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH).

BudgIT said Lagos retained the top position with internally generated revenue (IGR) of N1.71 trillion in 2025, up 35.67 per cent from N1.25 trillion in 2024.

The total revenue for the state increased by 19.26 per cent from N2.25 trillion in 2024 to N2.68 trillion in 2025, according to the non-profit.

Enugu's second-place position reportedly followed a 125.91 per cent increase in IGR to N407.76 billion from N180.5 billion in 2024.

However, BudgIT said non-tax receipts accounted for 90.79 per cent of the absolute increase in the state's IGR, raising questions about the sustainability of the revenue growth.

The report said Oyo and Gombe also recorded IGR growth of 112.79 per cent and 111.28 per cent, respectively.

Jigawa, Katsina, Borno, Bauchi and Ebonyi were among the leading states in the report's assessment on spending on selected critical sectors.

WORLD Bank, BudgIT Foundation and Ford Foundation said the growing fiscal resources available to states, largely driven by increased Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) disbursements, had not resulted in commensurate improvements in healthcare, education, social protection and other critical sectors.

Speaking yesterday at the Abuja launch of BudgIT's 11th State of States Report, the World Bank's Senior Country Economist, Ms Gloria Joseph-Raji, said state governments must strengthen public financial management and ensure that increased revenues translate into tangible development outcomes.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Nigeria's foreign reserves record slowest monthly growth in 2026

'Weak manufacturing sector threatens $1tr economy ambition'

By **Isaac Chibuife** and **Abigail Ikhaghu**

NIGERIA'S foreign reserves increased by $295.35 million in October, the weakest monthly growth recorded so far in 2026, as the pace of accumulation slowed considerably after stronger gains in the preceding months.

Meanwhile, economist, Prof. Akpan Ekpo, has warned that Nigeria's ambition to build a $1 trillion economy by 2030 will remain a pipe dream without significant investment in manufacturing, citing the sector's weak contribution to economic output and exports.

Data from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) showed that gross reserves rose from $54.93 billion at the end of September to $55.22 billion on October 30, extending the country's reserve accumulation trend despite the modest addition.

The reserves opened October at $54.95 billion on October 2 and maintained a gradual upward movement, reaching approximately $55.26 billion on October 27 before declining slightly to $55.22 billion at the end of the month.

October's increase was considerably below the gains recorded in previous months, highlighting a moderation in the pace of reserve growth after a period of stronger accumulation.

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Senate threatens review of China's BASA deal amid illegal mining concerns

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

SENATE has threatened to review Nigeria's air service agreement with China unless Nigerian airlines are granted reciprocal rights to operate direct flights between both countries, escalating pressure on the Federal Government to confront what lawmakers consider an imbalance in bilateral aviation relations.

The warning followed a motion sponsored by Senate Whip, Mohammed Tahir Monguno, representing Borno North, and seconded by Senator Abdul Ahmed Ningi of Bauchi Central.

The lawmakers argued that Nigeria should no longer accept an arrangement that allowed foreign carriers to enjoy access to its aviation market without ensuring comparable opportunities for Nigerian airlines.

The Senate consequently urged the Federal Government to renegotiate the Bilateral Air Service Agreement (BASA) with China, insisting that reciprocity must become a central condition of the deal.

Monguno said the growing economic relationship between Nigeria and China made the issue too important to ignore.

He cited bilateral trade estimated at $18 billion in the first half of 2025, representing a 25 per cent increase over the corresponding period, while total trade in 2024 stood at about $28 billion.

He also pointed to the large Nigerian community in China and the substantial number of Chinese nationals living in Nigeria as reasons for expanding direct air connectivity.

According to figures presented during the debate, more than 100,000 Nigerians live in China, while over 500,000 Chinese nationals reside in Nigeria.

Despite these extensive commercial and people-to-people ties, Monguno said Nigerian travellers often have to pass through other countries, including Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia and the United Kingdom, to reach China.

The arrangement, lawmakers argued, adds time and cost to journeys while limiting the opportunities available to Nigerian aviation operators.

Monguno called for coordinated action by the relevant ministries and aviation regulators to secure improved access for Nigerian carriers.

Air Peace, United Nigeria Airlines, Azman Air and Ibom Air were mentioned during the debate as potential Nigerian operators, subject to regulatory approvals, operational capacity and commercial arrangements.

THE debate took a sharper turn when Ningi raised concerns about the conduct of some Chinese mining operators in Nigeria.

The senator alleged that certain mining activities in Bauchi State and other parts of the country might be operating in violation of Nigerian laws.

He also expressed concern that raw minerals were allegedly being exported without adequate local processing, potentially denying Nigeria jobs, industrial development and greater economic value.

The allegations were raised during the Senate debate and were not independently established in the proceedings.

At the end of the debate, the Senate adopted the motion and urged the Ministry of Aviation to pursue a renegotiation of the agreement, with particular attention to commercial terms, operational schedules and reciprocal access for Nigerian airlines.

It also urged the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to engage its Chinese counterpart on improved business visa facilitation and reciprocal flight slots.



Chairman, Senate Committee on Army, Abdulaziz Yar'Adua (left); Chairman, Senate Committee on Banking, Insurance and other Financial Institutions, Adetokunbo Abiru; Senate President, Godswill Akpabio; Senate Leader, Opeyemi Bamidele, and Minority Leader of the Senate, Abba Moro after considering a motion on the need to renegotiate the commercial terms and operational schedules of the existing the Nigeria-China Bilateral Air Service Agreement at the Senate Chamber, National Assembly Complex, Abuja, yesterday.

NPA declares 25% increase in non-oil exports in two years

By **Adaku Onyenucheya**

NIGERIA has recorded over 25 per cent increase in non-oil exports in the last two years following the Federal Government's policies, the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) has stated.

The Managing Director, NPA, Dr Abubarkar Dantsoho, stated this while speaking at the ongoing Annual World Ports Conference in London, organised by the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH).

According to him, Nigeria's population gives it immense advantage among its peers in West and Central Africa, adding that recent reforms have also massively increased cargo throughputs.

He said the NPA has everything in place to sustain the growth in exports, adding that it was the reason it set up the Export Processing Terminal.

He said Nigeria was better placed today to take advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AFCTA) as a result of the reforms of the present administration.

The NPA boss revealed that as a result of the reforms, revenue from ports across Nigeria has quadrupled.

NiDCOM protests Gambia's move to sack 57 Nigerian bank workers

NIGERIANS in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) has opposed a directive by the Central Bank of The Gambia ordering banks to sack non-Gambian workers, a move that could affect 57 Nigerians.

NiDCOM Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Abike Dabiri-Erewa, described the directive issued on September 16 as worrying, saying it threatens the jobs of 57 Nigerian professionals working in the country.

In a statement yesterday, NiDCOM spokesperson Abdur-Rahman Balogun said the Central Bank of The Gambia gave banks until December 31, 2026, to replace all foreign workers with Gambians.

The affected Nigerians work in four Nigerian-owned banks and have valid residence and work permits, according to the commission.

NiDCOM explained that the four banks play an important role in The Gambia's economy. They control 37.2 per cent of the country's total bank deposits, valued at 35.3 billion Gambian dalasis, and 32.6 per cent of loans worth 7.67 billion dalasis.

Work may commence on Abidjan–Lagos highway as ministers endorse initial sections

• IOM, ECOWAS deepen talks on free movement, regional migration

By **Oludare Richards**

MINISTERS from Nigeria and four other West African countries have endorsed an initial set of sections of the proposed Abidjan–Lagos Corridor Highway for progression towards construction, while calling for coordinated efforts to secure the funding and land required to advance the project.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Ministerial Steering Committee of the Abidjan–Lagos Corridor Highway Development Project in Lomé, Togo. The meeting brought together ministers, engineers, senior officials and development partners from Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Côte d'Ivoire.

The proposed six-lane highway is intended to link the five countries along the coastal corridor, with the project expected to improve regional transport connectivity and facilitate trade and movement across their borders.

Chairman of the Steering Committee and Minister of Public Works of Nigeria, David Nweze Umahi, stressed the need for the five participating countries to coordinate their efforts to move the project into its next phase.

Ministers from Ghana, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire and Benin also reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the highway towards construction, while urging the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Management Authority (ALCoMA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Development Bank and other stakeholders to support efforts to mobilise the required resources.

A major challenge identified at the meeting is the need to secure funding for right-of-way acquisition, as well as debt and equity contributions required for construction.

MEANWHILE, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have agreed to strengthen cooperation on migration management, including free movement, labour mobility, climate-related displacement and the reintegration of returning migrants.

The commitment followed a working visit by the IOM Regional Director for West and Central Africa, Sylvia Ekra, to the ECOWAS Commission headquarters in Abuja.

The discussions also covered migration governance and ways to align the partnership more closely with the priorities of member states, according to a statement issued by the regional bloc.

Correctional Service assures Reps of inmates' safety amid Ebola scare

From **Joel Oladele**, Abuja

• Reps summon CBN gov over alleged pension irregularities

THE Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS) has assured the House of Representatives of measures to protect inmates and personnel against possible Ebola transmission in custodial centres nationwide.

The Controller-General of Corrections, Sylvester Nwakuche, gave the assurance yesterday at a public hearing on the Ebola outbreak in Nigeria, organised by the joint House Committees on Infectious Diseases, Healthcare Services, Aviation and Interior in Abuja.

Nwakuche said the Service was strengthening disease surveillance, infection prevention and emergency response measures to prevent an outbreak in correctional facilities.

He identified overcrowding, shared facilities and frequent human interactions as factors that could complicate disease containment in custodial centres.

He said the Service was prioritising early detection of suspected cases, health screening, provision of personal protective equipment and designated isolation spaces in collaboration with public health authorities.

The controller-general, however, identified inadequate funding, medical infrastructure and protective equipment as major requirements for effective preparedness.

He called on the Federal Government to include the Service in publicly funded health emergency response programmes, noting that custodial centres required protective equipment, disinfectants, screening devices, ambulances and improved medical facilities.

Nwakuche also stressed the need for regular training of correctional officers and healthcare workers to identify suspected cases, use protective equipment and respond to emergencies.

In his remarks, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tajudeen Abbas, called for sustained vigilance against Ebola, despite the evacuation of the confirmed imported case and the absence of established onward transmission.

MEANWHILE, the House of Representatives has summoned the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Olayemi Cardoso, to explain alleged breaches of pension agreements and unpaid retirement benefits owed to former employees of the apex bank.

The House took the decision yesterday after adopting a motion sponsored by Hussaini Jallo, who represents Igabi Federal Constituency, Kaduna State.

The motion raised concerns over alleged violations of approved pension agreements, failure to implement the harmonisation policy and the exclusion of some retirees from general pension increases.

Global data breaches jump 13% in Q3 2026, Ukraine leads surge

• Nigeria ranks 56th as breaches rise by 6% in Q3

By **Adeyemi Adepetun**

CYBERATTACKS are escalating worldwide, with hackers intensifying their activities and breaching systems at an alarming pace.

Latest data from a cybersecurity company, Surfshark, released yesterday, revealed that global breaches in Q3 2026 grew by 13.2 per cent compared to Q2, reaching 121.8 million compromised accounts between July and September.

While the U.S. continues to lead overall numbers with 38.1 million leaked accounts, other countries experienced significant and dramatic shifts during this period.

Most notably, the UK has seen a sharp rise in compromised accounts, doubling its quarterly count to 5.8 million, a 121.6 per cent surge that made it the most affected nation in Europe. At the same time, Ukraine surged to sixth place globally from 47th, with 2.6 million accounts breached in just three months, underscoring intensified cyber pressure and ongoing digital threats in the region.

NNPC considers 5-10% stake sale in proposed IPO

• Plans domestic listing, eyes London, New York secondary markets

By **Helen Oji**

NIGERIAN National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC) is considering selling between five and 10 per cent of its equity through a proposed initial public offering (IPO), as the company moves towards opening its ownership to private investors and strengthening corporate transparency.

The Group Chief Executive Officer of NNPC, Bashir Bayo Ojulari, disclosed this in an interview with *Reuters*, stating the proposed offering would focus mainly on Nigeria's domestic capital market, although the company could also consider secondary listings in London or New York.

Ojulari said NNPC could spend the whole of 2027 preparing for the proposed IPO, indicating that the exercise would be driven primarily by the need to improve corporate governance, transparency and accountability rather than raising additional funds.

NBA raises alarm over remand proceedings, e-filing deficiencies in Ondo

- Groans over network failures, bottlenecks, mandatory hard copies
- Seeks judiciary intervention
- PPDC cautions against AI-driven decisions in justice system

From **Joel Oladele** (Abuja) and **Adewale Momoh** (Akure)

THE Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Akure branch, has expressed concerns over the handling of remand proceedings in Ondo State, alleging that judicial officers may be compromising personal liberty due to what it described as fears of administrative reprisal.

According to the branch, in a communiqué issued at the end of its monthly general meeting, applications for remand are not always subjected to adequate scrutiny.

The NBA Akure branch, in the communiqué signed by its Chairman, Oju Kekemeke, and Secretary, Oluwanike Omotayo, described the situation as a threat to the safeguards contemplated by the Administration of Criminal Justice Law of Ondo State, 2015.

The Association emphasised that decisions affecting personal liberty must be guided strictly by the applicable law and the materials placed before the court, rather than by fear of administrative displeasure.

It, therefore, resolved to engage the leadership of the judiciary to address the concerns.

Read the remaining part of this story on www.guardian.ng

LASIMRA issues ultimatum to ISPs over infrastructure cleanup in Lagos

By **Adeyemi Adepetun**

THE Lagos State Infrastructure Maintenance and Regulatory Agency (LASIMRA) has issued an urgent directive to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) operating within key parts of the state, mandating immediate cleanup and sanitisation of their telecommunications infrastructure.

The notice, signed by the agency's General Manager, Oyekanmi Elegushi, was released on November 2, 2026, and sets a strict deadline ahead of enforcement operations scheduled to begin on Monday, November 9, 2026.

According to LASIMRA, the affected areas include Ilasan and Ikate in Lekki, Allen Avenue in Ikeja, and the Customs Office vicinity, off Toyin Street, Ikeja. The agency emphasised that ISPs must ensure their network infrastructure, particularly cables and associated installations, are properly arranged, secured, and cleared of obstructions or environmental hazards.

The agency said that its enforcement teams would commence operations in the listed areas immediately after the deadline, and warned that service providers who fail to comply risk sanctions.

2027: Osun APC divided over PCC composition list

- Backtracks, renames 'parallel' list as parliamentary campaign committee
- Chieftains fault exclusion of state working committee members

From **Adamu Abuh**, Abuja

FRESH divisions have emerged within the Osun State chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC) over the composition of the state's Presidential Campaign Council (PCC), following the emergence of a new campaign structure headed by the party's governorship candidate in the last election, Bola Oyebamiji.

Some members of the Osun State Executive Committee have rejected the newly released PCC list, questioning Oyebamiji's appointment as Director-General and that of the state APC chairman, Tajudeen Lawal, as Deputy Director-General.

The aggrieved party officials said that the new arrangement appeared to create a parallel campaign structure, despite an earlier presidential directive reportedly naming Governor Ademola Adeleke as Director-General of the Presidential Campaign Council in Osun State.

According to them, Adeleke had subsequently inaugurated a broad-based campaign team to coordinate President Bola Tinubu's re-election campaign across the state, making the emergence of another structure without adequate clarification a potential source of confusion and internal friction.

In an official rejoinder titled, "Official Rejoinder and Rejection of the Osun State Presidential Campaign Council (PCC) List," the officials, in a statement signed by the State Publicity Secretary, Wole Adunola; Welfare Officer, Adesola Ayangbile; Assistant Organising Secretary, Rasheed Adeniji; and Ex-Officio member, Abiola Ololade, declared their rejection of the newly published list in its present form.

They expressed dissatisfaction with what they described as the failure of the composition to reflect established party guidelines, due process and the principle of inclusiveness expected in constituting a statewide campaign structure.

Of particular concern to the officials was the alleged exclusion of members of the State Working Committee, who, according to them, should be statutory members of the council under the applicable party's guidelines.

They maintained that excluding recognised party officials raised serious questions about consultation, due process and respect for the established leadership structure of the APC in the state.

The signatories, who also questioned the rationale behind the emergence of the new arrangement without adequate clarification on its relationship with the campaign team earlier inaugurated by Adeleke, however, suggested that the controversy might be resolved if the newly released list was intended to serve as a Parliamentary Campaign Council rather than the Presidential Campaign Council.

Read the remaining part of this story on www.guardian.ng



Former Minister of Power, Adebayo Adelabu (left); Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, and Chairman of Lagos State All Progressives Congress (APC), Cornelius Ojelabi, during a stakeholders' engagement by the Presidential Campaign Council (PCC) in Lagos, yesterday.

2027 Election: Customs intensifies anti-smuggling operations

Intercepts 3.4 tonnes of cannabis, 23,220 machetes

THE Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Federal Operations Unit (FOU), Zone 'A', has intensified anti-smuggling operations ahead of the 2027 general elections, intercepting 3.4 tonnes of cannabis and 23,220 pieces of new machetes among prohibited goods valued at N6.19 billion.

The Acting Comptroller of the Unit, Oladapo Afeni, disclosed this yesterday in Ikeja, Lagos, during his maiden media briefing, where he said the seizures were recorded within four weeks of intensified enforcement operations.

Afeni said the operation was aimed at preventing the circulation of prohibited goods, protecting the national economy and curbing the movement of items that could threaten public safety and security, particularly as the country prepares for the 2027 general elections.

According to him, the unit intercepted 195 smuggling attempts involving prohibited and restricted items with a total Duty Paid Value (DPV) of N6,194,695,947.05.

The seized items included 5,986 parcels of cannabis weighing 3,407.83 kilogrammes, 23,220 pieces of new machetes, 1,250 cartridges of Red Star 12-calibre ammunition, 400 grammes of cocaine, 100 grammes of methamphetamine and eight live pangolins.

Other seizures comprised 21 foreign-used vehicles, 3,028 bags of 50kg imported rice, 6,949 cartons of spaghetti, 173 cartons of imported frozen poultry products, 1,236 used tyres, 459 bales and 39 jumbo sacks of second-hand clothing, and 8,025 litres of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS).

The unit also intercepted 57 cartons, 37 packs and six pieces of codeine syrup, 250 cartons of Lotus sardines without NAFDAC registration numbers, 101 bags of imported sugar, eight bags of powdered milk, 12 bags of grain oat products, 20 cartons of couscous and a 40-foot container carrying 2,760 office chairs in completely knocked-down form.

Afeni said the interception of the machetes was particularly significant given the approaching elections, warning that the items could be diverted for criminal activities.

He said: "The 23,220 pieces of new machetes being smuggled into the country without requisite certificates and permits could easily be deployed towards disrupting peaceful elections in a couple of months.

Read the remaining part of this story on www.guardian.ng

S'West APC leaders close ranks, endorse Tinubu's re-election

By **Seye Olumide**

POLITICAL leaders and stakeholders of the All Progressives Congress (APC) across the South-West, under the aegis of South-West Stakeholders' Council, have resolved to rally behind President Bola Tinubu's re-election bid in 2027, despite internal disagreements within the party.

They, however, committed to reconcile aggrieved members and intensify grassroots mobilisation ahead of the general elections.

The resolution followed a meeting of South-West APC stakeholders in Lagos yesterday, where leaders from the six states of the region reviewed the performance of the Tinubu-led administration, discussed the party's electoral prospects and agreed on strategies to strengthen its structures ahead of the next general elections.

Former Governor of Ondo State, Dr Olusegun Mimiko, who read the communique issued at the end of the meeting, said the stakeholders had agreed to put aside their political differences and work towards securing another presidential term for Tinubu.

Those present included former Lagos State Governor, Babatunde Raji Fashola; Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, his deputy and APC governorship candidate, Dr Obafemi Hamzat; former Ekiti State Governor, Niyi Adebayo; former Senator Gbenga Ashafa, Lagos APC Chairman, Cornelius Ojelabi, and Secretary of the council, Senator Fatai Buhari, among other party leaders and stakeholders.

Mimiko said the meeting provided an opportunity for representatives of different political tendencies within the party to assess the administration's policies, acknowledge its challenges and agree on a common position ahead of 2027.

He said the stakeholders were satisfied with the direction of the Tinubu administration and believed that its ongoing programmes offered prospects for a better future, despite the difficulties Nigerians were experiencing.

Deep seaport, LNG project trigger investors' interest in Ogun, says Abiodun

- Seeks stakeholders' input for 2027 budget
- Promises completion of projects, policy continuity

From **Azeez Olorunlomeru**, Abeokuta

OGUN State Governor, Dapo Abiodun, has said that the planned $7 billion Gateway Deep Seaport and the proposed $10 billion Ogun Liquefied Natural Gas (Ogun LNG) project are attracting fresh waves of investors to the state, positioning it for a new phase of industrial expansion and economic growth.

The governor said the strategic investments, alongside the proposed Ogun Blue Marine and Special Economic Zone and the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway being constructed by the Federal Government, were opening up unprecedented economic opportunities and generating growing interest among local and international investors.

Abiodun made this known yesterday in Ijebu-Ode during the town hall meeting on the 2027–2029 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and the 2027 Budget, organised by the Ministry of Budget and Planning.

He described the planned deep seaport as a defining legacy project of his administration, noting that the agreements recently signed in Paris with DP World would attract approximately $7 billion in private-sector investment into Ogun State.

Read the remaining part of this story on www.guardian.ng

2027: Indigenes vow to defend "Ogun for Ogun' mandate as Adebutu, deputy tour wards

- Ogun PDP, APC trade words over Adebutu's omission on INEC's list
- Omission won't stop my 2027 bid, says guber candidate
- Accuses APC of attempt to stifle opposition parties
- Accusation on name's omission cheap propaganda, says APC

From **Segun Ayinde**, Abeokuta

MANY indigenes of Ogun State have renewed their resolve to protect their heritage and ensure that the 'Ogun for Ogun' mandate of prominent stakeholders in the state is actualised in the 2027 governorship election in the state.

They pledged in their separate remarks at the ward-to-ward campaign tours embarked upon by the governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Oladipupo Adebutu and his running mate, Yemi Sowunmi-Kolapo, declaring their support for the candidates ahead of the polls.

The stakeholders urged Adebutu to fix their deplorable roads and assist farmers with seedlings and modern agricultural equipment to enable them to produce food in large quantities for the state.

Read the remaining part of this story on www.guardian.ng

2027 poll: Opposition decry shrinking campaign space, threaten boycott

- AAC demands safety guarantees for opposition candidates, supporters
- ADC accuses Sokoto govt of sealing campaign office
- Party alleges hotels evicted delegates during campaign flag-off
- Opposition turns to town halls, street rallies, social media campaigns
- Parties cite attacks, arrests, intimidation across six Southern states
- Rivers ADC, ZLP vow to challenge APC despite alleged intimidation

From **Leo Sobechi** (Abuja), **Seye Olumide** (Lagos) and **Ann Godwin** (Port Harcourt)

OPPOSITION political parties have raised concerns over growing restrictions on campaign activities, alleged intimidation and political violence ahead of the 2027 general elections, with the African Action Congress (AAC) urging opposition forces to consider a collective boycott if the Federal Government and security agencies fail to guarantee their safety.

The concerns reflect a wider pattern of reported political violence, harassment, attacks on party members and restrictions on campaign activities across several states, including Oyo, Ekiti, Osun, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo and Sokoto.

While opposition parties are devising alternative strategies to reach voters, the ADC has cited its experience in Sokoto, where it accused the state government of frustrating its political activities through alleged restrictions on delegates' accommodation and the sealing of one of its campaign offices.

Political parties, including the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), Allied Peoples Movement and Zenith Labour Party (ZLP), resolved to confront the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) despite what they described as shrinking campaign spaces.

In a bid to overcome restrictions allegedly imposed by ruling parties, opposition groups are adopting alternative strategies, including town hall meetings, street processions and social media livestreams, to engage voters and communicate their political programmes.

The parties have also raised concerns over the high costs of political advertising and campaign publicity in some states, alleging that incumbent administrations are imposing prohibitive charges on campaign billboards, handbills and other communication materials.

In the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), political parties seeking to display campaign billboards are reportedly expected to pay as much as N750 million to the administration, while similar charges apply in some states, including Abia, Anambra and Ebonyi.

The NDC presidential contender, Peter Obi, has also explored digital platforms to engage Nigerians, featuring in live sessions on TikTok programmes hosted by Emirsaddam and Peller, alongside visits to markets and engagements on X (formerly Twitter).

Obi has maintained that political leaders must engage directly with the electorate and present practical plans to address insecurity, economic instability and the rising cost of living.

AAC proposes collective boycott

THE AAC in Oyo State has called on opposition political parties and democratic forces across the country to consider a collective boycott of the 2027 general elections to press home their demand for equal access to voters.

In a statement signed by its Oyo State Chairman, Kayode Babayomi, the party said reports of political violence, intimidation, harassment and attacks on opposition activities in Oyo, Ekiti, Osun, Lagos, Ogun and Ondo states pointed to an increasingly hostile political environment.

It argued that unless the Federal Government and security agencies guarantee the safety of candidates, party members and supporters, the boycott option should become inevitable.

The party expressed concern that the situation was emerging ahead of the 2027 elections, warning that the right to participate in an election would amount to little if candidates and their supporters could not campaign, organise meetings or mobilise voters without threats to their lives and property.

Babayomi said: "Elections should be a contest of ideas, policies and visions for the future, which our party has consistently advocated for. However, what we are currently witnessing is troubling and alarming. An election should not be a platform for political actors and their supporters to unleash violence, terrorise opponents and threaten the lives of citizens.

"Incidents of physical attacks, intimidation and threats to human lives and property during campaign activities raise serious concerns about the safety, credibility and integrity of the electoral process."

The AAC cited developments in Ekiti State ahead of the June 20, 2026 governorship election, where the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) accused Governor Biodun Oyebanji's administration of using security agencies and state machinery to intimidate opposition members.

The PDP's deputy governorship candidate, Ayodeji Ogunsakin, had alleged that some party members were arrested, detained and harassed because of their political affiliations.

The party also alleged that unidentified men, reportedly operating under the guise of the Rapid Response Squad, invaded homes in Ikere-Ekiti in the early hours of June 7 and took away some residents said to be its members.

Although election observers subsequently described the

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Deputy Governor, Sokoto State, Idris Muhammad Gobir (left); Governor Dauda Lawal; Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar, and Bishop Mathew Hassan Kuka of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Sokoto, during the 20th anniversary of the Sultan, yesterday

Atiku, PDP, Obi raise alarm over alleged plot to weaken opposition

- Ex-VP tells Tinubu to fight hunger as he alleges attacks on opposition figures
- PDP threatens to petition IGP over alleged intimidation, killings of candidates
- Obi's media office accuses govs of plotting to manipulate 2027 polls
- ADC campaign media team divided as Momodu allegedly sidelined
- OK Movement warns Obidient, NDC leaders against internal political battles
- Court allows police to reopen case against PDP factional chairman, Turaki

From **Azimazi Momoh Jimoh, John Akubo** and **Andrew Oota**, Abuja

FORMER Vice-President Atiku Abubakar, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the Peter Obi Media Office have raised concerns over alleged attempts to undermine opposition parties ahead of the 2027 general elections, accusing the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) of prioritising political suppression, intimidation and electoral manipulation over addressing the country's economic and security challenges.

Their concerns came amid growing political tension, allegations of attacks on opposition candidates, internal disagreements among opposition groups and fresh developments in the ongoing crisis within the PDP.

Atiku, the presidential candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), yesterday challenged President Bola Tinubu to fight hunger rather than the opposition, alleging that the administration had abandoned Nigerians to economic hardship and insecurity while focusing on weakening rival political parties.

The PDP, meanwhile, accused some APC governors of creating a hostile political environment for opposition candidates, particularly those seeking governorship positions, and threatened to petition the Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Tunji Disu, and other security agencies.

Similarly, the Peter Obi Media Office alleged that some governors were plotting to manipulate the 2027 elections, warning that Nigerians would resist any attempt to compromise the credibility of the electoral process.

Atiku accuses Tinubu of targeting opposition

SPEAKING during a press conference at his Abuja residence, Atiku said the Federal Government should concentrate on addressing the worsening economic conditions rather than attacking opposition figures.

He said many Nigerians were dying from hardship, while several businesses had collapsed because of the administration's economic policies.

The former Vice-President was reacting to rising economic hardship and alleged attacks on opposition figures, accusing the Tinubu administration of abandoning citizens to hunger, poverty and insecurity while directing its attention towards crushing opposition parties ahead of the 2027 elections.

According to him, Nigerians could barely afford food, rising fuel prices were putting businesses under pressure, and insecurity remained widespread.

He said the APC administration appeared more concerned about intimidating opposition candidates than addressing the country's pressing challenges.

Cracks widen in ADC campaign media team

HOWEVER, the ADC presidential campaign council is also facing internal disagreements, with disturbing cracks emerging within its media directorate ahead of the commencement of campaigns.

The campaign council's list, unveiled on September 24, named former Labour Party presidential candidate Dele Momodu as Deputy General in charge of Media and Communications.

Momodu played a similar role in 2023 when Atiku contested the presidency on the platform of the PDP.

Former PDP National Publicity Secretary, Kola Ologbondiyan, and Atiku's Senior Special Assistant on Public Communication, Phrank Shaibu, were appointed Media and Publicity Director and Strategic Communications Director, respectively.

Others in the directorate are Ladan Salihu (Branding), Moji Rhodes-Vivour (Digital and Online Media) and David Iyofor (Content Development), while Kenneth Okonkwo, Keturah King and Nana Kazure were named spokespersons.

However, shortly after the council's inauguration, Momodu was reportedly relegated to the background and excluded from key media activities.

The disagreement has allegedly resulted in a lack of coordination, with Ologbondiyan and Shaibu competing for relevance and issuing statements on similar subjects.

Conflicting statements and media briefings have reportedly been circulated through different groups within the press corps without Momodu's approval, despite his position in the directorate.

Atiku addressed a press conference in Abuja yesterday, announcing that his campaign would be flagged off on Wednesday (today). The event was attended by selected journalists allegedly loyal to Shaibu.

Momodu and ADC National Publicity Secretary, Bolaji Abdullahi, were absent from the briefing.

It was the third selective press conference Atiku had held without the head of his media directorate, with Shaibu reportedly coordinating the events.

Momodu was said to have remained in Lagos since attending the campaign council's inauguration on October 9.

A party source blamed the situation on Atiku, arguing that the presidential candidate had yet to fully recognise the role of the ADC as the political platform under which he would contest the election.

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CDS links rising crude production to Navy's crackdown on theft

From **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

THE Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Gen. Olufemi Oluyede, has commended the Nigerian Navy's (NN) contributions to boosting Nigeria's crude oil production, safeguarding critical national assets and strengthening maritime security.

Oluyede gave the commendation yesterday in Abuja while declaring open the 2026 Chief of the Naval Staff Annual Retreat themed "Appraisal of Nigerian Navy Commands for Enhanced Operational Effectiveness."

The CDS, while highlighting the Navy's operational efforts in curbing crude oil theft, pipeline vandalism and other maritime crimes, said the service's sustained presence and strategic operations in Nigeria's maritime domain had contributed significantly to the increase in crude oil production from an average of 1.4 million barrels per day (bpd) in October 2025 to 1.84 million bpd as of September 2026.

According to him, the increase in production had also translated into improved national revenue, with Nigeria's earnings rising significantly.

Oluyede described the Nigerian Navy's 70 years of service as a testament to its enduring commitment to national security and development, stressing that its role remained critical to protecting Nigeria's vast coastline and advancing the nation's blue economy.

He also applauded the navy's contributions to joint military operations alongside the Nigerian Army (NA) and the Nigerian Air Force (NAF), particularly in counterterrorism, counterinsurgency and efforts to tackle other forms of criminality.

Further acknowledging the navy's role in joint rescue operations, including the rescue of kidnapped students and teachers in Niger State, and its contributions to protecting lives and critical national assets, he described the yearly retreat as an important platform for strategic assessment, institutional reflection and review of operational structures, doctrines and strategies to improve the navy's effectiveness.

The CDS also stressed the need for greater cooperation among the armed forces, saying no single military service can independently address Nigeria's security challenges.

Earlier, the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Idi Abbas, said the retreat provided an opportunity to assess the navy's performance over the past year, evaluate progress towards its strategic objectives and establish priorities for the coming year.

Abbas thanked President Bola Tinubu for his continued support, saying the navy's Strategic Directive 2026-2027 provided a framework for strengthening operational readiness, fleet capabilities, human capital development, institutional governance and maritime security operations.

According to him, the directive outlined key areas of development, including operations, fleet renewal, infrastructure, logistics, personnel administration, training, technology and interagency cooperation.

Meanwhile, the naval chief stressed that the retreat must go beyond reviewing activities and resources expended to identifying measurable operational achievements, institutional shortcomings and practical solutions to existing challenges.

He also called for deeper cooperation and interoperability among the armed forces, particularly in addressing emerging security threats across the country's operational theatres.



Governor Douye Diri of Bayelsa State (right) and Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly, Michael Ogbere, during the presentation of the 2027 Appropriation Bill to the Assembly in Yenagoa yesterday.

Efficient civil service critical to Tinubu's $1tr economy, says Olaopa

From **Monday Osayande**, Asaba

NIGERIA cannot achieve President Bola Tinubu's ambition of building a $1 trillion economy by 2030 without an efficient, accountable, technology-driven and future-ready civil service, the Chairman of the Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC), Prof. Tunji Olaopa, has said.

Olaopa spoke yesterday in Asaba, Delta State, when he led federal commissioners, chairmen and members of Civil Service Commissions from states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) on a courtesy visit to Governor Sheriff Oboreveori at the Government House, represented by Deputy Governor Monday Onyeme.

He stressed that a reformed civil service with the capacity to translate government policies into measurable results would be critical to driving economic growth, improving public service delivery and achieving the country's development aspirations.

Diri presents N1.24tr 2027 Appropriation Bill to Bayelsa Assembly

GOVERNOR Douye Diri of Bayelsa State yesterday presented the state's 2027 Appropriation Bill, based on a projected revenue of N1.24 trillion, to the House of Assembly for consideration and passage.

Presenting the bill, titled "Budget of Assured Prosperity for Sustainable Growth and Development," Diri explained that the 2027 proposals were derived from broad stakeholder engagements with traditional rulers, technical experts, the organised private sector, and citizens across the state.

He also stated that it was a historic budget, being the first as the state was beginning its fourth decade and presented at a time that sustained investments were visible in all the local councils.

According to him, the fiscal priorities remain roads and bridges that connect communities, better health and education services, reliable power and an environment in which businesses and families can thrive.

In a breakdown of the estimates, the governor said N840.791 billion (68 per cent) is proposed for capital expenditure while recurrent expenditure is N401.897 billion (32 per cent).

Caverton's transformation gathers pace as marine revenue rises

Revenue hits N20.74b in nine months, net finance costs down 16%

NIGERIAN maritime and aviation services group, Caverton Offshore Support Group Plc, yesterday announced the unaudited results for the nine months ended September 30, 2026, showing the group reshaping for growth.

Caverton Marine, a negligible revenue line a year ago, now generates almost a third of group revenue, while the OMIBUS electric ferry platform has completed sea trials and is preparing for passenger service, the company said.

It disclosed that group revenue rose 1.4 per cent from N20.45 billion in the same period of 2025 to N20.74 billion, as marine growth more than replaced the revenue from a major helicopter contract that concluded in August 2025. Also, net finance costs fell 16 per cent, and the group recorded a net foreign exchange gain.

The group reported a loss after tax of N13.79 billion (9M 2025: N4.63 billion), largely reflecting N5.9 billion of non-cash depreciation following last year's asset revaluation and the absence of a N5.3 billion one-off gain recorded in 2025. The results were approved by the Board of Directors on 28 October 2026.

Caverton's indigenous electric ferry platform, OMIBUS, has completed sea trials on Lagos waterways. In a full-load trial, an OMIBUS ferry carried passengers over 12.6 nautical miles between Falomo and Ikorodu ferry terminal.

Commercial passenger service will begin on short, high-demand routes linking CMS, Falomo, Victoria Island and Lekki, with longer routes such as Ikorodu to follow as charging and battery performance are proven.

Meanwhile, 10 electric ferries are being built for Lagos State at Caverton Marine's facilities, including its Naval Dockyard operation in Victoria Island, combining local construction with propulsion technology from OEM partner, ExploMar of Shanghai, China.

The programme is building the charging, jetty access and crew standards that a reliable, sustainable waterways network requires.

Through the Stena Sonangol Suezmax Pool, Caverton holds a charter position in three Suezmax tankers trading internationally, earning foreign-currency revenue from global crude shipping.

UNICROSS lecturers resume strike over unpaid salaries

From **Charles Akpeji** (Jalingo) and **Solomon Azu** (Calabar)

ACADEMIC activities at the University of Cross River (UNICROSS) were grounded yesterday as the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) resumed an indefinite strike.

This was as the Yola Zone of ASUU declared yesterday that only Taraba State, among the 19 northern states, was yet to implement the 2025 Federal Government/ASUU Agreement.

Also, the leadership of ASUU across the North-East has backed the ongoing industrial action by the ASUU branch of Taraba State University (TSU), Jalingo, and called on the state government to immediately implement the 2025 Federal Government/ASUU agreement and pay all outstanding arrears owed to the academic staff.

ASUU says Taraba yet to implement 2025 pact with FG

The UNICROSS lecturers are protesting the non-payment of salaries for September and October 2026 and the Cross River State Government's failure to implement the financial components of the renegotiated 2025 FG/ASUU pact.

ASUU had embarked on strike on May 19, 2026, and suspended it on July 21, 2026, after an emergency meeting with Governor Bassey Out, who assured the ASUU delegation and the Calabar Zonal Coordinator, Dr Ikechukwu Igwenyi, that his administration would begin implementation within 90 days. Three months later, however, nothing was done.

The branch Chairman, Dr Patrick Ushie, told an emergency congress yesterday that members of staff were yet to receive September and October salaries, forcing the union to resume action.

Meanwhile, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Francisca Bassey, who attended the congress with his management team, appealed for patience, disclosing that the governor had approved payment of the salaries.

She described Otu as a "man of honour and integrity who had done his part," adding that the accountant-general has assured that October salaries would be paid before the close of business yesterday.

Nevertheless, the lecturers rejected the plea, insisting on a total shutdown and promising to reconvene to suspend the strike once payment is confirmed.

NYSC disowns certificate linked to ex-minister Nnanji, cites four defects

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

THE National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) yesterday disowned the certificate linked to a former Minister of Innovation, Science and Technology, Geoffrey Nnanji, telling a Federal High Court in Abuja that it did not issue the certificate.

Testifying as the second prosecution witness (PW2) before Justice Joyce Abdulmalik, the NYSC's Assistant Director in the Department of Certification, Yusuf Abubakar Jumare, said an investigation by his department established that the document was fake.

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) is prosecuting Nnanji on charges of certificate forgery and money laundering in charge No. FHC/ABJ/CR/389/2026.

The accused, who is the People's Democratic Party (PDP) candidate in the forthcoming Enugu State governorship election, was represented by a team of lawyers led by Woke Olanikpekun, SAN. The others were Ugwu Onoja, Bode Olanikpekun and George Ibrahim - all SAN.

Okorocha flays Uzodimma over APC Imo West comments

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

FORMER Governor of Imo State, Rochas Okorocha, has asked his successor, Hope Uzodimma, and his aides to desist from further insulting judges over a recent judgment that voided the incumbent governor's claim to being the Imo West Senatorial District candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) for the 2027 elections.

Instead, Okorocha advised Uzodimma and his aides to pursue their appeals up to the Supreme Court rather than denigrating the judiciary over a lost case.

The ex-governor spoke yesterday on the premises of the Federal High Court in Abuja, where he said he attended to sign some documents at the court registry in relation to Uzodimma's appeal against Justice Obiora Ekwuatu's October 29 judgment, which upheld Okorocha as the APC candidate.

Okorocha challenged Uzodimma to fault his claims in public rather than attacking judges and the judiciary, and to allow the legal process to run its course, insisting that disagreement with a court decision should be addressed through the appellate process.

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EFCC uncovers Chinese-operated illegal oil refinery in Ogun

From **Bertram Nwannekanma** (Lagos) and **Ameh Ochojila** (Abuja)

THE Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has uncovered an illegal oil refinery allegedly operated by Chinese nationals in the Ogere area of Ogun State.

The discovery followed an intelligence-led operation conducted on Saturday, October 31, 2026, by operatives of the commission's Lagos Zonal Directorate 2, after weeks of surveillance on the activities of suspected illegal sludge oil refiners.

The refinery was deserted when the operatives stormed the premises, following an earlier crackdown by the commission on four illegal lithium processing plants in the area.

Although no operator was found at the facility, the operatives discovered waste products from the refining process, as well as underground tanks believed to have been used for heating and processing sludge oil.

Two of the tanks inspected contained substances suspected to be Automotive Gas Oil (AGO), commonly known as diesel. Preliminary investigations revealed that the operators sourced sludge oil, also called black sludge, from Warri, Delta State, and Port Harcourt, Rivers State, before transporting it to the facility in Ogere for processing.

Further findings indicated that the operators subjected the sludge oil to intense heat, allowing lighter petroleum components to pass through a series of chambers and filters in a process believed to produce AGO for sale in the Nigerian market.

Security personnel at the facility reportedly told EFCC operatives that the Chinese nationals operating the refinery never disclosed their identities or the name of the company behind the business.

The commission has since taken over the premises as investigations continue to uncover the identities of the operators, establish ownership of the facility and determine the full extent of the suspected illegal activities.

The EFCC said the investigation would also establish the extent of the alleged economic sabotage arising from the operation.



Busted illegal refinery in Ogun

Police arrest three suspected human traffickers, rescue Nigerian woman from Mali

•Victim alleges 42 Nigerian women are held in gold-mining camp and forced into prostitution

From **Andrew Oota**, Abuja

THE Nigeria Police Force has arrested three suspected members of an international human trafficking syndicate and rescued a 21-year-old Nigerian woman who was allegedly trafficked to Mali and forced into prostitution.

The police also disclosed that about 42 Nigerian women were being held in a makeshift camp in a remote gold-mining settlement in Mali, where they were allegedly subjected to sexual exploitation and slave-like conditions.

The suspects were identified as Daniel Aondofa, 26; Orgba Solomon, 28, also known as Terry, who allegedly leads the syndicate and resides in the Republic of Benin; and Thankgod Ocho, 25. All three are indigenes of Benue State.

The Assistant Commissioner of Police in charge of the Special Tactical Squad (STS), Victor Ogbiede Godfrey, disclosed this while briefing journalists in Abuja yesterday.

He said the operation, which took place between October 1 and 27, also led to the rescue of three other female victims and a woman from Mali.

According to the police, investigations revealed that Solomon lured the principal victim, Miss Godiya Amos, from Akwanga, Nasarawa State, on September 26, 2026, with promises of lucrative employment abroad.

Amos was allegedly taken through Lagos and illegal border routes into the Republic of Benin before being transported to artisanal gold-mining camps in Mali, where female victims were reportedly forced into prostitution.

Polish national, Nigerian arrested over indoor cannabis farm in Lagos

By **Eniola Daniel**

A 49-YEAR-OLD Polish national, Thomas Razvickas, and his Nigerian accomplice, 36-year-old James Chisome, have been arrested over the discovery of a sophisticated indoor cannabis farm in a residential property in Apapa, Lagos.

The suspects were arrested by operatives of the Lagos State Police Command on Monday, November 2, 2026, following the receipt intelligence.

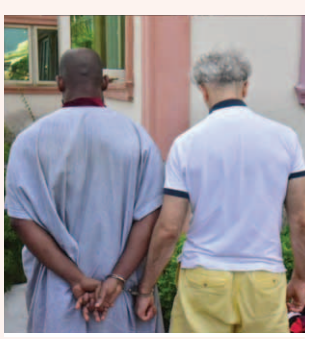
The police said the suspects were allegedly involved in the operation of the facility.

They are currently in custody, where they have reportedly made confessional statements and are providing useful information to assist ongoing investigations.

The Commissioner of Police, Lagos State Command, Tijani Fatai, visited the scene to inspect the facility, assess the scale of the operation and receive a briefing on the investigation.

Fatai commended the operatives for their vigilance and intelligence-led policing, reiterating the command's commitment to combating drug-related offences, dismantling criminal networks and preventing Lagos from becoming a haven for criminal activities.

He also appreciated members of the public for their continued cooperation and urged residents to sustain the timely provision of credible information to the police.



Suspects

Rivers fighters emerge from forest, plead for amnesty, second chance

By **Ayonote Clement**

MEMBERS of a group identifying themselves as the Freedom Fighters of Ekpeye Ethnic Nationality have appealed for forgiveness and amnesty, saying they are desperate to abandon life in the forest and return to normal society.

The appeal was disclosed by Kenneth Nwachi, spokesperson for the Omega Power Ministry (OPM), who said the group reached out to the ministry's Founder and General Overseer, Apostle Chibuzor Gift Chinyere, in a video appeal yesterday.

Speaking from an undisclosed forest location, the fighters pleaded with the cleric to intervene and help secure their rehabilitation and reintegration into society, describing their present circumstances as a form of bondage.

In a letter titled Request for Pardon and Amnesty, the group described Apostle Chibuzor as a father figure whose humanitarian interventions could offer them a pathway to redemption.

"Our major problem now is how we can come out of this bush and live a normal life in society through amnesty. We have searched around and found out that you are the only man with a fatherly heart that can take us out of this bondage," they said.



The fighters with Apostle Chibuzor Gift Chinyere

According to Nwachi, the group also expressed remorse over its past activities, acknowledging that its actions had offended both God and humanity.

"We remorsefully and regrettably condemn some of our unwanted and unruly activities and pray for God's endless mercy on us, as we promise to be of good conduct to society from now on," the fighters stated in their letter.

Appealing to the cleric's Christian faith, they cited biblical passages on repentance, forgiveness and redemption, expressing confidence that he would not only pray for them but also guide them towards a new beginning.

Police bust alleged fake dollar syndicate, recover three bags of counterfeit notes

From **Adewale Momoh**, Akure

OPERATIVES of the Ondo State Police Command have uncovered an alleged counterfeit currency production centre in Kiniso Village, Ajue, Odigbo Local Council of the state, arresting one suspect and recovering three bags of suspected fake United States dollar notes.

The operation followed a complaint by a businessman, Yusuf Nasiru, from the Sabo area of Okitipupa, who allegedly lost $6,000, estimated at N8.6 million, to two men who approached him under the guise of exchanging dollars for their naira equivalent.

The police said the suspects, identified as Peter Desmond and Olami Toro, both residents of Ode-Irele, visited Nasiru's shop and expressed interest in exchanging the foreign currency.

According to the police, the complainant handed over the $6,000 to the men, but they later returned what they claimed was the same money, saying they did not have enough naira to complete the transaction.

It was only after examining the notes more closely that Nasiru discovered they were counterfeit, prompting him to report the incident to the police.



Recovered fake currencies

The command's spokesperson, Abayomi Jimoh, said the complaint prompted operatives from the Okitipupa Divisional Police Headquarters to launch an investigation, which led them to one of the suspects in Kiniso Village.

Jimoh said that, acting on intelligence from residents, the operatives raided a suspected hideout on October 29, 2026, believed to be used for printing counterfeit dollar notes and defrauding unsuspecting members of the public.

During the raid, one suspect was arrested, while other occupants of the premises reportedly escaped through a perimeter fence.

A search of the premises led to the recovery of three bags containing suspected counterfeit United States dollar notes and a small wooden box.

Gunmen abduct six mourners, abandon corpse on Benue highway

From **Felix Uroko**, Makurdi

SUSPECTED gunmen have abducted six mourners, including the husband of a deceased woman and five of his friends, while they were transporting her remains from Kano State to Okpoga in Okpokwu Local Council of Benue State.

The attackers reportedly intercepted the vehicle conveying the burial party along the Adoka Road, abducted the six occupants and abandoned the casket containing the woman's corpse on the highway.

The abandoned body was later discovered by operatives of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), who moved it to a police station in Adoka. It was subsequently deposited in a morgue.

Chairman of Otukpo Local Council, Maxwell Ogiri, confirmed the incident, describing it as distressing and traumatic.

Ogiri said the driver of the vehicle was his friend, expressing concern over the growing insecurity in the area.

"Yes, it happened. Incidentally, the driver of the vehicle is my friend. This is the unfortunate incident we are seeing. It is really traumatic," he said.

Sources said the abductors had contacted the victims' relatives and demanded a ransom for their release.

Meanwhile, security operatives, local youths and vigilante groups have reportedly launched a joint operation to rescue the victims and track down the perpetrators.

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TheMetroSection

Customs intercepts 195 smuggling attempts, seizes contraband worth N6.19b

By Adaku Onyenucheya

THE Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Federal Operations Unit (FOU), Zone A, Ikeja, has intercepted 195 smuggling attempts involving prohibited and restricted goods valued at N6.19 billion in four weeks across the Southwest.

The seizures included thousands of bags of foreign rice, 23,220 machetes, 21 foreign-used vehicles, 5,986 parcels of cannabis weighing 3,407.83kg, 1,250 cartridges and other prohibited items.

The Acting Comptroller of FOU Zone A, Oladapo Afeni, disclosed this yesterday during his maiden press briefing, four weeks after assuming office.

Giving a breakdown of the seizures, Afeni said the unit intercepted 3,028 bags of 50kg rice, 995 bags of 25kg, 104 bags of 20kg and 207 bags of 5kg.

Other seized items included 173 cartons of frozen poultry products, 6,949 cartons of spaghetti, 459 bales and 39 jumbo sacks of second-hand clothing, 1,236 used tyres, 33 used vehicle rims and 8,025 litres of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS).

The unit also seized 101 bags of imported sugar weighing 50kg each, 20 cartons of couscous, eight bags of imported cream powder, 12 bags of green oat products and a 40-foot container carrying 270 pieces of office sheets in Completely Knocked Down (CKD) form, allegedly misdeclared as raw materials.

Other seizures included 400 grammes of cocaine, 100 grammes of methamphetamine, eight live pangolins, 250 cartons of Lotus sardines without National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) registration numbers, and 11 means of conveyance.

Afeni put the total duty-paid value of the seized goods at N6.19 billion, describing the interceptions as part of the service's efforts to curb smuggling, protect government revenue and safeguard the country's economic and security interests.

He disclosed that the cocaine, methamphetamine and cannabis consignments had been handed over to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) for further investigation and prosecution, while other seized items were transferred to relevant government agencies.



The seized items on display yesterday.

Expressing concern over the volume of cannabis intercepted, the acting comptroller warned about the health and social consequences of drug abuse, particularly among young people.

Citing the 2025 World Drug Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), he said cannabis remained the most widely available and used drug globally, accounting for an estimated 42 per cent of drug use disorder cases worldwide.

He added that increasingly potent varieties of cannabis, including those popularly marketed as Colorado, posed serious threats to young people, families and the healthcare system.

Afeni also expressed concern over the interception of 23,220 machetes, warning that the illegal importation of such items could fuel violence and undermine peaceful electoral processes.

According to him, smuggling networks could facilitate the movement of dangerous items capable of being used to disrupt elections and threaten public safety.

On revenue recovery, Afeni said the unit recovered N683.66 million between September 30, 2026, and the date of the briefing through compliance checks, scrutiny of import declarations and the detection and correction of undervaluation.

He attributed the seizures and revenue recovery to improved intelligence gathering, risk profiling, surveillance, targeted examination of suspicious consignments and collaboration with relevant government agencies.

The acting comptroller assured importers, customs agents and other stakeholders that the unit would continue to facilitate legitimate trade while strengthening enforcement against duty evasion, false declarations and other customs-related offences.

Pyrates confraternity, group screen over 200 women for breast cancer in Ogun

From Segun Ayinde, Abeokuta

MORE than 200 women in Abeokuta, Ogun State, have benefited from free breast cancer screening organised by the National Association of Seadogs, popularly known as the Pyrates Confraternity, in partnership with Women Aid Africa.

The beneficiaries also received clinical breast examinations and counselling on breast cancer awareness and general health during the exercise at Kugba Primary Healthcare Centre, Abeokuta.

The Chief Executive Officer of Women Aid Africa, Bukola Konkwo, said the programme was designed to educate women on breast cancer, regular breast self-examination and the importance of seeking medical attention whenever they noticed unusual lumps or changes in their breasts.

Konkwo, who disclosed that she was a breast cancer survivor and had reached the 10th anniversary of her diagnosis, emphasised that early detection remained crucial to saving lives and reducing the impact of the disease.

She urged women not to allow financial constraints, busy schedules or domestic responsibilities to prevent them from prioritising their health.

According to her, women should take advantage of free screening opportunities and make regular health checks part of their routine.

"Early detection saves lives. It is only when you are alive that you can attend to other responsibilities. Health is wealth, and women must always put their health first," she said.

Also speaking, the Second Mate of Ash Montana Deck, Dr Hafiz Bello, said the association partnered Women Aid Africa to bring affordable healthcare services closer to underprivileged women who might otherwise struggle to pay for hospital examinations.

He explained that beneficiaries who showed signs of possible cancer would be referred to appropriate health facilities for further medical evaluation.

HURIWA faults multiple toll gates on Keffi–Makurdi highway, warns of food price hikes

By Bertram Nwannekanma

THE Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has condemned the multiple toll gates on the Keffi–Lafia–Makurdi highway, warning that repeated charges could push up transportation costs, increase food prices and worsen the economic hardship facing millions of Nigerians.

The association said the tolling arrangement was placing additional financial pressure on motorists, commercial transport operators, farmers, traders and businesses already struggling with high fuel prices, rising operating costs and declining purchasing power.

It warned that the consequences would extend beyond road users in Nasarawa and Benue states, as higher costs of transporting agricultural produce along the corridor could eventually translate into more expensive food items in markets across the country.

In a statement issued yesterday and signed by its National Coordinator, Emmanuel Nnadozie Onwubiko, HURIWA described the arrangement as burdensome, particularly because motorists are required to make payments at multiple points along the same highway.

The association called on President Bola Tinubu and the Federal Ministry of Works to immediately suspend toll collection pending an independent review of the policy, the condition of the road and the payment system.



Garaku toll plaza along the Abuja–Keffi–Akwanga–Lafia–Makurdi highway

According to HURIWA, the Federal Government commenced toll operations on February 4, 2025, along the 227.2-kilometre Abuja-Keffi-Akwanga-Lafia-Makurdi highway, with four principal toll locations covering Keffi, including Garaku, Akwanga, Lafia and Makurdi.

Police, group warn youths against cultism, cybercrime in Ogun

From Segun Ayinde, Abeokuta

YOUTHS have been urged to shun cultism, cybercrime, substance abuse and other social vices as part of efforts to build responsible leaders and safer communities.

The call was made by the Ogun State Police Command during a youth sensitisation programme organised in partnership with Royal Ambassadors Nigeria.

The programme, facilitated by the Police Campaign Against Cultism and Other Vices (POCACOV), was held at the Peter Akinola Foundation, Obada, Ogun State, as part of the Royal Ambassadors Nigeria National Leadership Training Conference.

With the theme, "Divine Companion," the event brought together teenagers and young adults from across the country for leadership development and crime prevention advocacy.

The State Coordinator of POCACOV, ASP Opeyemi Oluborode, alongside officials of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), educated participants on the dangers of cultism, cybercrime, substance abuse, negative peer influence and deceptive recruitment tactics.

Oluborode stressed the important role of young people in building a peaceful and secure society, noting that early value reorientation and responsible leadership were essential to preventing criminal behaviour.

He urged participants to embrace integrity, accountability, patriotism and positive community engagement, stressing that their choices would significantly influence the future of their communities and the country.

The police officer also warned against deceptive recruitment strategies used to lure young people into criminal activities, urging them to exercise self-discipline, make responsible decisions and resist negative influences capable of jeopardising their future.

He reaffirmed POCACOV's commitment to sustained youth engagement and community-based crime prevention, describing investment in responsible leadership as a pathway to a safer society.

Uzere gas leak: Residents seek sustained intervention over health risks

From Monday Osayande, Asaba

RESIDENTS of Uzere community in Isoko South Local Council of Delta State have called for sustained government intervention to address potential health complications arising from the recent gas leakage, while commending Governor Sheriff Oborevwori for providing free comprehensive medical services to the affected community.

The residents described the deployment of more than 100 medical personnel to the community as a timely intervention that would help identify, diagnose and treat those who might have developed health complications following exposure to the leaked gas.

The medical outreach, which commenced at Uzere Community Hall, was designed to provide comprehensive health assessments, diagnosis and treatment. The exercise, expected to run until Thursday, offers free medical services, including surgical operations, dental care, eye examinations, laboratory investigations and medications.

Speaking at the commencement of the exercise, the Commissioner for Health, Dr Joseph Onojaeme, said Oborevwori had directed the ministry to mobilise medical personnel to the community following an assessment of the gas leakage and its potential health implications.

He explained that the intervention was aimed at identifying, examining and treating residents who might have suffered health complications from exposure to the gas.

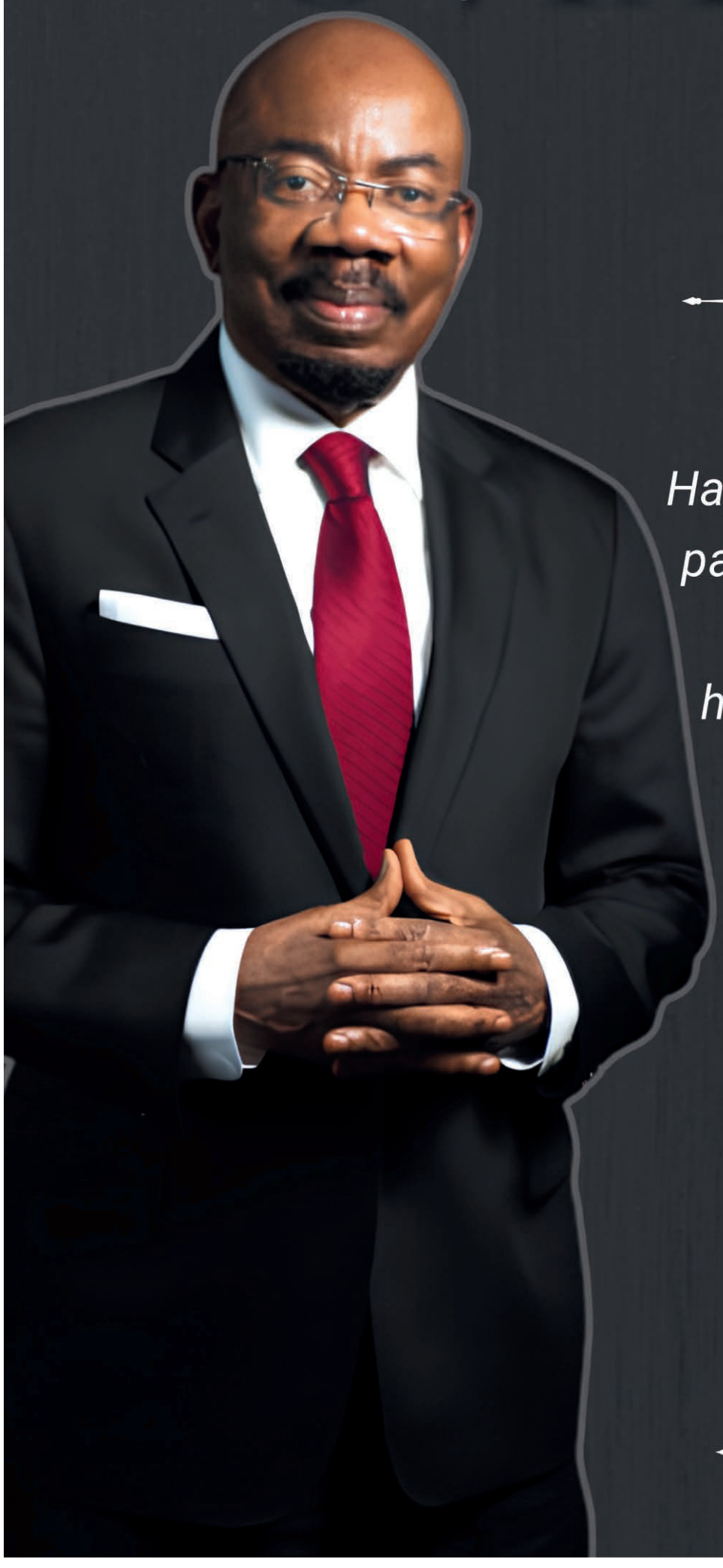
According to him, the governor's directive underscores the administration's commitment to protecting the health and welfare of communities affected by environmental incidents, particularly those in oil and gas-producing areas.

Onojaeme disclosed that the governor had earlier issued a similar directive for an emergency medical intervention in Odidi community, Warri South-West Local Government Area, following an oil spill.


Some residents of Uzere community receiving treatment from the medical team

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WEST AFRICA OIL AND GAS REGULATORS FORUM (WARF)

Congratulations!



The West Africa Oil and Gas Regulators Forum (WARF) warmly congratulates **Engr. Farouk Ahmed,** Pioneer Authority Chief Executive of the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA), on his conferment with the prestigious **OTL Special Award** by **OTL Africa Downstream Energy.**

This distinguished recognition is a testament to his contributions to Nigeria's midstream and downstream petroleum industry, as well as his leadership and commitment to the advancement of petroleum sector regulation.

WARF celebrates this well-deserved honour and wishes him continued success, greater accomplishments and fulfilment in his future endeavours.

ENGR. FAROUK AHMED, FNSE



Signed:
West Africa Oil and Gas Regulators Forum (WARF)

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Conscience is an open wound; only truth can heal it. Uthman dan Fodio 1754-1816

Editorial

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Chief Reuben Famuyide Fasoranti (1926-2026)

THE passing on October 20, 2026, of the elder statesman and National Leader of the pan-Yoruba social-political organisation, Afenifere, Pa Reuben Famuyide Fasoranti (OFR), at the age of 100 years marked the end of an era that will continue to feature prominently in national discourse even as the country inches towards the 2027 general elections.

His century-long life was a lesson in integrity, discipline, selflessness, and unwavering commitment to the progress of his Yoruba people and the unity and development of Nigeria. Pa Fasoranti was one of the few remaining members of the old guard led by the late sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, who unleashed nationalist struggles and an ideological revolution that led to Nigeria's independence in 1960 and later shaped the country's path to building a new nation in the post-independence era.

Fasoranti belonged to the generation of Nigerian politicians whose convictions were sharply shaped by the nationalist struggles and Awolowo's progressive philosophy. They fought against military dictatorship to attain democratic rule in 1999. Fasoranti was born on May 11, 1926, in Uso, in present-day Owo Local Government Area of Ondo State. He was educated at St. Andrew's Primary School, Owo; Ondo Boys High School; and the Yaba Higher College, Lagos, before studying English and Geography at the University College, Ibadan. He obtained a post-graduate diploma in Education from the University of Hull, United Kingdom. His appetite for learning led him to obtain a master's degree in education administration and School Management from Macquarie University in Australia.

The late Fasoranti was an educationist par excellence, a politician, and a pro-democracy activist, among others. He gave an outstanding account of himself, drawing on his educational background. He built a career in teaching and as a school administrator, serving in several institutions, including the Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure, and the Iju-Itaogbolu Grammar School, where he served as founding principal. His contribution to the development of education was remarkable and a good advertisement for the role of the educationist in society. After retiring from teaching, he established the popular Omolere Nursery and Primary School and the Akure High School in Akure. He also established the St Frances' Academy, Igoba, in memory of his wife. Fasoranti belonged to a generation of Nigerians devoted to democratic principles, which they pursued rigorously. His political history was strongly rooted in the ideals and principles of his Yoruba nation. In every judgment, he was learned, refined, charismatic, and visionary. He participated in the political activities of the Action Group (AG) in the First Republic and played a prominent role in the leadership and success of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN).

Between 1979 and 1983, he served as Commissioner for Finance under the UPN administration of the late Chief Michael Adekunle Ajasin, as governor of Ondo State. In a proud defence and celebration of his appointment of Fasoranti as commissioner, Ajasin, on page 199 of his autobiography titled 'Ajasin: Memoirs and Memories', wrote: "I have known Chief Fasoranti for a long time within and outside politics. He was by any standard a solid personality. He was solid in capability, integrity, dependability, reliability, efficiency, effectiveness and loyalty. For this reason, I decided to put him in charge of finances as my Finance Commissioner." And in justification of the trust vested in him, according to records, Fasoranti's tenure was marked by efforts to improve the state's financial management and development, demonstrating his commitment to public service and governance. He distinguished himself in every respect in his disciplined Spartan way of life, his belief in principles, and his commitment to noble causes. Though he exhibited calm and quiet disposition, he was a consistent and outspoken critic of bad governments and was one of the loud voices drawing attention to the failures in Nigeria's democratic process.

At the centre of Fasoranti's political history was his emergence as the leader of Afenifere after the death of Pa Abraham Adesanya, becoming an influential voice on Yoruba interests, unity, development and the political ideals, including restructuring of the country, true federalism and accountable democratic governance. He featured prominently in the June 12 struggle.

It is also on record that Fasoranti's political exploits were characterised by some challenges, as evidenced by the assassination attempt believed to have been orchestrated by the oppressive regime of General Sani Abacha in 1996. Despite the threats to his life while striving to liberate the Yoruba race from oppression and uphold the tenets of democratic governance in Nigeria, Fasoranti's resilience and fortitude remained unshaken, symbolising the strong spirit of resistance against tyranny and oppression.

However, Fasoranti paid for his activism, particularly for being an Afenifere leader. His daughter, Funke Olakunrin, was killed in July 2019 in an attack along the Ondo-Ore expressway. The murder attracted widespread outrage and renewed national discourse on the high level of insecurity in the country.

The departure of Fasoranti, one of the great followers of Awolowo, has further depleted the rank of frontline nationalists who inspired the youth of their time with their sincerity, eloquence, patriotism and sense of purpose. Some questions that can be asked are: where are the Nigerians today, especially members of the political class, who are without blemish and can also be an inspiration to today's youth with positive drive to nation-building and development? Where are those patriotic Nigerians who, beyond political expediency, will see a vision of a greater tomorrow for our youth through, for instance, education and go forthrightly to realise it, as done by the sage, Awolowo and his faithful disciples?

Eminent Nigerians across the country, including President Bola Tinubu, have paid glowing tributes to the late nationalist, extolling his virtues, especially the laudable role he played in the development of education and entrenchment of democratic government in Nigeria.

Fasoranti's exemplary life, profound contribution to the development of education and his role in nation-building will endure through the ages.

LETTER

On seven-point legislative agenda for FCT women, girls

SIR: The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) women's concern about practical measures to improve their welfare has always been in terms of protection and advancing the causes of women and girls across the six area councils.

Of particular concern are the seven priority areas underpinning Senator Philip Tanimu Aduda's legislative agenda for women and girls as listed accordingly.

Skills development and economic empowerment: Supporting legislation and budget provisions that expand access to vocational training, digital skills, enterprise development and cooperative financing.

Support for women-owned businesses: Championing access to grants, affordable credit, markets and public procurement opportunities, with transparent criteria to ensure support reaches intended beneficiaries.

Education and mentorship: Advocating policies and funding that promote girls' enrolment, retention and completion of school, alongside scholarships, STEM education, adult literacy and mentorship.

Maternal and community healthcare: Advocating adequate funding for maternal healthcare, primary health facilities and affordable health coverage, while strengthening oversight of service delivery across the six area councils.

Women's representation and leadership: Supporting legislative and policy reforms that expand women's participation in governance, public appointments and decision-making, alongside leadership development opportunities.

Protection and inclusion of vulnerable women: Championing legal protections and social support for widows, women living with disabilities and other vulnerable women, including access to livelihoods, essential services and protection against discrimination and dispossession.

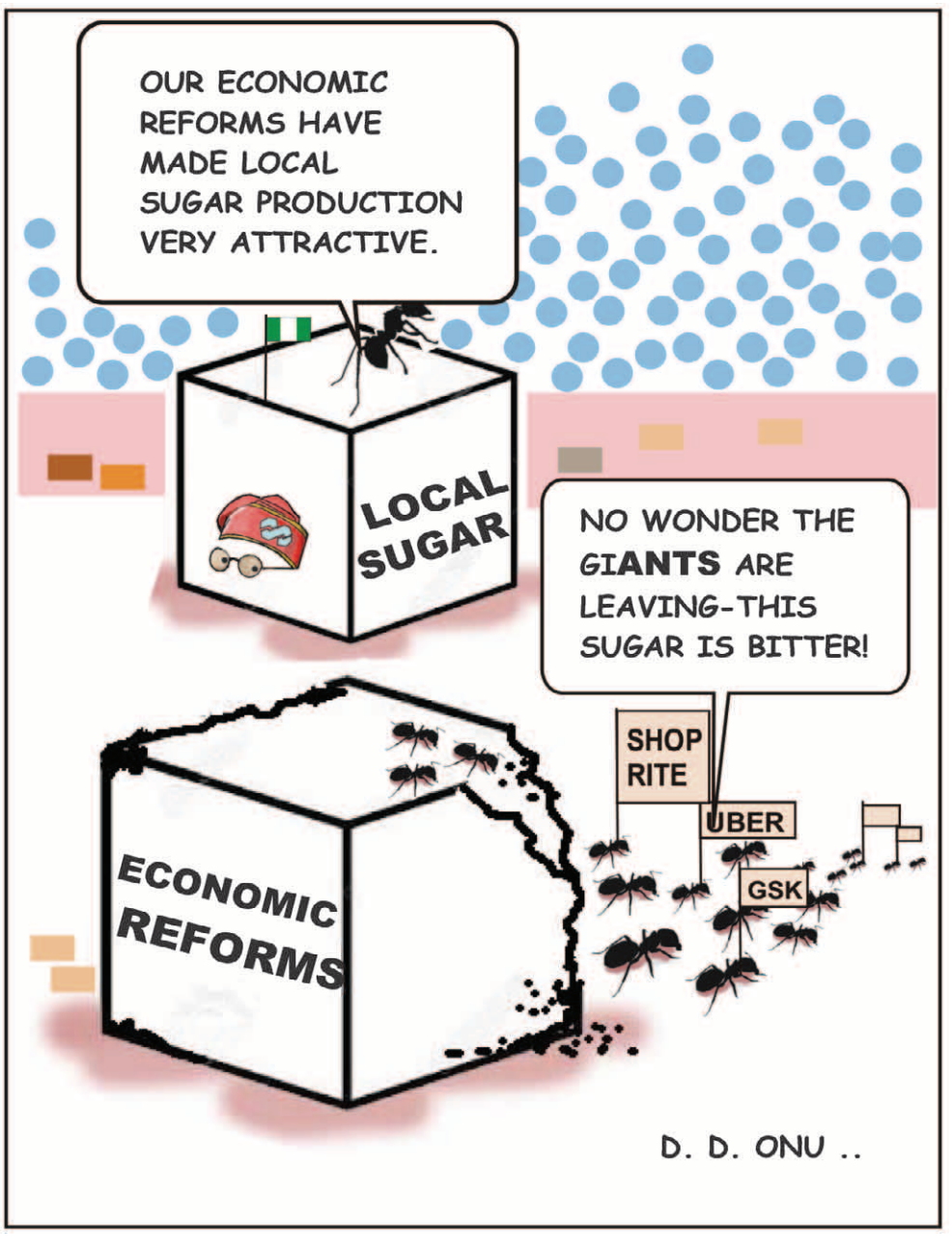
Prevention of gender-based violence and access to justice: Supporting stronger legal protections, effective enforcement, survivor services, shelters and accessible legal aid through adequate funding and oversight.

Princess Hauwa Philip Aduda has emphasised the importance of sustained dialogue with women leaders to ensure that grassroots concerns inform these priorities. She encouraged continued engagement, collaboration and practical recommendations to strengthen the proposed agenda.

This, therefore, reinforces the importance of women's participation in shaping policies that affect their lives and holding public representatives accountable for results.

Through continued consultation, the priorities will be further developed into a legislative agenda focused on measurable improvements in the lives of women and girls across the FCT.

Ambassador Mariam Haruna wrote from Abuja.



Opinion

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Reengineering NAFDAC: Need for national food safety agency

By **Christine Amaka Ikpeme**

TODAY, in homes, markets, and roadside stalls across Nigeria, well over 130,000 people will fall ill from something they ate or drank. That is what nearly 50 million foodborne illnesses a year looks like in daily terms, and tomorrow the figure will be much the same.

Behind every case is a chain that runs from farm or fishpond through slaughterhouse, mill, warehouse, and market stall to the plate, and a weakness at any link can make a family sick. The question before the nation is whether our institutions are built to guard that whole chain or whether it is time to reengineer the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) by unbundling food safety into a dedicated national food safety agency.

After more than 30 years in food science and food safety training, I am alarmed by the level of unsafe food available in Nigeria's domestic food trade and by NAFDAC's failure to address these challenges. This is not an attack on NAFDAC, whose work to protect consumers deserves acknowledgment. It is an argument about institutional design and the best use of public resources.

A public health emergency on our plates

The Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has said that Nigeria records nearly 50 million foodborne illnesses and more than 53,000 deaths each year, based on the World Health Organisation's updated global estimates for 2000 to 2021. About 4.26 million healthy life years are lost annually. Children under five account for more than 80 percent of the burden, and more than 40 million of the illnesses are diarrheal infections linked to pathogens such as Salmonella and E. coli.

Behind each figure is a child kept out of school, a parent kept out of work, a hospital bill a poor household cannot afford, and, too often, a funeral. A burden of this magnitude is a public health emergency, an economic drag, and a threat to national development. It deserves an institution whose sole purpose is to reduce it.

The problem is regional, and Nigeria sits at its centre. The FAO's assessment of the food safety burden in sub-Saharan Africa identifies Nigeria as the chief contributor to the regional total, largely because of its population, in a region that already carries the world's highest per-capita burden of foodborne disease. As Africa's most populous nation, Nigeria moves the regional numbers more than any other country. Any continental effort to cut foodborne disease will, therefore, depend on whether Nigeria gets its own food safety system right.

One regulator, too many mandates

NAFDAC's statutory mandate is exceptionally broad. It covers the manufacture, importation, exportation, distribution, advertising, sale, and use of food, drugs, cosmetics, medical devices, packaged water, chemicals, and detergents. Each area requires its own laboratories, scientists, inspectors, legal expertise, and enforcement strategy.

Food safety, meanwhile, is a specialised discipline. It spans microbiological hazards, chemical contaminants, pesticide and veterinary drug residues, mycotoxins, additives, allergens, fraud, hygienic processing and cold chain management. It does not begin at the supermarket shelf. It begins in the field and the farmyard. When one agency must give equal weight to antimalarials, cosmetics, medical devices and cassava flour, something competes for attention, funding and leadership time. That is no criticism of the men and women of NAFDAC. It is a structural reality, and structures can be redesigned.

Alerts are not the scorecard

NAFDAC regularly issues public alerts and recalls for food products that may be counterfeit, unwholesome, unregistered, or non-compliant. Its archive includes alerts on counterfeit milk, unwholesome mayonnaise and soft drinks, unauthorised sugar imports, and an energy drink recalled for high caffeine levels. In March 2026, Public Alert No. 018/2026 reported suspected counterfeit and unregistered infant cereal for sale in Lagos, with possible tampering with the expiration date. Surveillance officers removed it from sale.

Alerts are necessary, and an alert can show that surveillance is working. But the number of alerts is a poor measure of performance. A high count may signal better detection; a low count may signal weaker detection. What Nigerians need to know is how quickly hazards are found, how far they spread before detection, whether affected products are fully traced and withdrawn, and whether the same offenders reappear.

Registration matters, but a registration number on a pack does not guarantee that every unit sold is authentic, properly handled, and safe until its expiration date. The riskiest points are often the hand-offs, from farm to processor, processor to distributor, and distributor to retailer. A dedicated authority could manage those hand-offs as a single national program, stopping unsafe food before it reaches the consumer rather than reporting it after the fact.

The Senate's moment

The timing of this debate matters. In July 2026, the Senate advanced two bills touching this territory. The Food, Medical Products and Other Regulated Products Act, 2026 would consolidate and replace the Food, Drug and Related Products Act and the Food and Drugs Act, giving NAFDAC modernised powers on pre-registration evaluation, post-market surveillance, traceability and mandatory recall. The Counterfeit Medical Products, Fake Drugs and Unwholesome Processed Foods (Prohibition and Control) Bill, 2026 would strengthen enforcement against counterfeiters. During the debate, the Deputy Senate President asked the committee to clearly define the relationship with the NAFDAC Act to avoid duplication.

These bills show that lawmakers recognise the weakness of decades-old laws, and they deserve support where they strengthen consumer protection. But they also sharpen the strategic choice. If the new framework is written only around NAFDAC's existing portfolio, Nigeria will have modernised a bundled regulator without ever asking whether the bundle itself is the constraint. The cheapest moment to settle that question is before new powers are locked in.

The National Food Safety and Quality Bill, 2022, which proposed a National Food Safety Council and Management Committee, did not, on the public record, become law. Policy gives direction; a bill proposes; only an enacted law binds. Nigeria has had much direction and too little binding law on whole-chain food safety.

Six gaps a dedicated agency must close

Nigeria has policies and expertise, but it has not properly harnessed them. The 2023 National Integrated Guidelines for Foodborne Disease Surveillance and Response, the National Policy on Food Safety and Quality and its Implementation Plan launched in June 2024, and the National Food Safety Management Committee are real foundations. The question is whether they add up to a coordinated, funded, and accountable system. Six gaps suggest they do not yet: Fragmented responsibility.

Duties are spread across federal ministries, NAFDAC, the Standards Organisation of Nigeria, agriculture and livestock authorities, and state and local governments. Who leads when an outbreak crosses state lines? Who confirms a recall has reached every affected market?

Weak performance measurement. We need public indicators: time from a credible complaint to an investigation, time from a confirmed hazard to public notice, share of affected lots withdrawn, repeat violations, and laboratory turnaround.

Patchy traceability. When food moves through informal intermediaries and open markets, identifying the source of an unsafe product is slow. A national framework must be affordable for smallholders so it protects them rather than shutting them out.

Under-recognised foodborne disease. People often mistake symptoms for other conditions, and clusters are rarely linked to a common source. Hospitals, laboratories, veterinary services and inspectors must share data.

Uneven laboratory and inspection capacity. A new agency without validated testing, trained inspectors, and equipment would just be another office. Reform must come with a funded plan.

Risks in informal markets. Most Nigerians buy from open markets, roadside vendors and small processors. The goal is not to criminalise informality but to make safe practice achievable, with training first and proportionate sanctions for high-risk violations.

Re-engineering, not demolition

Unbundling does not mean dismantling NAFDAC. NAFDAC would retain its non-food mandates, and its laboratories and expertise could be transferred or shared during a phased transition, with staff offered a fair path into the new body. Whatever it is called, the new agency should coordinate risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication; oversee controls from primary production through consumption; lead outbreak investigations, tracing, and national recalls; support small food businesses; and publish an annual performance report with independently auditable data.

The law should include seven principles rather than leaving them to goodwill. Keep risk assessment separate from risk management, so scientific advice is independent of commercial and political pressure. Define boundaries with NAFDAC, SON, the health ministry, agriculture authorities and states, naming a lead wherever responsibilities overlap. Settle grey areas such as food-contact materials, supplements, and agrochemicals, so no hazard falls between two agencies. Retain NAFDAC's strengths. Ring-fence funding so the new body does not inherit the same resource squeeze. Build in federalism, since states and local governments run markets and abattoirs. And mandate transparency, including an annual appearance before the National Assembly.

What other countries show

No single model guarantees food safety. After food scares eroded public trust, the United Kingdom created its Food Standards Agency in 2000 to put consumers first and separate food safety advice from agricultural promotion. Ireland has a dedicated Food Safety Authority, and India established the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India in 2006 to consolidate fragmented laws. The WHO Global Strategy for Food Safety 2022 to 2030 prescribes no single structure but calls for evidence-based, coordinated, and adequately resourced systems.

The lesson is not to copy a flag. It is to secure a clear lead authority with defined legal powers, strong scientific and laboratory capacity, reliable surveillance and traceability, rapid incident response, transparent reporting with independent oversight, and sustained funding for prevention.

A call to action

The burden of unsafe food falls hardest on infants, young children, older people and poor households, who have the least room to avoid risk or absorb the cost of illness. The Federal Government should urgently make a transparent, evidence-based decision on a dedicated agency. The National Assembly should ensure that any food safety legislation clearly defines powers, funding, coordination and oversight. Industry must take responsibility for the food it produces, imports, stores and sells. Universities, professional bodies, consumer groups and the media have their parts to play. State and local governments must be partners from the start, because Abuja alone cannot manage food safety.

Nigeria already has policies, expertise and reform initiatives. What it lacks is a single, accountable institution whose success is measured by one thing: fewer Nigerians made sick by the food they eat. That institution should be a new agency radically empowered to regulate domestic and international food trade; hence, the decision must not be left to drift. With bills already before the Senate, the moment to decide is now.

A safe food supply is not a privilege. It is a public health necessity, and Nigeria must organise its institutions to deliver it.

Ikpeme is a rofessor of Food Science and Technology at the University of Calabar, a certified food scientist and a HACCP lead instructor.

Nigeria and EU: A trade partnership with untapped potential

By **Gautier Mignot**

THE European Union remains Africa's first trade and investment partner. Around 33 per cent of Africa's total trade in goods is with the EU, and Europe remains the main destination for African exports. European companies are also the largest foreign investors on the continent, with EU investment stock in Africa worth more than EUR 250 billion in 2024.

These are not just impressive figures. They point to a relationship of depth, resilience and long duration. Nigeria is central to that relationship.

The European Union has long been committed to providing preferred access for African goods. This year, the European Union celebrates 25 years of Everything But Arms (EBA) and 55 years of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP), the two preferential trade regimes supporting African exports to Europe.

Nigeria is not a beneficiary of EBA. That arrangement is reserved for Least Developed Countries and provides duty-free, quota-free access to the EU market for all goods except arms. Nigeria benefits instead from the GSP, which is part of the wider EU framework of trade preferences for developing countries.

For decades, through GSP and EBA alike, the European Union has chosen to open its market wide to developing partners. This year, the EU extended the GSP for another decade, with the new rules applying from 1 January 2027.

In a turbulent world, that is an important signal: it says that Europe remains committed to a trade relationship with developing partners that is generous, stable and predictable. At a time when global trade is becoming more fragmented, more uncertain and more transactional, that matters more than ever.

Other trading partners have recently moved in a similar direction with their market access offers to Africa, but the EU still stand out for the breadth, longevity and predictability of its trade preferences for African countries.

For 55 years now, the Generalised Scheme of Preferences has allowed beneficiary countries to export to the European market with reduced or zero tariffs on a wide range of goods. In 2024 alone, GSP beneficiary countries received an estimated EUR 5 billion in tariff savings.

Nigeria has already been making real use of this opportunity. Between 2022 and 2024, EU imports from Nigeria using GSP preferences totalled EUR 372.4 million, making Nigeria the largest user of GSP preferences among the non-EBA African beneficiaries. Nigeria's utilisation rate of 70 per cent is encouraging. It shows that Nigerian businesses are already taking advantage of the scheme in meaningful ways.

But it also shows there is room to go further and fully exploit the opportunities under the GSP.

That matters because Nigeria's long-term economic future depends on diversification. It depends on creating more value at home, strengthening manufacturing, expanding agro-processing, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, and generating more decent jobs, especially for young people. It also depends on building the conditions that allow Nigerian businesses to move further up the value chain and become more competitive, not only in the region but globally.

Trade preferences alone cannot achieve all that, but they are important because they contribute to a predictable environment for investment. Economic transformation depends above all on domestic leadership, reforms, infrastructure, skills and a supportive business climate. But trade preferences can help. They can lower the cost of entering international markets, make investment decisions easier, and encourage firms to think in terms of scale.

For Nigeria, this is not a marginal advantage. It is a strategic one.

When I look at Nigeria, I see one of Africa's most important economies, but I also see one of its most promising. I see talent, ambition and entrepreneurial drive on an exceptional scale. I see a country with every reason to play a larger role in regional and global value chains. And I see a partnership with Europe that is already strong, but still far from reaching its full potential.

I am therefore very pleased that Nigeria decided last year to launch a Trade and Investment Dialogue with the European Union, to discuss exactly how to reap the full benefits of this relationship. Two editions of this Dialogue have already taken place and 2027 should be a year to decisively bring the EU-Nigeria economic partnership forward.

Mignot is the Ambassador of the European Union to Nigeria and to the ECOWAS.

Opinion

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Elevate Africa: Redefining Africa's future with Accra Declaration

By **Adeniyi Ifetayo**

THE third edition of the Elevate Africa Convening, held in Accra, Ghana, has ended with an ambitious declaration of commitment by prominent African leaders, former and serving presidents, traditional rulers and other influential personalities to champion a new development agenda anchored on economic integration, reparatory justice, institutional reforms, cultural ownership, human capital development and shared prosperity.

The two-day gathering, which brought together an impressive assembly of political leaders, cultural ambassadors, investors, activists, entrepreneurs, academics, traditional rulers, development practitioners and stakeholders in the creative industries, provided a significant platform for interrogating Africa's development challenges and exploring practical pathways towards a continent capable of determining its own future.

Held under the theme, "Africa: Defining Her Future," the convening was co-founded by the Olu of Warri, His Majesty Ogiame Atuwatse III, and his wife, Her Majesty Olori Atuwatse III, who brought together participants from different parts of the world to deliberate on issues shaping Africa's political, economic, cultural and social development.

Among the distinguished personalities at the gathering were former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan, Sierra Leonean President Julius Maada Bio, former Malawian President Joyce Banda and former Mauritian President Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, alongside ministers, business leaders and representatives of international institutions.

Beyond the distinguished attendance and colourful atmosphere, what stood out was the determination to move conversations about Africa's future beyond familiar declarations of potential to concrete commitments, institutional action and measurable outcomes.

At the heart of this ambition was the Accra Declaration of Commitment, signed by participating leaders in their personal capacities at the Presidential Roundtable on October 28, 2026.

The declaration outlines 19 commitments covering three broad areas: confronting the historical consequences of the transatlantic slave trade and strengthening relationships with the African diaspora; accelerating economic integration, trade, investment and creative ownership; and rebuilding leadership, public trust and opportunities for future generations.

Importantly, the signatories did not present the declaration as a substitute for governmental policy. Rather, they invited African governments, the African Union, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat, regional economic communities and other stakeholders to support and translate its commitments into practical policies and programmes.

One of the most compelling issues that dominated discussions was the need for Africa to redefine its understanding of wealth and development.

Delivering the opening address, the Olu of Warri challenged African leaders to invest more deliberately in human capital, institutional development and economic opportunities, arguing that the continent's greatest asset was not its mineral deposits but the capabilities of its people.

"The true wealth of any nation lies not beneath its soil, but within its people," he declared.

The monarch warned that Africa's growing population would not automatically translate into prosperity without deliberate investments in education, healthcare, agriculture, innovation and other productive sectors.

With projections indicating that more than one in four people globally would be African by 2050, he argued that the continent must prepare its young population to compete in an increasingly knowledge-driven global economy.

His position reinforced a recurring concern throughout the convening: Africa cannot continue to measure its development solely by the abundance of natural resources while neglecting the human capabilities and institutions required to transform those resources into wealth.

The question of ownership also emerged as a major theme, particularly in discussions surrounding Africa's creative economy and cultural heritage.

Speaking on behalf of Dr Osahon Okunbo, founder of The Osahon Okunbo Foundation (TOOF), Nicole Asinugo, the foundation's Director of Partnerships and Communication, highlighted the importance of building institutions and policies capable of preserving Africa's cultural heritage and ensuring that the continent's creative achievements translate into lasting economic benefits.

Okunbo argued that international recognition of African artists and creative products would amount to little if the structures required to protect intellectual property, preserve cultural knowledge and create opportunities for emerging talents were absent.

Drawing from his experience growing up surrounded by Benin artworks belonging to his late father, he emphasised that cultural heritage represented much more than artistic objects. It preserved the history, identity, beliefs and knowledge of generations.

His intervention raised important questions about who owns Africa's cultural products, who controls their commercial value and what the next generation stands to inherit.

The issue received further attention from Olori Atuwatse III, who challenged African governments, investors and business leaders to move beyond celebrating the global popularity of African music, fashion and films to securing ownership of the economic value they generate.

She noted that Africa earns only about one dollar from every 100 dollars generated through global trade in creative goods, describing the situation as a troubling disconnect between the continent's cultural influence and its economic returns.

"Our soft power should do more than make the world lean in. It should make the world buy in," she said.

Referencing Afrobeats, Nollywood and African fashion, she observed that while African creativity increasingly commands international attention, much of the commercial value is captured elsewhere.

"The rhythm is ours. The colour is ours. Too often, the receipt is made out to someone else," she said.

Her argument highlight the need for African-owned creative businesses, stronger intellectual property protection, access to financing and commercial platforms that enable creators to retain ownership and benefit from their work.

The discussions also placed considerable emphasis on the relationship between Africa and its diaspora, particularly the question of reparatory justice and the restoration of historical connections disrupted by slavery and colonialism.

The Accra Declaration called for greater recognition of the enduring consequences of the transatlantic slave trade, including the return of ancestral remains and cultural property, access to historical archives, formal apologies where appropriate and consideration of measures to restore communities affected by the trade.

It also advocated policies that would make it easier for Africans in the diaspora to return to the continent through improved citizenship, residency, land ownership and recognition of professional qualifications.

Significantly, the declaration distinguished reparations from remittances, philanthropy, investment and development assistance, maintaining that historical justice should not be confused with ordinary economic transactions.

The call for a stronger relationship between Africa and the diaspora also extended to trade and investment, with participants advocating renewed commercial connections between the African continent and the Caribbean.

On continental integration, the declaration urged faster implementation of the AfCFTA, greater freedom of movement for Africans, visa-free and visa-on-arrival arrangements, mutual recognition of qualifications and the eventual realisation of an African passport.

It also called for improved roads, ports, electricity and digital infrastructure to enable African businesses to expand across national borders without unnecessary restrictions.

Another significant issue was the need to ensure that Africa derives greater value from its natural resources.

Participants called for greater transparency in mining contracts, local processing of minerals and equitable benefits for communities whose lands and resources sustain extractive industries.

Read the remaining part of this article on www.guardian.ng

Ifetayo is Chief Executive Officer, (CEO) of Megastar Magazine.

How wealth actually trickles down and the channels Nigeria broke

By **Magnus Onyibe**

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu recently made a remarkable declaration about not going back to Egypt during a meeting at the Aso Rock Villa with City Boys, the campaign group driven by his son, Seyi Tinubu.

He declared: "I came and I removed subsidy the first day. I knew Nigeria would go bankrupt. There was nothing left to pay subsidy. I could listen to my political opponents promising a return to subsidy.

"I remember my scripture studies, both in the Bible and in the Holy Quran. When Moses and Musa left Egypt, they faced a challenge, and the Red Sea parted and gave way. You cannot ask Moses to go back to Egypt.

"With your energy and support, we will never go back to Egypt. No regrets."

Apparently, he was responding to former Vice President of Nigeria, Waziri Adamawa, Atiku Abubakar, an African Democratic Congress (ADC) presidential hopeful, who has promised to restore fuel subsidy if elected in 2027.

Tinubu argued that removing petrol subsidy was necessary, pointing to the fact that Nigeria's economy is now growing at 4.6%, alongside several other positive indicators that demonstrate the country's improving macroeconomic performance.

It is no coincidence that, on the same day, Finance Minister Taiwo Oyedele warned that a return to fuel subsidy could push the exchange rate to N4,000 to the dollar and petrol prices to N5,000 per litre.

To further contextualise the "no going back to Egypt" remark, it is important to stress that Tinubu was also responding to concerns among some Nigerians who fear that the petrol price discount and modulation measures announced by the minister on October 8 could be a disguised attempt to reintroduce fuel subsidy. Opposition politicians and concerned Nigerians have characterised the measures as a possible return to subsidy under a complex policy terminology.

In addition, the President's statement may have been a direct response to officials of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), who recently cautioned Nigeria against restoring fuel subsidy during the IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings in Thailand. Some opposition leaders have been promising to reinstate the subsidy if elected, and, given the biting cost-of-living crisis, the proposition is becoming increasingly appealing to some Nigerians.

Incidentally, on September 1, nearly two months ago, I wrote a piece in this column titled "The Petrol Subsidy Dependency Syndrome and 2027 Elections." In it, I began examining President Tinubu's bold but painful reforms and explaining why the significant improvements recorded at the macroeconomic level have yet to translate into corresponding relief at the microeconomic level.

I cautioned that the administration must not allow itself to be stampeded into reversing the reforms that have enabled it to achieve significant macroeconomic improvements. An excerpt from that article is reproduced below:

"I recalled that, at about the same time in 1973, some 53 years ago, a temporary measure was introduced to cushion the effects of a sharp increase in international oil prices following the outbreak of the conflict between Israel and the Arab world, known as the Yom Kippur War.

"Arab oil producers, in solidarity with Egypt, which had invaded Israel, launched what became known as the OPEC oil embargo. That event quadrupled the price of crude oil from $3 to $12 per barrel. To help Nigerians cope with the shock, the then Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, introduced petroleum subsidy, which was supposed to be a temporary measure.

"However, it gradually became a form of entitlement that the masses were reluctant to relinquish, though the elite had been among the greatest beneficiaries of the largesse.

"These policies continued indefinitely because no end date was specified when they were introduced or enacted, as the case might be.

"Measures similar to those introduced by General Gowon to ameliorate the effects of the 1973 oil price shock are now being adopted by leaders in Europe and East Asia, who are reducing or removing taxes on petroleum products to help their citizens weather the storm of high energy costs.

"The difference between temporary policy measures in Nigeria and those adopted by European and East Asian countries is that, whereas Nigeria's measures were open-ended and consequently became perpetual, the governments of those countries stipulated clear end dates from the outset."

I further argued:

"Now, a cross-section of Nigerians is referring to the measures taken by leaders in other jurisdictions to cushion the effects of oil price shocks on their citizens and is calling on President Tinubu to do the same.

"Would the Nigerian President follow the example of his contemporaries around the world, or would he prefer not to 'go back to Egypt', just as the Israelites, according to the biblical account, did not want to return to Egypt after crossing the Red Sea?

"It is a decision that the President must make in light of the fact that petrol prices have risen by about 80%. However, if he decides to intervene, I reckon that it may be through tax relief, with clearly defined commencement and end dates."

I concluded:

"The lesson to be learnt from the standpoint of public policy formulation is that, to avoid the kind of situation in which Nigeria has found itself, temporary measures should always have clearly defined starting and ending dates."

Remarkably, my advice to President Tinubu not to reverse the petrol subsidy removal policy, using the analogy of not going back to Egypt, was offered more than a month ago, as the excerpts above demonstrate.

It is gratifying that the President has now echoed the same expression. Last week, he declared, "We are not going back to Egypt," underscoring his administration's resolve not to return Nigeria to the petrol subsidy regime that he jettisoned on May 29, 2023, during his inaugural address as President of Nigeria.

It is worth recalling that on May 29, 2023, President Bola Tinubu removed the fuel subsidy, thereby saving an estimated N4 trillion. Subsequently, the naira was floated, and over the past three years, Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate has climbed back to the 4.3–4.6 per cent range, its highest level in ten years. Similarly, banks declared profits ofN6.7 trillion in 2024, the highest in our history.

Yet, in the same year, 133 million Nigerians were living in multidimensional poverty, according to a recent World Bank survey.

This poverty is reflected in the daily lives of Nigerians. For instance, the cost of transportation from Oshodi to CMS in Lagos has quadrupled, rising from N300 to N1,200, while the price of a basket of tomatoes has increased from N15,000 to N60,000.

Although the high cost of tomatoes and other foodstuffs is also attributable to insecurity, which has spread across the hinterland, farmers in Bauchi, Benue and Plateau states—areas renowned for their contributions to Nigeria's food supply—are increasingly afraid of being kidnapped for ransom or killed.

Read the remaining part of this article on www.guardian.ng

Onyibe is an entrepreneur, public policy analyst, author, democracy advocate and development strategist.

TheGuardian Business

www.guardian.ng Wednesday, November 4, 2026 Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

CRUDE OIL PRICE UPDATE Brent crude: $108.6| WTI crude: $105.9 **FOREX MARKET UPDATE** I&E Window: N1,332.69

Despite 2b more people online, digital divides persist in developing countries

By Adeyemi Adepetun

GLOBAL Internet connectivity surged in 2026, with two billion additional people gaining access to the digital world. Yet despite this milestone, stark inequalities remain, as billions are still excluded from the opportunities of the online economy due to cost, infrastructure gaps, and limited digital literacy.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) reported that the number of Internet users worldwide has climbed to 6.3 billion, reflecting unprecedented growth in digital adoption. However, the expansion has not translated into universal access.

Developing regions continue to lag, with rural communities, women, and marginalised groups disproportionately affected.

According to ITU Facts and Figures 2026, released yesterday, 6.3 billion people, or 76 per cent of the world's population, are using the Internet in 2026.

The figure is up from a revised estimate of 6.1 billion people, or 74 per cent, in 2025. Despite the continued growth in connectivity, two billion people remain offline.

ITU Secretary-General, Doreen Bogdan-Martin, said: "In the age of AI, being offline means being shut out of countless opportunities, from education to employment. Now more than ever, we need to expand connectivity and make it meaningful for everyone, everywhere."

With Internet use now estimated to extend to more than three-quarters of the global population, Facts and Figures 2026 showed continued progress toward universal connectivity.

At the same time, the data reveal persistent disparities in who is connected. For example, Internet use stands at 93 per cent in high-income countries, compared with just 32 per cent in low-income countries.

Closing gaps in the affordability, availability, quality and use of digital technologies and services is essential to achieving universal and meaningful connectivity, when everyone can use the Internet under optimal conditions, at an affordable cost, wherever and whenever they need.

Director of ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau, Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, said: "The continued expansion of global connectivity creates opportunities for socio-economic development and supports wider access to emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence.

"Facts and Figures 2026 shows us the significant progress achieved so far and the work that lies ahead of us to translate access to digital technologies into meaningful connections that can improve people's lives. For this to happen, we should also prioritise the delivery of digital skills. Without digital skills and meaningful connectivity, the benefits of technologies risk remaining out of reach for many, reinforcing existing digital divides."



Incoming Chief Executive Officer, Stena Bulk, Philip Eriksson (left); Chief Executive Officer, Stena Bulk, Erik Hanell; Head of Stena Sonangol Suezmax Pool, Jawert Johan; Board Member, Sonangol Trading and Shipping, Domingos Fernandes and Chief Executive Officer, Caverton Offshore Support Group (COSG) Olabode Makanjuola when the top management of Stena Sonangol Suezmax and Caverton Group Pool Meetings and Tour of Caverton MRO/ Training Center held at Ikeja, Lagos.

Stakeholders proffer what Nigeria must do to beat poverty, create jobs

From Michael Olugbode, Abuja

NIGERIA must raise economic growth to 10 per cent, from the current level of about four per cent, and urgently address corruption, weak investment and low productivity to create jobs and lift millions of citizens out of poverty, prominent economic leaders have warned.

The Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi II; businessman Atedo Peterside; former President of the African Development Bank, Dr Akinwumi Adesina; Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Dr Bosun Tijani; and former Securities and Exchange Commission Director-General, Arunma Oteh, gave the warning yesterday, at the Oxford Global Think Tank Leadership Conference in Abuja.

They argued that Nigeria's economic challenge goes beyond achieving positive gross domestic product (GDP) growth, insisting that reforms must translate into higher household incomes, productive employment, improved public services and better living standards.

The speakers identified weak investment, corruption, inadequate infrastructure, underinvestment in human capital and the slow adoption of productivity-enhancing technologies as major obstacles to sustainable economic expansion.

Sanusi, a former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, cautioned that improvements in macroeconomic indicators could create a misleading impression of economic recovery if the welfare of ordinary Nigerians continued to deteriorate.

While acknowledging that the economy was growing by about 4.5 per cent and some indicators had improved, he said GDP growth alone could not establish whether economic reforms were delivering meaningful benefits to citizens.

He pointed to the decline in GDP per capita since 2023, influenced by economic growth and currency depreciation, as a reason to question whether aggregate economic gains were translating into improved living standards.

According to him, the real measures of economic progress should include household incomes, employment, access to healthcare and education, nutrition and poverty reduction.

The implication, he argued, was that an economy could record growth while many citizens continued to struggle with the cost of living and limited access to economic opportunities.

Sanusi also warned against excessive dependence on portfolio investments, which can be driven by attractive short-term returns and reverse when market conditions change.

He called for deeper structural reforms, greater investment in infrastructure, stronger accountability and transparency, and reliable economic data to guide policy decisions.

His intervention underscored the need for the government to move beyond headline economic statistics and demonstrate how reforms are improving the productive capacity of the economy and the welfare of households.

Peterside was more direct about what he considered the central obstacle to achieving the growth Nigeria needs, blaming corruption, political patronage and regulatory harassment for discouraging investment and weakening private enterprise.

He argued that growth of about four per cent was inadequate for a country with Nigeria's development challenges, insisting that the economy needed to expand by as much as 10 per cent to generate sufficient jobs and improve living standards.

Achieving that target, he said, would require a substantial increase in investment relative to GDP, alongside an environment in which businesses could operate, expand and create employment without arbitrary interference.

Peterside accused government officials and regulators of subjecting businesses, particularly small and medium-scale enterprises, to harassment and arbitrary demands that raise operating costs and discourage expansion.

'Transport sector loses N15tr yearly to insecurity, cargo diversion'

By Olusegun Koiki

THE Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has disclosed that transporters and logistics operators in Nigeria lose more than N15 trillion yearly to insecurity, cargo diversion and unsafe transport corridors across the country's highways.

The chamber also called on the Federal and State governments to formulate a 10-year transit plan to curb all the challenges in the transport sector.

Presenting a paper as a keynote speaker at the 30th anniversary of On The Highway and Road Annual Lecture with the theme: '30 years on the Highways: Safety, Security and Sustainability – From Bad Roads to CNG Revolution,' the Chairman of the LCCI Auto and Automotive Components Sectoral Group, Dr Femi Eguaikhide, called for urgent investment in integrated public transportation infrastructure and secure road networks.

Eguaikhide, who is also the Deputy Managing Director of RT Briscoe Nigeria Plc, said insecurity had become a major threat to the country's transportation and logistics businesses across the country.

He maintained that sustainable mobility could not be achieved when drivers were afraid to travel at night and passengers felt unsafe at bus stops.

He noted that Nigeria's transportation challenge went beyond road construction, noting that without an integrated public transportation system, the country would continue to play catch-up.

He insisted that Nigeria needed more than isolated investments in highways, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lanes and motor parks.

According to him, Nigeria had continued to import fairly used buses and repair potholes three decades after On The Highway commenced operations, without making sufficient progress in developing an interconnected transportation system.

He declared that the absence of proper integration among Federal, State and Local government transportation projects had continued to undermine efficiency, road safety and passenger convenience.

To address the challenge, Eguaikhide called on government at all levels to approve a 10-year dedicated public transit infrastructure plan and proposed the construction of 1,000 kilometres of dedicated transit lanes and 50 modern interchange hubs across Lagos, Abuja, Kano, Port Harcourt and Enugu, with private sector participation.

World Bank criticises states for prioritising roads over social services

By Abigail Ikhaghu

THE World Bank has criticised Nigerian state governments for expanding spending on roads and transport infrastructure faster than investments in education, healthcare and social protection, despite a significant increase in public revenues since 2023.

The bank said the spending pattern raised concerns about whether additional resources available to states were translating into better public services and improved living conditions.

A representative of the World Bank, Gloria Joseph-Raji, disclosed this at the launch of the 11th edition of BudgIT's State of States Report, themed: 'From Allocation to Impact: Rethinking State Spending Priorities.'

She said recent economic reforms, including exchange rate unification, petrol subsidy removal and improvements in tax administration, had significantly expanded government revenues, giving states greater capacity to finance essential services.

States had also benefited from federal government settlements of outstanding obligations, intervention funds for infrastructure and security, and improved internally generated revenue (IGR).

"A few years ago, many states struggled to meet non-discretionary expenditure commitments, in particular civil service salaries. But our understanding today is that all states are meeting their salary commitments, and they have additional resources available for service delivery," she said.

However, Joseph-Raji said an assessment of expenditure patterns across the 36 states showed that transport infrastructure investments had grown faster than spending on education, healthcare and social protection, including in states with weaker human capital outcomes.

The findings aligned with the World Bank's October Nigeria Development Update, titled 'Beyond the Federal Purse – How Higher State Revenues Reshape State Priorities,' which examined changes in state spending following increased public revenues since 2023.

She said although most states had expanded infrastructure investments and reduced their debt burdens, particularly domestic debt, greater attention was needed to sectors with direct implications for citizens' welfare.

"Allocating resources to sectors with the greatest development impact is therefore essential," she said.

On revenue sources, Joseph-Raji said federation transfers remained the dominant source of funding for most states, accounting for more than three-quarters of revenue in all but a handful of states in 2025.

Between 2021 and 2025, federation transfers contributed 73 per cent of aggregate state revenues, excluding Lagos State, which has a relatively large IGR base.

She warned that the dependence exposed state finances to fluctuations in federally shared revenues, while internally generated revenue remained insufficient to support recurrent expenditure in most states.

"Moreover, IGR remains narrowly based and is sufficient to cover recurrent expenditure in only two states," she said.

She called for stronger public financial management, including improved budget credibility, cash management, commitment controls and public investment management, to ensure that increased revenues translated into better services.

She also urged states to integrate fiscal risks and debt management into budget processes and properly capture donor-funded activities in their budgets, implementation reports and annual financial statements.

FACTS DON'T LIE

Since Nigeria's Independence

HEAD OF STATE

NORTH: 10 APPROXIMATELY 45 YEARS

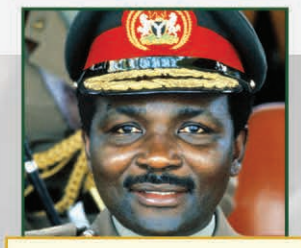
SOUTH: 6 APPROXIMATELY 21 YEARS



ABUBAKAR TAFAWA BALEWA
1960 -1966



JOHNSON AGUIYI-IRONSI
1966



YAKUBU GOWON
1966-1975



MURTALA MOHAMMED
1975-1976



OLUSEGUN OBASANJO
1976-1979



SHEHU SHAGARI
1979-1983



MUHAMMADU BUHARI
1983-1985



IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA
1985-1993



ERNEST SHONEKAN
1993



SANI ABACHA
1993 - 1998



ABDULSALAMI ABUBAKAR
1998-1999



OLUSEGUN OBASANJO
1999-2007



UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA
2007-2010



GOODLUCK JONATHAN
2010-2015



MUHAMMADU BUHARI
2015-2023



BOLA AHMED TINUBU
2023-Present

LAST 12 YEARS

PRESIDENT BUHARI - 8 YEARS (NORTH)

PRESIDENT TINUBU - 4 YEARS (SOUTH)

FOR NATIONAL STABILITY & UNITY

LET THE SOUTH COMPLETE ITS 8 YEARS

Signed: Yomi Edu

ADVERTISER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

PUBLIC APOLOGY, CLARIFICATION & UNSHAKABLE COMMITMENT TO THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF LAGOS STATE

RC: 426361



DR. KADRI OBAFEMI HAMZAT
DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF LAGOS STATE

A SINCERE APOLOGY & CLARIFICATION

The Board, Management, and Staff of Kenshad International Group wish to offer their unreserved apology to His Excellency, the Deputy Governor, over any misunderstanding and perceived disregard for authority.

We must clarify that the temporary closure of the site during the visit was strictly out of respect for the meeting the Osborne Estate was having with the Deputy Governor. Kenshad was not notified by the estate of His Excellency's visit to the site, hence we had no prior knowledge of the inspection.

There was absolutely no intent to show disregard for the high office of the Deputy Governor, whom we hold in the utmost esteem. We strongly appeal that this situation should not be used by the opposition to tarnish the image and reputation of the Deputy Governor.

COMMITMENT TO BEST PRACTICES & DEVELOPMENT

Kenshad International Group has always upheld best practices, operates in strict accordance with the relevant laws of the land, and is fully open to inspections.

As a partner in the progress of Lagos State, Kenshad is dedicated to the state's development. We pledge to strictly abide by all Lagos State building codes, urban planning regulations, and environmental best practices. We pledge to cooperate with all regulatory bodies to ensure all our projects meet the highest legal and environmental standards.

SOLIDARITY FOR THE 2027 GOVERNORSHIP

We take this opportunity to pledge our unwavering support and solidarity for His Excellency, Dr. Kadri Obafemi Hamzat, in his future endeavors, especially his noble ambition for election as the Governor of Lagos State in the 2027 elections. We believe in his visionary leadership to sustain and elevate the Greater Lagos vision.

SIGNED: MANAGEMENT & STAFF, KENSHAD INTERNATIONAL GROUP

RC: 426361

KENSHAD GROUP LTD

Four tier-one banks' profit rises 12.9% to N3.39tr in nine months

By Helen Oji

FOUR tier-one banks delivered combined profit before tax (PBT) of N3.39 trillion in the nine months' operations, about 13 per cent higher than N3 trillion achieved in the corresponding period in 2025.

The four lenders, comprising First HoldCo Plc, Guaranty Trust Holding Company (GTCO) Plc, Access Holdings Plc and Zenith Bank Plc, posted a combined N386.31 billion increase in pre-tax profit, reflecting improved earnings performance by three of the groups despite growing pressure on interest income and operating costs.

A breakdown of their unaudited nine-month performance showed that First HoldCo, the parent company of FirstBank, recorded the strongest growth, with its PBT rising by 60.84 per cent to N911.24 billion from N566.54 billion in the corresponding period of 2025.

Zenith Bank followed with a 1.24 per cent increase in pre-tax profit to N928.80 billion from N917.41 billion, while Access Holdings grew its PBT by 8.3 per cent to N667.36 billion from N616.25 billion.

Access Holdings recorded an 8.3 per cent increase in profit before tax to N667.36 billion from N616.25 billion in the corresponding period of 2025, supported by improved core income and a significant reduction in impairment charges.

GTCO, however, posted a pre-tax profit of N879.90 billion, down from N900.80 billion in the corresponding period of 2025.

First HoldCo's performance was supported by higher non-interest income, lower impairment charges and gains from financial instruments, which helped offset pressure on its core interest earnings.

Its nine-month net fee and commission income increased by 48.1 per cent to N316.4 billion from N213.7 billion, while impairment charges declined by 28.3 per cent to N207.10 billion from N288.92 billion.

For Access Holdings, the 8.3 per cent increase in pre-tax profit was supported by a 73.5 per cent reduction in impairment charges to N92.91 billion, while net fee and commission income rose by 12.4 per cent to N534.94 billion. The group also recorded a 32.1 per cent increase in net interest income after impairment to N1.20 trillion.

GTCO's performance was impacted by pressure from higher funding costs and fair-value losses, despite improvements in its asset quality and growth in some of its core income lines.

Abbey Bank retains A3 rating as capital, liquidity improve

ABBEY Bank Plc has received an affirmation of its short-term credit rating of "Bbb-" and "A3" by Agusto & Co., reflecting the Bank's improved capitalisation and strong liquidity profile.

The affirmation of the A3 rating underscores the Bank's capacity to meet its short-term financial obligations, supported by its robust liquidity position and strengthened balance sheet. Agusto & Co. also assigned a Stable Outlook to the Bank's ratings, reflecting expectations that its strengthened financial position, expanding franchise and increasing earnings diversification will support its credit profile.

The rating affirmation comes as Abbey Bank advances its transformation from a national mortgage bank to a regional commercial bank, following approval from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in June 2026. The Bank is preparing to commence commercial banking operations in November 2026, with a strategic focus on expanding its financial services offerings across the South-West, South-South and North-West regions, as well as the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.



Ingentia Energies Limited, Managing Director/Chief Executive officer, Victor Agbaroji (left) and NUPRC, Chief Executive, Oritsemeyiwa Eyesan, during the visit of Ingentia new MD/CEO to the Commission.

Ingentia Energies deepens NUPRC ties, eyes 30,000 bopd by 2030

By Benjamin Alade

INGENTIA Energies Limited has reaffirmed its commitment to operational excellence, growth and regulatory compliance following a courtesy visit to the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) at its headquarters in Abuja.

The visit marked the company's first official engagement with the Commission since the appointment of Victor Agbaroji, an engineer, as Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer and provided an opportunity to present the company's progress, growth ambitions, and long-term vision for sustainable value creation.

Leading the Ingentia Energies delegation, Agbaroji was received by the Commission Chief Executive, Mrs Oritsemeyiwa Eyesan, alongside members of the Commission's leadership team. During the engagement, Agbaroji highlighted Ingentia Energies' operational progress, revealing that the company has increased production to over 5000 bopd, representing significant growth since assuming operatorship of its asset. He noted that the achievement reflects the company's commitment to operational excellence, responsible asset development, and value creation, while positioning it for its next phase of growth.

As part of discussions around the company's future direction, Agbaroji outlined Ingentia Energies' ambition to achieve 30,000 BPD by 2030, supported by continued investment in technical development and growth opportunities.

'Cybersecurity rules risk disrupting business without rollout'

By Victoria Nwachukwu

THE Association of Corporate Treasurers of Nigeria (ACTN) has warned that the implementation of Nigeria's 2027 data localisation and cybersecurity requirements could disrupt business operations if regulators fail to provide practical timelines and address infrastructure readiness.

The association urged the Federal Government and relevant regulatory agencies to consider the cost and availability of local digital infrastructure before enforcing the requirements, stressing that data sovereignty and cybersecurity objectives must not undermine business continuity and the smooth flow of commerce.

President and Chairman of Council of ACTN, Adeyinka Ogunnubi, gave the warning at a press conference in Lagos ahead of the 2026 Treasury360 Conference, Exhibition and Corporate Treasury Awards.

Ogunnubi said the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) had introduced data localisation requirements mandating that payment transaction data generated in Nigeria be stored and managed within the country from January 2027.

He also highlighted the National Sovereign Cloud Initiative by NITDA and the Cyber Resilience Framework for the Nigerian Communications Sector, led by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), with obligations scheduled to take effect on February 23, 2027.

He said the measures would have significant implications for financial institutions and businesses whose payment platforms, banking systems and treasury operations depended on digital networks.

"Our payments, our banking platforms and our treasury systems all run on these networks, so their resilience is our resilience," he said.

The ACTN president called for sustained investment in digital infrastructure, cybersecurity and financial system resilience, noting that organisations required reliable, secure and accessible systems to support increasingly interconnected financial services.

Champion Breweries' revenue rises 140% to N51.4b on enJOYbev acquisition

By Isaac Chibuife

CHAMPION Breweries Plc's revenue rose by 140 per cent to N51.4 billion in the nine months ended September 30, 2026, from N21.4 billion recorded in the corresponding period of 2025, driven largely by the acquisition of enJOYbev B.V.

The company said the revenue growth reflected the consolidation of enJOYbev, although sales volumes at its standalone brewery business declined amid weak consumer demand and broader industry pressures.

Operating profit increased by 48 per cent to N6.3 billion from N4.3 billion, while profit after tax grew marginally to N2.18 billion from N2.05 billion.

The modest increase in net profit, despite higher revenue and operating profit, was partly due to increased finance costs arising from acquisition funding and prevailing interest rates.

The company also reported a net tax credit of about N1.3 billion, largely from deferred tax recognised on temporary differences in line with the International Accounting Standard 12.

Champion Breweries said the integration of enJOYbev had expanded its operations into new product categories and brands, reducing its reliance on a single market segment. It added that the acquisition would create opportunities to share distribution networks and enter new markets.

Higher revenues fail to improve living conditions in states, BudgIT warns

By Isaac Chibuife

DESPITE increased revenues and higher capital spending by state governments, Nigerians are yet to see corresponding improvements in public services and living conditions, the 2026 State of States Report by BudgIT has revealed.

The report, which assessed the 2025 fiscal performance of 35 states, found that rising government revenues were not necessarily translating into better healthcare, education, agriculture, water supply and other essential services, amid growing operating costs and weaknesses in budget implementation.

It warned that the fiscal gains arising from the removal of petrol subsidy and exchange rate reforms risk becoming an expansion of government spending without corresponding improvements in citizens' welfare.

According to the report, federal allocations to the 35 states assessed increased from about N5.4 trillion in 2023 to N11.38 trillion in 2024, significantly expanding the resources available to subnational governments.

However, the increased inflows have not automatically strengthened states' capacity to deliver public services, with BudgIT arguing that fiscal performance should be measured by how effectively governments convert available resources into tangible development outcomes.

The report also highlighted the continued dependence of several states on federal allocations, despite improvements in internally generated revenue (IGR).

While Lagos generated N1.71 trillion in IGR in 2025, accounting for 67.72 per cent of its recurrent revenue, federal allocations accounted for 79.28 per cent of Kano's recurrent revenue, 82.90 per cent of Abia's and 86.47 per cent of Anambra's total revenue.

FG to recover N400m unpaid charges, pledges to tackle power shortages

By Victoria Nwachukwu

THE Federal Government has uncovered unauthorised electricity connections involving about 14 industrial customers along a particular corridor, with unpaid electricity charges exceeding N400 million over the last few years.

Minister of Power, Joseph Tegbe, disclosed this yesterday at the 2026 Manufacturers Energy Security and Energy Efficiency Summit in Lagos, saying the government would pursue recovery and hold those responsible accountable.

He said the unauthorised connections deprived the electricity sector of revenue needed to sustain supply and unfairly burdened consumers who paid their bills. He urged manufacturers to support lawful electricity connections, warning that "this abuse cannot be allowed to continue."

Tegbe also disclosed that the President had approved a coordinated anti-vandalism campaign involving railway security agencies to protect critical national assets and hold offenders accountable. He described vandalism as a serious threat to the power sector, saying it damaged critical infrastructure and disrupted electricity supply.

Outlining the government's plans to address the sector's challenges, the minister said it had developed a four-pronged roadmap covering grid standardisation, sector liquidity and sustainability, asset optimisation, and expansion.

He said the approach would prioritise major electricity demand centres through corridors that align generation, transmission and distribution with demand. Lagos, he added, had been identified as the country's first energy-zone corridor because it accounts for 50 per cent of national electricity demand.

According to him, the government is working with the Lagos State Government to identify constraints affecting supply in the state.

Tegbe said a technical audit, which had been underway for four weeks, was expected to establish a diagnostic baseline for identifying infrastructure problems and prioritising interventions. He said the exercise was necessary to prevent spending money on the wrong projects without properly identifying the sector's needs.

He identified constrained gas supply, ageing equipment, network bottlenecks, vandalism and electricity theft among the challenges affecting the sector.

NNPC

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NIGERIAN AGIP EXPLORATION LIMITED (NAE) RC299647

OPERATOR OF NNPC LTD ONSHORE (PSC) BLOCKS OMLS 125, 134, 151 & OPL 245 (NOW PML 102 & 103)

TENDER OPPORTUNITY

PROVISION AND ADMINISTRATION OF INSURANCE SERVICES FOR (LIFE INSURANCE SERVICES) & (NON-LIFE INSURANCE SERVICES INCLUDING ENERGY PACKAGE) (NAE. 00000045 & 00000046)

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigerian Agip Exploration Limited herein referred to as "NAE", Operator of NNPC Limited's OMLs 125, 134, 151 & OPL 245 (Now PML 102 & 103) invites interested and reputable Insurers with competent and skilled personnel, equipment and relevant experience to apply for pre-qualification for consideration to tender for the Provision of Insurance services for NAE operations.

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WORK SCOPE AND SPECIFICATIONS

This Contract is for the provision and administration of insurance services.

The objective of the call for tender (CFT) shall be to award contracts to multiple technically qualified bidders with the best competitive commercial offers for the provision and administration of Insurance Services for NAE operations.

The scope of the contract shall cover the provision of insurance programmes for the following operational risks and services::

- NAE PSC Blocks- OMLs 125, 134, 151 & OPL 245 (Now PML 102 & 103) - Property Damage, Operator's Extra Expense, and Third-Party Liability.
- Naira Denominated Policies - Group Life Assurance, Group Personal Accident Insurance, Motor Insurance, Combined All Risk Insurance and House Ownership Insurance.

PROJECT DELIVERY SCHEDULE

The schedule requirement is to have a contract in place by Q4 2026. The Call for Tender will detail the provisions necessary for the Service. Contract duration is estimated at five (5) years firm with the option to extend annually for an additional period of up to two (2) years, subject to satisfactory performance.

3. CONDITION FOR SELECTION

Insurance Company seeking to be selected must satisfy the following conditions.

1. Be a Limited Liability Company registered in Nigeria and licensed by the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) to transact Insurance Business.
2. Must have valid registration with Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), expiring not earlier than 31st December 2026.
3. Have a net asset of not less than N10billion and N15billion for Life and Non-Life (General) Insurance Business respectively.
4. Have acquired relevant experience in Oil and Gas insurance business.
5. Have adequate and qualified staff with experience in Oil and Gas insurance business.
6. Must be in good standing as regards prompt settlement of all claims reported to date.
7. Have good re-insurance strategy, including use of A-rated re-insurance companies.
8. Have business relationship with competent Insurance Broker(s) with good reputation and experience in Oil and Gas Insurance business.
9. Must have obtained tax clearance certificate for the past three years (2023, 2024 & 2025).
10. Must have current certificate of compliance from PENCOM
11. Must have current certificate of compliance from ITF.
12. Must have current certificate of Group Life for its employees.

4. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- To be eligible for this tender exercise, interested suppliers are required to be pre-qualified and have a **"LIVE"** subscription status in the relevant NJQS service/product Group under the Life and/or Non-Life Categories (3.14.05 and/or 3.14.07) by the CFT advert closing date. All successfully pre-qualified suppliers in these categories will receive an invitation to submit their Technical Tender (ITT) for the services.
- To determine if you are pre-qualified and view the product/services category you are listed for: visit https://vms.nipex.org/login and access NJQS with your log in details. Click on 'Subscription' tab on the left-hand side of the dashboard to view your status and, click "Product Code" tab to view registered product codes.
- If you are not listed under the product/service category mentioned above but you have registered with the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) to do business in the Nigerian Oil & Gas Industry in those areas, please contact the NipeX administration office at Post Square Towers (Building B), 1, Ologun Agbaje Street Off Adeola Odeku Street, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria with your NUPRC (formally DPR) certificate as evidence for verification and necessary update.
- To initiate the NJQS pre-qualification process, access http://www.nipex-ng.com, click on the Registration tab, and select NipeX SAP Ariba Vendor Registration.
- To be eligible, all tenders must comply with the Nigerian content requirements in the NipeX system.
- Only Nigerian indigenous service companies having verifiable Nigerian equity shareholding of 51% and above shall submit bids for this tender.

5. NIGERIAN CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

NAE is committed to the development of the Nigerian Oil and gas business in compliance with the Nigerian Content Act 2010 for Nigerian Content Development.

As from the commencement of this Act, the minimum Nigerian Content in any project, service or product specification to be executed in the Nigerian oil and gas industry shall be consistent with the level set in the Schedule of the Act and any other targets as may be directed by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (The Board)

Tenderer shall comply with all the provisions of the Nigerian Content Act that relate to this contract but in particular comply with the minimum Nigerian Content 70% for the scopes which are covered in the Schedule of the Act and any other requirement that may arise from time to time not explicitly stated in this contract, but which apply to the contract in fulfilment of the Nigerian Content Act, in the submission of their Tender.

Failure to fully comply with the Nigerian Content Act or demonstrate commitment to Nigerian Content Development Policy of the Nigerian government shall result to disqualification from bidding this contract.

Tenderers shall provide evidence of Registration by National Insurance Commission (NAICOM).

As part of their submissions:

i. Tenderer shall demonstrate that the entity is a Nigerian-registered company with 51% or more shareholding capacity. Submit certified true copies of CAC forms 10, 02 & 07 (or its equivalent; CAC 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, etc.). Tenderer shall provide evidence of registration with the NCDMB NOGIC JQS and NUPRC Certificate.
ii. Tenderer shall provide evidence of what percentage of your key management positions is held by Nigerians and what percentage of the total work force are Nigerians. Also, show overall percentage of work to be performed in Nigeria and those by Nigerian resources relative to total work volume.
iii. Tenderer shall provide detailed description of the location of in-country committed facilities & infrastructure. (Technical/Administrative office, etc.) in Nigeria to support this contract.
iv. Tenderer shall provide evidence of a License to carry out Insurance services in-country issued by National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) as an Insurer to transact general Insurance business
v. Tenderer shall comply with the latest approved version of NCDMB HCD guideline by committing (via a letter of undertaking) to providing Project-Specific training, man-hour, budget, skill development and understudy plan for Nigerian personnel utilizing OGTAN registered trainer(s) or other approved NCDMB training institution(s)

Below are the In-country Value Add for the **PROVISION OF NAE 2027 NAIRA INSURANCE POLICIES:**

- **Professional Services:** 100% domiciliation of insurance, legal, and financial services in Nigeria.
- **Training (HCD):** Statutory minimum commitment to Human Capacity Development (3% of TCV)

Below are the In-country Value Add for the **PROVISION OF NAE 2027 ENERGY INSURANCE POLICY:**

- **Professional Services:** Minimum of 70% domiciliation of insurance services in Nigeria.
- **Training (HCD):** Statutory minimum commitment to Human Capacity Development (3% of TCV)

NOTE: Failure to comply with the provision of the Nigerian Content Act 2010 or to demonstrate commitment to the development of the Nigerian Content Policy shall result in the disqualification of the tenderer from the bidding process.

6. INFORMATION

Tenderers are to provide current NAICOM registration certificate and approved financial report/ statement.
Bidding shall be acceptable and evaluated on individual as well as Consortium basis provided that Consortium shall:

- Agree with the lead underwriter for the consortium
- Have executed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
- Obtain NAICOM certification for the consortium
- Obtain NAICOM certification for the consortium consolidated Financial Report/Statement.
- Obtain NAICOM approval for reinsurance offshore on the basis that local capacity has been exhausted.
- Provide acceptable reinsurance treaty from Reinsurance Companies with A rating.

a.) Failure to provide any of the listed documents or information may automatically disqualify the tenderer.
b.) This notice and the ensuing qualification process neither create any commitment by NAE nor establish any legal relationship with NAE.
c.) All costs incurred in registering and prequalifying for this and other service categories in NJQS shall be borne solely by the Bidders.
d.) This advertisement shall neither be construed as any form of commitment on the part of NAE to award any contract to any Bidder and/or associated Vendors, sub-contractors or agents, nor shall it entitle pre-qualified companies to make any claims whatsoever, and/or seek any indemnity from NAE and/or any of its partners by virtue of such companies having been pre-qualified in NJQS.
e.) The ITT and any further progression of this tender shall be via NipeX portal. Interested suppliers are therefore advised to ensure that their profiles in NipeX are active with a valid official email address accessible by their organization as this shall be the only means to transmit the ITT.
f.) Tendering process will be the NNPC Ltd contracting process of both:

- Single Envelope Tenders shall apply to the NAE PSC Energy Package Policy for OMLs 125, 134, 151 & OPL 245 (Now PML 102 & 103). Pre-qualified companies will first submit technical tenders. After technical evaluation, only technically qualified contractors will proceed to risk placement.
- Double Envelope Tenders (DET) for Naira policies, requiring pre-qualified companies to submit technical and commercial tender at the same time. Following a technical review, commercial tenders of technically qualified contractors will be evaluated.

g.) Manhour figures for Capital Project Portfolios are estimates to provide definition to the scope and do not constitute guaranteed quantities.
h.) NAE will only recognize and correspond with duly authorized officers of the pre-qualified tenderers and NOT through individuals or agents acting on their behalf.
i.) Interested Tenderer(s) should note that NAE has very cordial relationship with the host communities of the sites where these services may be performed based on existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Prospective Tenderer(s) will be required to implement the obligations of the MOU as part of their contract.

7. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Only suppliers, who are registered and have a **"LIVE"** subscription status in NJQS Life and/or Non-Life Categories **(3.14.05 and/or 30.14.07)** at 16:00 hrs. (Nigerian Time) on Wednesday November 25, 2026, being the advert closing date, shall be invited to submit technical and commercial tenders.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This advertisement of "Tender Opportunity" shall not be construed as a commitment on part of NAE, nor shall it entitle Applicants to make any claims whatsoever and/or seek any indemnity from NAE and/or any of its Partners by virtue of such Applicants having responded to this Advert.

Please visit the NipeX Portal at www.nipex-ng.com for this Advert and other information

NCDMB Advert Certification Authorization No.: ES/NCDMB/UPD/NAE-NCP-101168/150926 & ES/NCDMB/UPD/NAE-NCP-101169/150926

MANAGEMENT



CHIEF MUSA DANJUMA LL.B (HONS) B.L

Happy Birthday

to a
Remarkable Business Leader and
an outstanding Brother for all Seasons.

Wishing you renewed strength,
good health, joy, peace
and fulfilment of divine purpose.

Dr. & Mrs. BB Dan-Habu

BB DAN-HABU & CO
SOLICITORS & ADVOCATES
www.bbdanhabuco.com

nahco aviance

NIGERIAN AVIATION HANDLING COMPANY PLC

RC: 30954

Member of IATA IGHC ASA AIRPORT SERVICES ASSOCIATION TIACA

SUMMARY OF THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR NINE MONTHS ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2026

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce the Group's unaudited financial results for the third quarter ended 30th September, 2026

	Jan-Sept 2026 Group N'000	Jan-Sept 2025 Group N'000	Jan-Sept 2026 Company N'000	Jan-Sept 2025 Company N'000
Revenue	55,643,690	47,759,302	48,809,244	44,364,015
Profit from Operations	21,667,374	18,142,724	20,647,860	17,762,226
Profit Before Tax	21,237,696	17,939,135	20,118,751	17,597,939
Income Tax Expense	(5,196,113)	(4,482,273)	(5,029,688)	(4,399,485)
Profit after Tax	16,041,583	13,456,862	15,089,063	13,198,454
Total comprehensive income attributable to owners of the Company	16,034,369	13,460,922	15,089,063	13,198,454
EPS (K)	720	604	677	593

The Group recorded an improvement in Profit Before Tax with Earning Per Share (EPS) of 720k as compared with the prior year same period. It is our expectation that performance in the remaining quarter of 2026 will be better.

BELLO A. ABDULLAHI
FRC/2013/NBA/004/PRO/00000002301
Dikko & Mahmoud Solicitors
Company Secretary

CAVERTON OFFSHORE SUPPORT GROUP PLC

UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED RESULTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30th SEPT, 2026

caverton

The Board of Directors, ("the Board"), of Caverton Offshore Support Group, ("the Group), hereby announces the following Unaudited Results for the period ended 3Oth Sept 2026: -

Caverton Offshore Support Group Unaudited Consolidated and separate financial statements Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive Income For the period ended 30 September 2026	Notes	Group		Company	
		Year to September 2026	Year to September 2025	Year to September 2026	Year to September 2025
		N 000	N 000	N 000	N 000
Revenue	1	20,736,093	20,454,881	–	–
Operating expenses	2	(11,865,435)	(9,868,444)	–	–
Operating Profit		**8,870,658**	**10,586,437**	–	–
Administrative expenses	3	(12,760,527)	(6,238,301)	(16,345)	(46,322)
Net Exchange Difference	5	1,692,341	(731,362)	–	–
Other operating income	4	(55,867)	5,481,865	–	592,036
Total Operating Profit		**(2,253,395)**	**9,098,639**	**(16,345)**	**545,714**
Net Finance cost	6	(11,492,284)	(13,679,689)	–	–
Share of (loss)/profit of an associate		–	–	–	–
Profit before income tax expense		**(13,745,679)**	**(4,581,050)**	**(16,345)**	**545,714**
Income tax expense	7	(47,700)	(47,700)	–	–
Profit for the year		**(13,793,379)**	**(4,628,750)**	**(16,345)**	**545,714**
Other comprehensive income that may be reclassified to profit or loss in subsequent periods (net of tax):					
Share of other comprehensive loss of an associate		–	–	–	–
Exchange differences on translation of foreign operations		–	–	–	–
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax		–	–	–	–
Total comprehensive income for the year, net of tax		**(13,793,379)**	**(4,628,750)**	**(16,345)**	**545,714**
Profit attributable to:				–	–
Owners of the Company		(13,655,609)	(4,577,005)	–	–
Non-controlling interests		(137,770)	(51,745)	–	–
Total comprehensive income attributable to:		**(13,793,379)**	**(4,628,750)**		
Owners of the Company		(13,655,609)	(4,577,005)	–	–
Non-controlling interests		(137,770)	(51,745)	–	–
		(13,793,379)	(4,628,750)	–	–
Basic Earnings per share (N)	9	**(4.12)**	**(1.38)**	**(0)**	**0.16**

COMMENTS:

The results indicate revenue of N20.74 billion for the nine months ended 30 September 2026, compared with N20.45 billion in the same period of 2025. However, the company witnessed a loss before tax of N13.7b, primarily due to lack of flight contracts that expired in August 2025, while still maintaining the same cost structure. Administrative expenses rose to N12.76 billion mainly because of N5.9 billion additional depreciation following the revaluation of the Group's assets in the fourth quarter of 2025.

These results reflect the challenges we are still working through, particularly the financing obligations and cost pressures that continue to weigh on our performance. We are addressing them directly, and the progress we are making on restructuring our debt is an important step forward.

At the same time, the shape of the Group is changing. Our marine business now contributes almost a third of Group revenue, and it is building on strong international partnerships. Our focus is on building a stronger Caverton, with a more diversified revenue base, greater operational resilience and businesses capable of delivering long-term value for our shareholders."

Dated the 30th day of October 2026.
By order of the Board

AMAKA PAMELA OBIORA
Company Secretary
1, Prince Kayode Akingbade Close, Victoria Island, Lagos.

The detailed Financial Statements for the period are available on the company's website, www.caverton-offshore.com

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(CONSULTING SERVICES – FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT – FIRMS SELECTION)

Nigeria

Name of Project: Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) Project

Credit No.: 7638-NG

Assignment Title: ENGAGEMENT OF A FIRM TO PROVIDE PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE (PMO) SERVICES

REF No. NG-HOPE-PHC-579568-CS-QCBS

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The consulting services ("the Services") include Project Management Office (PMO) to provide oversight for the Digital Transformation Project of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA). The Consultant to be selected is to assist the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) through the SWAp Project to provide the services.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be obtained at: https://swap.gov.ng/jobsandpostings

The Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) Project now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are:

Profile of firm/consortium including ownership structure and role of each corporate entity with full contact details of each firm and proof of firm's legal registration status.

Evidence of Relevant institutional experience for successfully completed or ongoing assignments involving ICT implementation, digital transformation, enterprise systems, software development, systems integration, or technology-enabled business process transformation.

Demonstrated experience in project planning, governance, implementation monitoring, performance reporting, risk and issue management, quality assurance, and stakeholder coordination across complex programmes.

Evidence of Institutional delivery capacity of successfully completed or ongoing assignments involving ICT implementation, digital transformation, enterprise systems, software development, systems integration, or technology-enabled business process transformation.

Evidence of Government and Public-Sector Experience working with government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), public-sector institutions, or government- funded programmes, particularly on complex ICT or institutional transformation initiatives.

Demonstrated capacity to provide timely support implementation in Nigeria whether through its own presence or another arrangement permitted by the procurement documents.

Key Experts will not be evaluated at the shortlisting stage.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" (July 2016, revised September 2025); "Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

A Firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) method as set out in the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, (July 2016, revised September 2025); on www.worldbank.org/procurement.

A Firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost Based Selection method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained via the e-mail addresses below.

Expressions of Interest must be delivered in a written form to the physical or e-mail address(es) below by 13th November, 2026.

Setor-Wide Approach (SWAp) Project
Attn: Dr. Muntaqa Umar-Sadiq – National Coordinator, Project Coordination Unit,
No. 7 Usuma Street, Maitama, Abuja, FCT. Nigeria
E-mail: jobsandpostings@swap.gov.ng
Only short-listed Consultants will be contacted

Scan this code to access the full terms of reference

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  - Ensure that drilling operations are carried out in a safe, efficient and productive manner
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  Basic Function:
  - Supervise the drilling operations and associated activities and ensure it is in accordance with the well program.
  - Ensure drilling operations are carried out in a safe, efficient and productive manner.
- **DRILLER**
  Basic Function:
  - Operate drilling and mud circulating equipment as instructed in the well program and in accordance to Company policies and procedures.
- **ASSISTANT DRILLER**
  Basic Function:
  - Assist the Driller in operating drilling and mud circulating equipment as instructed in the well program and in accordance to Company policies and procedures.
- **DERRICKMAN**
  Basic Function:
  - Handle tubular goods while working on the derrick.
  - Assist in operating and maintaining drilling fluid pumping and mixing systems.
- **PUMPMAN**
  Basic Function:
  - Work in pump room and operate and maintain mud pump and mud mixing equipment.
  - Maintain records and logs of additives to the drilling fluid and the varying properties of the mud.
- **FLOORMAN**
  Basic Function:
  - Handle drilling tools and tubular on the rig floor for the purpose of making up/breaking down drill sting, riser and other drilling systems.
  - Assist the Driller in all operations on the rig floor.

MARINE DEPARTMENT

- **DECK PUSHER**
  Basic Function:
  - Supervises deck crews, crane lifts, materials handling and housekeeping. Requires solid roustabout and deck supervisory experience and rigging and lifting knowledge.
- **CRANE OPERATOR**
  Basic Function:
  - Operate the rig's crane in a safe and efficient manner and in accordance to Company Policies and Procedures
  - Regularly perform Preventative Maintenance on cranes and components
- **ROUSTABOUT/ MAINTENANCE ROUSTABOUT**
  Basic Function:
  - Carry out cargo handling duties, general cleaning, maintenance and other manual labor as assigned/directed

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

- **ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN**
  Basic Function:
  - Installs, maintains and repairs rig electronic, instrumentation and control systems. Requires a technical diploma or equivalent and offshore electronics experience.
- **MECHANIC**
  Basic Function:
  - Assist in maintaining and repairing mechanical, pneumatic and hydraulic equipment onboard the vessel
- **ELECTRICIAN**
  Basic Function:
  - Assist the Chief Electrician in the installation, maintenance and repair of all electrical equipment onboard the vessel.
- **MOTORMAN**
  Basic Function:
  - Monitor performance, lubricate, and maintain the engines and other mechanical equipment onboard the vessel
- **WELDER**
  Basic Function:
  - Carry out welding, cutting, burning and associated activities as directed on board the vessel

OTHERS

- **RADIO OPERATOR**
  Basic Function:
  - Operate rig communication equipment and answers phones. Carry out clerical duties such as filing and typing as directed
- **MEDIC**
  Basic Function:
  - Provide medical care and primary first aid care in emergency cases, to all personnel onboard the rig.
  - Provide clerical/administrative support as required.
- **HSE OFFICER**
  Basic Function:
  - Implements and enforces health, safety and environmental policies, conducts audits and inspections and leads safety training and incident investigations. Requires an HSE diploma or degree, NEBOSH or equivalent and offshore HSE experience.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL POSITION

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- Valid industry certifications applicable to the role.
- Commitment to safety, teamwork and operational excellence.
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- Valid passport and willingness to travel

HOW TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates should email their CVs/Resumes, relevant certifications, and supporting documents to:
humvicglobalresource@gmail.com stating position applied for, within one week of this publication.

Our Client is committed to providing equal employment opportunities and fostering an inclusive workplace where all employees can thrive and contribute to our success.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

22 years without CVFF access spurs audit call

Stories by **Adaku Onyenucheya**

• Stakeholders demand forensic probe of fund management

THE continued inability of indigenous shipowners to access the Cabotage Vessel Financing Fund (CVFF) for over 22 years, as well as the controversy surrounding the amount contributed by the present and former Director-Generals of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) has again heightened uncertainty about the funds, actual accruals and interest generated in both the CVFF account and the Treasury Single Account (TSA).

Even officials at NIMASA, the Federal Ministry of Transportation, the Federal Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), and the Ministry of Finance are uncertain about the fund's whereabouts and have given conflicting figures.



Chairman, Freight Forwarders Group Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), Las Alli Shobande (left); President/Chairman of Council, LCCI, Leye Kupoluyi, and National Secretary General, Association of Maritime Truck Owners (AMATO), Mohammed Sani at the LCCI Freight Forwarders Trade Group Strategic Stakeholders' Engagement held in Lagos.

This has led maritime stakeholders to demand a forensic audit of the account from 2004 to date before disbursement to the indigenous shipowners that applied for the funds.

The present DG of NIMASA, Dr Dayo Mobereola, and the former, Temisan Omatseye, differed last week over the conversion of the fund's dollar component to naira.

Omatseye said the agency had N52 billion in fixed deposit when he left office in December 2010, which comprised both the CVFF and the Maritime Fund, adding that the conversion of dollar-denominated funds into naira was carried out on the directive of the Accountant-General of the Federation (AGF), based on the interest rates offered by commercial banks on naira and dollar deposits at the time.

The Guardian found that the fund was initially quoted at $195 million and in 2019 to 2020, the then DG of NIMASA, Dakuku Peterside, claimed it had reached $200 million.

His successor, Dr Bashir Jamoh, in 2023, said $350 million was available as the dollar component, alongside a N16 billion naira component.

A former Minister of State for Transportation, Gbemisola Saraki, also confirmed the $350 million figure but acknowledged the uncertainty surrounding the actual balance.

However, in May 2023, the House of Representatives disclosed that the CVFF account with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) held $360 million.

Most recently, Mobereola, said the fund now stands at $700 million.

Meanwhile, a document obtained from NIMASA by Borderless Ltd/ Gte through a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, detailing transactions from January 2007 to October 2022, revealed that N20,613,344,488.8 was transferred from local banks to the TSA, while N16,953,322,635.17 was paid directly into the TSA, bringing total naira collections to N37,566,667,123.97.

For the dollar collections, $257,228,760.32 was paid directly to the CBN/Access Bank and $12,147,632.66 held by the Office of the Auditor-General for the Federation, totaling $269,376,392.98.

The FOI requests by the Nigerian content advocacy group also uncovered alarming mismanagement of accrued interest, which the group's founder, Tunde Kasamotu, said raises serious questions about financial accountability and stewardship.

Regarding interest accrued, only figures from the dollar accounts were disclosed. The default Afribank generated $1,516,928.14; Platinum/ Keystone Bank accrued $40,326.46; Access Bank earned $11,594.32, while Guaranty Trust Bank (GTB) held $43,333.81.

Hamzat plans waterways expansion, ferry upgrade to boost transit

THE Lagos State All Progressives Congress (APC) governorship candidate, Dr Obafemi Hamzat, has announced plans to expand water transportation infrastructure, improve ferry services and integrate water transport with road and rail networks.

He disclosed this as part of his 100-point campaign manifesto, noting that his administration, through the proposed Omi Eko initiative, would dredge an additional 140 kilometres of water corridors.

He said he would also optimise 15 ferry routes and refurbish 27 of the state's 47 ferry terminals to boost growth in water transportation.

Hamzat also pledged to procure 75 electric vessels as part of efforts to improve water transportation and increase passenger movement across the state.

According to him, the proposed interventions are designed to maximise the use of Lagos' waterways as an alternative transportation network, given the state's geographical features and road traffic congestion.

He further proposed an integrated transportation system that would connect rail, road and water transport under a unified ticketing arrangement.

"What this does is that it allows us to move more water. Lagos, we must know, is a water state. The lagoon must therefore be our third highway. One ticket, one turntable, one integrated service across rail, road, and water," he stated.

Meanwhile, boat operators have charged the incoming government to introduce subsidies for boat engines and flexible repayment arrangements to help operators whose businesses have been affected by faulty engines, damaged boats and other operational challenges.

Outlining their expectations for the continued development of water transportation and the blue economy in Lagos State, they also called for the provision of more jetties, fuel stations and financial support

Deputy Chairman, Association of Tourist Boat Operators and Water Transporters of Nigeria (ATBOWATON), Lagos State Chapter, Babatunde Segun, said boat operators struggle with inadequate jetties, forcing them to travel long distances to access suitable operating locations.

Segun stressed that more interventions were needed, particularly in remote communities where access to jetties and fuel stations remained limited.

He identified financial support for boat operators as another critical area requiring government attention, explaining that some operators had lost their boats or were struggling with faulty engines, thereby affecting their livelihoods and operational capacity.

Segun appealed for subsidies on boat engines and flexible repayment arrangements to enable affected operators to rebuild their businesses and return to optimal operations.

Truckers blame port gridlock on poor scheduling

• Suggest e-tagging, manifest control, others

TRUCKERS have stressed that improving the Apapa and Tin Can Island Ports requires coordination among cargo readiness, truck staging, call-up authorisation, terminal capacity, empty-container returns, and port gate operations, rather than just controlling the number of trucks.

The truckers, under the aegis of the Association of Maritime Truck Owners (AMATO), said the responsibilities of all parties involved were clear, with the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) coordinating and supervising operations, the Truck Transit Park (TTP) operator maintaining an accountable call-up platform, terminal operators providing accurate receiving information, government agencies enforcing the rules consistently, shipping companies and freight forwarders supporting proper scheduling, and truck owners complying with approved procedures.

Recall that the Managing Director of NPA, Dr Abubakar Dantsoho, had highlighted the cause of port congestion, noting that cargo previously remained at Lagos ports for as long as three weeks, while the Apapa access road, designed to accommodate approximately 2,400 trucks daily, carried more than 7,000 trucks.

Speaking at the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Freight Forwarders Trade Group Strategic Stakeholders' Engagement, the National President of AMATO, Remi Ogungbemi, said port congestion is not merely a problem of inadequate road space or excessive truck numbers, but a reflection of challenges with truck staging, terminal scheduling, empty-container returns and enforcement of port access requirements.

Ogungbemi, who was represented by the National Secretary General, Mohammed Sani, also raised concerns about trucks approaching port access roads without proper call-up authorisation, complete documentation or the required NPA Minimum Safety Standard sticker, which require proper investigation and verification.

Ogungbemi stressed that the call-up system must do more than issue tickets by verifying the actual truck, confirming its presence at an approved park or pre-gate, establishing its queue position and authorising movement in line with terminal readiness.

He said every truck must satisfy identity, destination, safety and movement-authorisation requirements before entry, noting that any exception, including emergency movement, must be justified, authorised and electronically recorded.

Ogungbemi also raised concerns on the release of trucks without regard to terminal receiving capacity, noting that this activity merely transfers congestion from parks to port access roads, bridges and adjoining corridors.

AMATO chief recommended a batch-release system based on verified terminal capacity, with truck movements scheduled according to the number of vehicles each terminal can reasonably receive within a given period.

APM Terminals pushes port upgrade to cut cargo delays

APM Terminals Nigeria has underscored the importance of efficient ports, modern infrastructure, effective cargo evacuation systems, and stronger public-private collaboration in enabling trade, improving productivity and supporting Nigeria's economic growth.

The call was made during a plenary session at the 32nd Nigerian Economic Summit (NES) held in Abuja.

Chief Executive Officer of APM Terminals Nigeria, Koen De Backker, reinforced the critical role ports play in facilitating trade and creating economic value, noting that the terminal operator's job is to facilitate trade, enable cargo movement in and out of the port, and to create wealth and prosperity for the population of Nigeria.

Highlighting capacity constraints within ports as a key challenge, De Backker explained that containers remaining too long at terminals reduce the capacity available to keep cargo moving.

He stressed the need to diversify cargo evacuation beyond road transportation by expanding alternatives such as barge and rail transport.

He cited APM Terminals' logistics centre in the Ibadan area, where export cargo is consolidated, stuffed into containers and moved by rail into the terminal, as an example of how alternative transport links can support cargo flows.

De Backker also emphasised the need to modernise Nigeria's ageing port infrastructure, noting that technology, specialised expertise and investment are essential to increasing capacity and efficiency.

Rather than viewing private-sector participation simply as privatisation, he described it as an opportunity to "professionalise the infrastructure, modernise, and get experts in."

He further highlighted collaboration with government agencies, Customs and clearing agents as central to achieving meaningful improvements.

Citing the deployment of cargo scanners, De Backker said collaboration with Customs had enabled containers to be scanned rather than relying solely on physical examinations, thereby improving efficiency and security.

According to him, this helped reduce import container dwell time from 18 to 14 days, resulting in faster cargo availability and lower costs.

Chairman of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), Olaniyi Yusuf, stressed the need for economic growth to create value, expand opportunities, and improve living standards.

GuardianTech

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Nigeria targets 90% local Internet traffic, regional hub power

Stories by **Adeyemi Adepetun**

NIGERIA's Internet Exchange Point of Nigeria (IXPN) marked its 20th anniversary with a bold declaration: by 2046, the country aimed to achieve 90 per cent local Internet traffic, positioning itself as Africa's digital hub.

At the gala event, themed: 'The Digital Bridge: The Next Connection', IXPN Chief Executive Officer, Muhammed Rudman, reflected on the journey from humble beginnings in 2006 to today's thriving ecosystem.

"The next connection is ours to build. Together, we can connect Nigeria to its next digital future," he said, underscoring the institution's vision for the next two decades.

When IXPN began operations in 2006, only one per cent of Nigeria's traffic was local, with 99 per cent routed internationally. This reliance on foreign bandwidth meant higher costs, slower speeds, and limited digital independence.

Two decades later, IXPN has achieved a remarkable turnaround. Today, up to 70 per cent of traffic is now local, saving Nigeria an estimated $40 million yearly in international transit costs, according to a 2020 ISOC study.

As of today, the exchange now boasts over 130 connected networks, over 200 connected ports, 13 points of presence nationwide, and 400G ports available

This growth was made possible by early support from the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), alongside collaboration with Internet Service Providers, telcos, universities, and engineers.

Looking ahead, IXPN's vision is clear: by 2046, Nigeria will not only connect all 36 states and the FCT with affordable domestic fibre but also serve as Africa's content hub.

Rudman listed the key pillars of this ambition, including national reach, which will ensure interconnection across Nigeria.

There will also be content localisation. This includes hosting more cloud, AI, and digital services within Nigeria and West Africa. The target will also see IPv6 adoption, ensuring a future-ready Internet infrastructure.

According to the IXPN boss, there will also be university partnerships. He said that over 100 universities would have been connected by 2030 to anchor research, local hosting, and demand for fibre.

"Our ambition is to grow local hosting, IPv6, and regional participation until Nigeria serves Africa from Nigeria," Rudman emphasised.

Rudman said the implications of achieving 90 per cent local traffic are profound. According to him, "Economic Independence: Nigeria would save billions in international transit costs over the next two decades, freeing resources for infrastructure and innovation.

"Digital Sovereignty: By keeping traffic within its borders, Nigeria gains greater control over its internet ecosystem, reducing vulnerability to external disruptions.

"Faster, Cheaper Internet: Local routing means lower latency and more affordable broadband for businesses, schools, and homes.

"Regional Leadership: Nigeria could become the primary hub for Africa's digital economy, hosting content, cloud services, and AI platforms for the continent.

"Innovation Ecosystem: Universities and startups would benefit from stronger local hosting, encouraging research, entrepreneurship, and digital skills development."

He stressed that "If Nigeria achieves 90 per cent local traffic, it won't just be a technical milestone; it will redefine Africa's digital map."

To meet rising demand, IXPN has outlined a phased technology plan. These are that from 2027 to 2029, there will be expansion of 400G ports with diverse fibre paths.

From 2030 to 2032, there should be introduction of 800G optics, ensuring efficiency and interoperability. From 2033 to 2036, Nigeria should see the evaluation of 1.6T capacity through operational trials.

This roadmap, according to Rudman, ensures Nigeria's Internet backbone remains affordable, scalable, and resilient, aligning with global standards while meeting local demand.

IXPN also plans to expand its service offerings. There would be private and cloud connections with clear support terms, remote peering and regional access to partner exchanges, automation and security services including route alerts and attack filtering, and neutral interconnection for AI and compute services, ensuring Nigeria remains central to Africa's digital economy.



Director/ Zonal Controller, Lagos Zonal Office, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC),Tunji Jimoh (left); former Acting Executive Vice Chairman, NCC, Stephen Bello; Chief Executive Officer, Internet Exchange Point of Nigeria (IXPN), Muhammad Rudman; Executive Commissioner, Technical Services, NCC, Abraham Oshadami and a former EVC, NCC, and NASENI, Dr. Bashir Gwandu, at the 20th anniversary celebration of IXPN in Lagos.

Localisation: CBN, NITDA lead operators into sovereign cloud era

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), in collaboration with the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), has taken a decisive step toward advancing the implementation of sovereign cloud for the country's financial sector.

This initiative is designed to strengthen data sovereignty, enhance cybersecurity resilience, and ensure that critical financial information remains within Nigeria's jurisdiction.

By aligning regulatory oversight with cutting-edge cloud infrastructure, the partnership aims to foster trust, innovation, and efficiency across the banking ecosystem.

At the heart of this move is the recognition that financial data is a strategic national asset that requires robust protection against external threats. Sovereign cloud adoption will not only safeguard sensitive information but also support compliance with global standards while promoting local capacity development. Through this collaboration, CBN and NITDA are positioning Nigeria's financial institutions to leverage secure, scalable cloud solutions that drive digital transformation and economic competitiveness.



Cardoso Kashifu

This was disclosed at the Africa Hyperscalers-organised Executive Regulatory Dialogue on NSCI Implementation and Data Localisation in Lagos. The event brought together representatives from commercial banks, fintech companies, payment service banks, switching and processing companies, microfinance institutions, cloud providers, data centres, cybersecurity firms, system integrators and other technology companies supporting Nigeria's financial sector.

The dialogue focused on the practical steps required to migrate critical financial data and workloads to secure infrastructure within Nigeria. Discussions covered implementation planning, cybersecurity, operational resilience, provider assurance, third-party risk and collaboration among regulators, financial institutions and technology providers.

Opening the dialogue, the Director-General of NITDA, Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, described digital sovereignty as a matter of national resilience and economic security. He explained that the objective is not to isolate Nigeria from global technology or require the country to build every system independently, but to develop sufficient capacity and control to keep essential services operating during external disruption.

Deputy Governor, Financial Systems Stability, Central Bank of Nigeria, Lamido Abubakar Yuguda, said critical payment transaction data must be stored and managed within Nigeria in line with the 1 January 2027 implementation timeline. He noted that the initiative should strengthen regulatory visibility, protect critical financial data and improve the resilience of the infrastructure supporting Nigeria's payment system.

Yuguda emphasised that localisation alone would not guarantee security. Financial institutions and their technology partners must maintain effective cybersecurity, business continuity, disaster recovery, and risk management arrangements. He added that regulated institutions would remain accountable for risks arising from their reliance on cloud and other third-party providers.

Nigerians get battery-strong POCO device this November

NIGERIAN smartphone shoppers welcomed a new entrant this November as POCO officially launches the C95 Pro. The mid-range device is being positioned as a reliable companion for everyday use, with the company highlighting its focus on battery strength, performance, and connectivity.

At the heart of the C95 Pro is a massive 7,500mAh battery paired with 45W turbo charging, designed to keep users powered through long hours of gaming, streaming, and social activity. Complementing this is a 6.9-inch display with refresh rates of up to 120Hz, offering smoother visuals for entertainment and productivity alike. POCO said this combination is designed to reduce charging interruptions while enhancing the viewing experience.

POCO's C95 Pro went on sale in Nigeria on November 3, with the company positioning the device around battery power, reliability and everyday connectivity. The release adds another option for shoppers considering a phone purchase ahead of peak Black Friday activity.

Marketing Manager, POCO NG, Sonia Gao, said: "At POCO, we believe great smartphone experiences should come without compromise. With the POCO C95 Pro, we focused on what matters most to our users: a massive 7,500mAh battery, 45W turbo charging, and an immersive 6.9-inch display with up to 120Hz refresh rate. It's all about delivering more power, more entertainment, and more freedom to enjoy every moment."

"Life moves fast, and your phone should keep up. With a massive 7,500mAh battery, the POCO C95 Pro is built to power you through long days of gaming, streaming, and everything in between. And when it's time to recharge, 45W turbo charging helps you get back in action quickly. Less time worrying about battery life, more time doing what you love."

FMYD
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THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

COMMENCEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL PHASE: NATIONAL YOUTH CONFAB 2026

The Federal Government, through the Federal Ministry of Youth Development and the National Planning Committee, hereby notifies the general public, accredited delegates, youth stakeholders, and civil society organizations of the commencement of the Physical Phase of the National Youth Confab 2026.

EVENT SCHEDULE & VENUE

CONFERENCE DATE:
Wednesday, 4th November - Saturday, 7th November 2026
VENUE:
Army Conference Centre, Asokoro, Abuja
VALIDATION OF THE CONFAB:
Sunday 8th November 2026
TIME:
17:00 - 19:30
VENUE:
Army Conference Centre, Asokoro, Abuja
CLOSING CEREMONY:
Monday 9th November 2026
VENUE:
Presidential Villa, Abuja
DELEGATE ARRIVAL:
Tuesday, 3rd November 2026
DELEGATE DEPARTURE:
Tuesday, 10th November 2026

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ANNOUNCER:
CONFAB MEDIA SUB-COMMITTEE

‘High production costs hobble manufacturing, competitive edge’

Stories by **Tobi Awodipe**

SECRETARY-General of the Pan-African Manufacturers Association (PAMA), Segun Ajayi-Kadir, has identified the soaring cost of production, epileptic power supply, expensive logistics and fragmented markets as major obstacles to Africa’s manufacturing ambitions.

Ajayi-Kadir, who also serves as the Director-General of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), lamented that Nigeria’s industrial sector is particularly constrained by infrastructure and financing challenges.

Speaking on behalf of the association, he said Africa’s ability to build competitive manufacturing industries would depend not merely on expanding production capacity or attracting investments, but on addressing the structural weaknesses that make locally manufactured goods expensive and limit their access to regional and international markets.

He noted that although Africa has considerable natural resources, a growing consumer market and opportunities arising from the reorganisation of global supply chains, its manufacturing base remained relatively small compared with its population and economic potential.

He cited data from the African Development Bank’s Africa Industrialisation Index 2025, which puts the continent’s manufacturing value added at approximately $351 billion in 2025, up from $285 billion in 2020. Manufacturing, he said, accounted for about 10.8 per cent of Africa’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

However, Africa accounted for less than two per cent of global manufacturing output and 1.4 per cent of global manufacturing exports. Manufacturing value added per capita stood at $226.7 in 2025, below the $254.9 recorded in 2014.

He stressed that these figures underscore the need to move beyond policies that prioritise market creation towards building industries capable of producing competitively, adopting technology, developing local suppliers and participating in regional and global value chains.

He identified the high cost of production and weaknesses in the systems connecting factories to markets as critical challenges that African governments must address to achieve meaningful industrialisation.

“In Nigeria, these challenges have significant implications for manufacturers contending with extremely high electricity costs, limited access to affordable credit, transportation bottlenecks and FX pressures. Such constraints increase operating expenses, weaken capacity utilisation and make locally manufactured products less competitive against imports,” he said.

Also highlighting the importance of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in creating a larger market for manufacturers, he noted that despite Africa’s substantial population, its markets remained fragmented by customs procedures, product standards, transport systems, payment arrangements, tax regimes and regulatory differences.

“The World Bank’s 2026 report, Integrating Africa: From Threads to Hubs, estimates that about 60 per cent of Africa’s trade costs arise behind national borders, including customs, logistics, regulation and infrastructure constraints. This means that tariff reductions alone cannot deliver the full benefits of continental trade integration when businesses still face high costs moving raw materials, intermediate goods and finished products across borders.

“Manufacturing requires significant investment in machinery, buildings, engineering, quality assurance, product development and management. These fixed costs can only be recovered when businesses achieve sufficient production volumes and market access,” he said.

He further pointed out that regional production networks could enable African countries specialise, combine industrial capabilities and attract investments in sectors that individual national markets may not support.

Potential areas, he said, include agro-processing, petrochemicals, minerals and metals, machinery, transport equipment, textiles, energy and industrial services.

For Nigeria, he revealed that the opportunity lies in leveraging the nation’s industrial base, consumer market and resource endowment to supply neighbouring countries and participate in continental production networks, rather than relying predominantly on its domestic market.

“However, this would require improvements in cross-border transportation, customs administration, standards, payments and trade financing,” he said.

Drawing attention to the importance of linking natural resources to domestic production capacity, he said the cement industry illustrates how sustained investment in local resources and manufacturing capacity can reduce import dependence and create export opportunities.

He revealed that investment in domestic limestone resources and production facilities has helped develop a substantial local cement industry, demonstrating how resource availability can translate into industrial value when supported by capital, infrastructure and access to markets.

This, he said, can be applied to other resource-based industries, particularly petrochemicals, metals, agricultural processing, and other manufacturing segments, where Nigeria has the potential to substitute for imports and develop export capacity.

Listing Morocco as an example of industrial upgrading, he said the country ranked first in the African Development Bank’s 2025 Industrialisation Index, reflecting improvements in productive capacity, export diversification and industrial development.



Chair, Women’s Group, Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), Olufemi Ogun (left); First Lady, Ogun State, Bamidele Abiodun; President, LCCI, Leye Kupoluyi, and Deputy Governor, Ogun State, Noimot Salako-Oyedele during the yearly women’s conference of the Chamber at Commerce House, Lagos.

Women-led firms push for affordable credit, wider markets

WOMEN entrepreneurs have called on the Federal Government to remove financing, infrastructure and market-access barriers constraining the growth of their businesses, warning that Nigeria risks losing significant productive capacity if women-owned enterprises cannot scale.

The call was made at the 2026 Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Women Group Annual Symposium in Lagos, where the Deputy Governor of Ogun State, Noimot Salako-Oyedele, urged government and financial institutions to provide practical support to help women-owned businesses move beyond small-scale operations into manufacturing, investment and export markets.

Speaking on the theme: ‘Women at the Forefront: Leading Enterprise, Shaping Policy, Building the Future’, Salako-Oyedele, who delivered the keynote address, said women must become more active participants in Nigeria’s industrialisation and economic diversification drive, particularly through local production and regional value chains.

She identified inadequate financing, poor infrastructure, limited access to technology and difficulties meeting export standards as major constraints preventing women entrepreneurs from expanding their businesses.

According to her, financial institutions should introduce more appropriate financing options, including credit guarantees, alternative collateral arrangements, patient capital, and supply chain financing.

She stressed, however, that access to finance must go hand in hand with reliable infrastructure, market opportunities and business development support.

“Markets do not create prosperity. Production does. Trade agreements do not industrialise nations. Competitive enterprises do,” she quoted the Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Jumoke Oduwole, as saying at an earlier engagement on women’s participation in intra-African trade.

She said the Nigeria First Policy and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) offer opportunities for women-owned businesses in manufacturing, agro-processing, packaging, logistics, technology, and professional services.

She urged entrepreneurs to improve product quality, obtain relevant certifications, adopt technology and strengthen distribution networks to compete in regional and international markets.

The deputy governor also highlighted Ogun State’s industrial development initiatives, including investments in road infrastructure, industrial corridors, the Gateway International Airport, and the proposed Gateway Deep Seaport. She said women-owned businesses should be deliberately integrated into the supply chains of major manufacturing and infrastructure projects.

LCCI President, Leye Kupoluyi, said women account for 48 per cent of businesses surveyed in the FATE Institute’s 2024 State of Entrepreneurship in Nigeria Report, but noted that entrepreneurial participation is yet to translate into profitability, expansion or sustainability.

He identified limited access to affordable finance, high operating costs, inadequate infrastructure, restricted market access and unequal access to technology as major challenges.

Kupoluyi called for dedicated financing windows through development finance institutions, commercial banks and private-sector investment platforms. He also advocated stronger links between women-owned businesses and corporate supply chains through trade fairs, business matchmaking and export-readiness programmes.

BII targets $3b for African SMEs, manufacturing

BRITISH International Investment (BII), the United Kingdom’s development finance institution, has earmarked £2.25 billion ($3 billion) for Africa’s frontier markets and least-developed countries over the next five years, targeting economies struggling to attract private investment.

The allocation represented 25 per cent of BII’s planned £9 billion investment in Africa between 2026 and 2031 and formed part of its new strategy to expand financing for infrastructure and productive sectors.

According to *Bloomberg*, the institution will work with local partners to strengthen financial markets and address barriers preventing capital from reaching businesses and infrastructure projects.

BII Chief Executive Officer, Leslie Maasdorp, said many African countries remained excluded from the investment criteria of major global asset managers because of poor credit ratings or the absence of sovereign ratings.

“We are very realistic and recognise that we’re not going to get BlackRock to come and invest in Burundi or in the Democratic Republic of Congo,” he said, explaining the decision to commit a substantial share of the institution’s African funding to underserved markets.

Under the strategy, BII plans to provide £5 billion directly and mobilise another £4 billion from partners, primarily for infrastructure investment. Priority areas include power generation, ports, railways and digital infrastructure such as telecommunications towers and data centres.

The institution also planned to expand financing for manufacturing, financial inclusion and businesses involved in electric mobility.

The investment push comes as African manufacturers continue to face high production costs arising from inadequate infrastructure, unreliable electricity and limited access to affordable long-term finance.

Increased investment in power, transport and digital infrastructure could help lower operating costs, improve logistics and strengthen the competitiveness of locally manufactured goods.

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CHANGE OF NAME

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ABRAHAM : I formerly known as Abraham Evelyn Enoguninhenlegbie now wish to be addressed as Palmer Evelyn Enoguninhenlegbie. All former documents remains valid General public take note

ABUBAKAR : I formerly known as Abubakar Raiyanatu now wish to be addressed as Muhammad Zahrau Idris My DOB is 01-02-1999 not 12-07-1990. Former documents remain valid. Public note.

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ADDITION OF NAME :I, formerly known as Wosilat Ahoyiza Abdulrahaman now wish to be addressed as Wasilat'niyyah Ahoyiza Abdulrahaman . All former documents remain valid .General public take note

ADDITION OF NAME: I formerly known as Osasemide Happy now wish to be addressed as Osaseminde Happy Ofure, my DOB is 23-12-1983 not, 20-05-1982. All former documents remains valid. Public note.

ADDITION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Oneh Chika, wish to be addressed as known and addressed as Oneh Chika Praise. All documents remain valid, general public note

ADEOLA : I, formerly known as Adeola Bamidele now wish to be addressed as Adeola Abigael Ekundayo . All former documents remain valid . General public take note.

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CONFIRMATION OF NAME:: My Name was wrongly written as Ojo Adewole Olamilekan on my BVN instead of Ojo Adewole. All former documents remain valid. Public note.

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News

Atiku tells Tinubu to fight hunger as he alleges attacks on opposition figures

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

The source questioned why Atiku would address a press conference on his campaign flag-off without the participation of the head of his media directorate or the party's National Publicity Secretary.

He also faulted the release of the campaign council's list by Shaibu, insisting that the party's National Publicity Secretary should have handled the announcement.

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THIS IS TO NOTIFY THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ORIGINAL TITLE DOCUMENTS IN RESPECT OF THE PROPERTY SITUATES AT **NO. 40, DOSUNMU STREET, MAFOLUKU, OSHODI, LAGOS STATE** BELONGING TO **MR. EBENEZER AYINDE ODEWUNMI** GOT LOST RECENTLY.

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AAC demands safety guarantees for opposition candidates, supporters

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

June 20 exercise as generally peaceful, pre-election allegations and complaints by opposition candidates about intimidation raised questions about the political environment in which the contest was conducted.

The Social Democratic Party's candidate, Peter Obafemi, also alleged that the election was characterised by intimidation and vote-buying.

Party cites violence in Osun, Oyo, Lagos, Ogun

THE AAC also pointed to developments in Osun State, where political tension and allegations of violence featured prominently in preparations for the August 15 governorship election.

Opposition parties and civil society organisations raised concerns about attacks on supporters, political clashes, intimidation and the safety of party members.

The Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room expressed concern over reports of politically motivated clashes, attacks and intimidation, while Enough is Enough Nigeria cited data indicating that 44 election-related violent incidents were recorded in Osun between October 2025 and June 2026, resulting in 13 fatalities.

In Oyo State, the attack on supporters of the Accord Party's governorship candidate, Oriyomi Hamzat, during a procession in the Molete area of Ibadan on October 14 also raised concerns.

The police confirmed the incident, saying the supporters had been ambushed during what was described as a peaceful procession. Some party members were injured, while vehicles in the convoy were vandalised.

Similarly, the PDP in Ogun State accused the ruling APC administration of harassment and intimidation following the alleged disruption of its Ogun East senatorial campaign flag-off in September.

The party claimed that its campaign venue was cancelled and its convoy attacked by suspected hoodlums at Ososa in Odogbolu Local Government Area.

In Lagos, the reported invasion of a political gathering organised by Labour Party members defecting to the ADC in Alimosho, as well as violence during the APC primary in Kosofe, where several people were reportedly injured, further illustrated the tensions surrounding political activities in the state.

Ondo State has also witnessed incidents of political violence. In February, suspected hoodlums invaded the APC secretariat in Akure during a stakeholders' meeting, assaulting the party chairman, Ade Adetimehin, and other members.

The incident was followed by violence during the party's ward congress in Idanre, where at least two people were reportedly killed.

The AAC said the developments, irrespective of the political parties involved, demonstrated the dangers of allowing violence and intimidation to become features of Nigeria's electoral culture.

It also cited the recent incident involving its presidential candidate, Omoyele Sowore, which it described as an assassination attempt, insisting that it should not be dismissed as a mere political disagreement or altercation.

The party demanded an immediate investigation into the alleged attempt, urging security agencies to identify and prosecute those responsible, including any sponsors, irrespective of their political affiliations.

It further called for a genuine commitment to protecting all Nigerians, warning that fear of violence could discourage voter participation and deepen public distrust in the electoral process.

"Therefore, we call on opposition parties and democratic forces across Nigeria to consider a collective boycott of the 2027 general elections if the government and relevant security institutions cannot guarantee the safety of political actors, their supporters and ordinary citizens.

"A meaningful democratic election cannot occur when opposition voices are silenced through violence and intimidation. Participation should never mean surrendering our lives to political violence," the party added.

ADC, ZLP insist on challenging APC in Rivers

MEANWHILE, the ADC and ZLP in Rivers State have declared their resolve to challenge the ruling party in the 2027 general elections, insisting that alleged intimidation and campaign tactics by the ruling party would not deter them.

The parties said their campaigns would focus on addressing economic hardship, insecurity, unemployment, rent increases and other challenges confronting Nigerians rather than engaging in political distractions.

The ADC Publicity Secretary, Chizzy Enyinnaya, said the party was concerned about the increasing economic burden on Nigerians, noting that the ruling party had yet to adequately address issues affecting the livelihood of ordinary citizens.

He said the party was developing practical measures to tackle economic hardship, unemployment, insecurity and the country's persistent electricity challenges, arguing that unemployment remained a major driver of insecurity.

"Providing jobs and economic opportunities would help reduce crime and other social vices. The situation in Rivers State, particularly the challenges surrounding governance and employment, underscores the need for a new approach to economic development," he said.

Enyinnaya expressed confidence that the party would not be discouraged by alleged attacks, arrests and detention of its members, recalling that similar challenges had confronted opposition parties in previous elections.

He said: "Rivers State was more or less a theatre of war during the last election, but that did not stop the opposition from moving forward. We are not disturbed by arrests, detention or other forms of intimidation. We are moving forward, God willing, we will emerge winners at the 2027 elections."

The Rivers State ZLP Chairman, Ben Ogbogbula, also said the party remained undeterred by what he described as strong-arm tactics by the ruling party.

He said the ZLP's campaign was centred on human welfare, capacity development and empowerment, rather than what he described as peripheral political issues.

Ogbogbula urged residents to support the party, saying its agenda was to improve living conditions and ensure that citizens could afford basic necessities, including food and decent accommodation.

On the rising cost of accommodation, he said the party's governorship candidate had pledged to address the situation through measures to regulate rents and ensure that housing remained affordable.

He also identified insecurity, particularly in riverine communities, as a major concern, assuring that the party's governorship candidate had made addressing the challenge a priority.

ADC alleges hotel restrictions, delegate evictions in Sokoto

THE ADC had in October accused the Sokoto State Government of allegedly directing hotels in the state capital to deny accommodation to its delegates expected to attend the party's presidential campaign flag-off.

The party also alleged that some delegates who had already secured accommodation and were staying in hotels were being forcibly evicted following the purported directive.

The presidential campaign spokesperson, Dahiru Maishanu, condemned the alleged action, describing it as irresponsible and an abuse of executive power.

Maishanu said it was unacceptable for the state government to allegedly instruct both public and privately owned hotels to deny paying guests accommodation, adding that the eviction of customers who had already paid for their rooms was equally condemnable.

Read the remaining part of this story on www.guardian.ng

ELLAH LAKES PLC

ELLAH LAKES PLC

CONSOLIDATED UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 SEPT., 2026

	Notes	30 Sept., 2026 ₦'000	17 Months to Dec 2025 (Audited) ₦'000
Assets			
Non-Current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	3	25,208,271	24,702,036
Biological assets	4	191,767	191,767
Goodwill	5	57,689	57,689
Other asset	6	2,178	13,664
		25,459,906	24,965,156
Current assets			
Receivables	7	42,204	230,339
Inventory	8	39,633	5,306
Resricted cash	7	1,980	1,980
Cash and cash equivalents	8	14,794	3,054,570
		98,610	3,292,195
Total assets		**25,558,516**	**28,257,351**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	9	316,884	358,611
Current tax payable	13.1	570	570
		317,454	359,181
Non-current liabilities			
Payables to related parties	10	40,427	-
Directors' Loan	11	-	7,076,000
Borrowings	12.0	645,705	391,667
Deferred tax	13.2	88	88
		686,220	7,467,754
Total liabilities		**1,003,674**	**7,826,935**
Equity			
Share Capital	14	3,087,835	1,929,087
Share premium	15	14,030,385	8,203,178
Reserves	15	710,788	710,788
Deposit For Shares		2,498,641	2,498,641
Retained earnings/(loss)		(10,700,596)	(7,839,067)
Revaluation surplus	16	14,927,789	14,927,789
Total equity		**24,554,842**	**20,430,415**
Total liabilities and equity		**25,558,516**	**28,257,350**

These Group financial Statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 30th, 2026 Sept, ... and signed on it behalf by:

Mr. Chuka Mordi
Chief Executive Officer
FRC/2014/CIBN/00000005906
Date: 30/10/2026

Olushola Dehindilu
Finance Manager
FRC/2025/PRO/ICAN/001/111277
Date: 30/10/2026

ELLAH LAKES PLC

CONSOLIDATED UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE THIRD QUARTER ENDED 30 SEPT., 2026

	Notes	3 months ended to Sept 30, 2026 ₦'000	3 months ended to Sept 30, 2025 ₦'000	9 months ended to Sept. 30, 2026 ₦'000	9 months ended to Sept. 30, 2025 ₦'000	17 months to 31 December, 2025 (Audited) ₦'000
Revenue	17	102,916	5,054	636,773	64,859	146,658
Cost of sales	18	(48,092)	(277)	(239,544)	(1,392)	(16,602)
Gross profit/(loss)		**54,824**	**4,777**	**397,229**	**63,467**	**130,056**
Other income/(loss)	19	365	43,381	37,729	70,108	280,828
Administrative expenses	20	(189,206)	(233,373)	(742,902)	(729,920)	(2,796,797)
Personnel expenses	21	(161,114)	(234,576)	(634,216)	(675,821)	(1,189,423)
Finance cost	22	(5,159)	(7,050)	(19,259)	(25,467)	(68,020)
Depreciation	3	(58,762)	(871)	(154,546)	(5,495)	(194,781)
Gain/(loss) on foreign exchange		-	-	(5,280)	1,786	(1,519)
		(414,241)	(475,871)	(1,556,204)	(1,434,916)	(4,250,540)
Operating profit/(loss)		(359,052)	(427,713)	(1,121,246)	(1,301,342)	(3,839,656)
Earnings per share (EPS)		(0.06)	(0.16)	(0.18)	(0.47)	(1.00)

Kogi commissioner, VC defend hike in tuition fees

From **Yusufu Aminu Idegu**, Lokoja

THE Kogi State Government has defended the recent hike in tuition fees for its state-owned tertiary institutions, insisting that the exercise was part of a unified policy to harmonise charges across all state-owned universities.

Clarifying the Kogi State House of Assembly Committee on Education following a petition, the Commissioner for Education, Wemi Jones, explained that the adjustments were not in isolation, as the government usually accommodates different interests whenever such a review becomes necessary, particularly in view of the administration's free education policy.

He disclosed that a letter conveying the directive for the fee review was sent to PAAU in 2024 but was not fully implemented at the time, adding that the current exercise was in line with a uniform fee structure for state-owned universities, which had already been adopted by other institutions in the state.

Tinubu, Lawal hail Sultan, say reign reunites Christians, Muslims

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu has congratulated the Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, on his 20th anniversary on the throne, saying his reign has reunited Muslims and Christians in Nigeria.

In a statement, Tinubu described the Muslim leader as "more than a traditional ruler" but "a moral authority, a bridge between faiths, a voice of moderation, and a steady counsellor to leaders across the country.

"You have consistently stood for religious harmony and tolerance. Under your leadership as co-chairman of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council, Christians and Muslims have found common ground, and our diversity has become a source of strength rather than division," the president stated.

"Your advocacy for peace in the North and across the Sahel, your passion for education, especially for the girl-child, your support for our farmers and for public health, and your quiet but effective interventions for the poor and vulnerable speak to a reign that is truly people-centred."

Also, Zamfara State Governor, Dauda Lawal, described the sultan as a humble leader who brings people together and provides stability.

Lawal spoke at the 13th Shaikh Usmanu Bin Fodiyo Week and the sultan's 20th coronation anniversary in Sokoto, with the theme "Reviving Ethical Leadership and Social Harmony: Lessons from Sokoto Jihad Leaders."

FG unveils N80b agricultural financing for 40 tertiary institutions

From **Owede Agbajileke**, Abuja

THE federal government has unveiled a N2 billion-per-institution agricultural financing package for 40 tertiary institutions to transform over 500,000 hectares of underutilised land into commercial farms, boost food production and create jobs for Nigerian youths.

The Minister of Education, Dr Tunji Alausa, disclosed this during a meeting with heads of the selected institutions and the management of the Bank of Agriculture (BOA) to discuss the implementation of the Renewed Hope Tertiary Agricultural and Entrepreneurship Programme.

Under the initiative, the BOA will provide between N1 billion and N2 billion to each participating institution to establish commercial farming operations, acquire agricultural equipment and strengthen production.

Alausa said the programme was designed to end the longstanding underutilisation of agricultural land in tertiary institutions by providing the financing, machinery, technical expertise and institutional support needed to make farming commercially viable.

He said participating universities, polytechnics and colleges of education were expected to provide about 1,000 hectares each, though institutions with smaller landholdings could qualify based on the viability of their business proposals.

Each institution is also expected to establish a limited liability company to partner the BOA in managing its agricultural investments.

According to the minister, the Federal Ministry of Education provided for N20 billion in its capital budget to support 20 tertiary institutions under the agricultural development initiative.

He added that the programme would build on previous interventions by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), which approved N1 billion for some institutions and N2 billion for others.

Beyond financing, participating institutions will receive 10 tractors each at significantly reduced costs through the government's agricultural mechanisation initiative, the minister disclosed.

Other support will include modern seedlings, farm implements, irrigation equipment, water pumps, fertilisers and technical assistance to improve productivity.

Moreover, the government will also engage produce aggregators to purchase crops and introduce measures to reduce post-harvest losses, as a way to guarantee a ready market for harvested produce.

Alausa said students, unemployed graduates, alumni, academic and non-academic staff, as well as members of host communities, would participate in the commercial farming ventures under the supervision of lecturers and agricultural experts.

Welcoming the programme, the Vice-Chancellor of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Prof. Adamu Ahmed, said it would help the institution translate its extensive agricultural research capacity into commercial production.

Similarly, the Rector, Federal Polytechnic Oko, Dr Chioma Awuzie, said the initiative would enable the institution to maximise its available land through mechanised farming and improve agricultural production.



A cross-section of senior naval officers during the Chief of the Naval Staff 2016 Annual Retreat in Abuja yesterday PHOTO: NAN

DSS frees another 4 suspected IPOB members, pays N20m compensation

From **Andrew Oota**, Abuja

THE Director-General of the Department of State Services (DGSS), Oluwatosin Ajayi, has freed four suspects alleged to belong to the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), and approved an initial compensation of N20 million at N5 million for each suspect, following their clearance.

Security sources disclosed that the suspects – EmeleUduma Ibe, Bereffgagha Appah, Ondo keyilemi Aggry and Oyeinmokebebeton Aggry- were arrested in May 2022 in Sampou and Akeddei communities in Kolokuma/Opokuma and Sagbama Local Council Areas of Bayelsa State.

A source cited the agency as saying that the suspects were misled into believing that they would each receive a monthly payment of N100,000 under the Federal Government's Amnesty Programme, not knowing that they were being lured by a group of IPOB members who are now facing trial.

Receiving the four, counsel to the suspects, DejiAdeyanju & Partners, commended the DSS for its relentless efforts to safeguard Nigeria's security, particularly acknowledging the DG's genuine attempt to uphold human rights.

The counsel furthermore noted the high level of hygiene and professionalism within the DSS, saying it was the best he has witnessed in over 20 years of interacting with the agency's personnel.

Expressing gratitude to Ajayi, Ibe, on behalf of others, said it was the happiest day of his life and noted that the experience had taught him a valuable lesson .

The DG, upon assuming office in 2024, ordered a review of over 300 inherited terrorism cases. Following this, the facility has been decongested to about 100 after thorough investigations, and over N1 billion has been paid in compensation.

Atiku accuses DSS of plot to disrupt ADC rally in Sokoto

• State govt explains sealing of campaign office

PRESIDENTIAL candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Atiku Abubakar, has accused the Department of State Services (DSS) of recruiting protesters to create disorder in Sokoto and provide a pretext for imposing a curfew to stop the party's campaign rally.

Atiku said the alleged plot was part of a broader attempt by the President Bola Tinubu-led administration to frustrate opposition parties, undermine political competition and deny Nigerians the freedom to choose their leaders ahead of the 2027 general election.

However, the Sokoto State Government said it sealed the ADC campaign office over ownership issues, with the Media Aide to the Sokoto ADC governorship candidate, Aminu Abdullahi, confirming to newsmen that the Commissioner for Land and Housing, Nasiru Dantsoho, came with a letter to the occupants of the building demanding to know the real occupant.

The ADC campaign office was said to be a defunct Savanna Bank building, which the People's Democratic Party (PDP) once used as its party office in the state. BRIEFING newsmen in Abuja yesterday, the former vice president alleged that public facilities meant for campaign activities had been blocked and logistical support withheld in Sokoto, describing the developments as deliberate efforts to deny the ADC a level playing field.

He said information available to the party indicated that protesters were being mobilised from an office behind Zenith Bank on Koko Road, with trucks deployed to strategic locations, including a roundabout.

According to him, the protesters were causing gridlock, threatening commuters and beating some residents, while some had moved away from the roundabout to find shade.

"This is not intelligence work. It is political interference dressed in official uniform," Atiku said. "Security agencies exist to protect Nigerians and uphold the law, not to recruit protesters or help a political party manufacture a crisis."

DLA suspends 2027 presidential candidate's campaign

From **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

PENDING the resolution of disciplinary proceedings, the Democratic Leadership Alliance (DLA) has suspended all presidential campaign activities and public appearances relating to its 2027 presidential flagbearer, Dr Moses Adesoji.

The party said Adesoji was the subject of ongoing criminal investigations by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Nigeria Police Force over concerns about his personal financial affairs, including an alleged dud cheque he issued.

In a statement yesterday, DLA National Chairman, Samuel Memeh, said the party had initiated internal disciplinary proceedings over the matter followingAdesoji's emergence as its presidential candidate at the substitution primary held on August 20, 2026.

According to him, the DLA National Disciplinary Committee had, on August 29, invited Adesoji to respond to the issues raised and, following the proceedings, directed the suspension of all presidential campaign activities and public appearances related to his candidature.

NNPP sues INEC, 45 lawmakers over alleged unlawful defection

By **Yetunde Ayobami Ojo**

THE New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) has sued the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and 45 lawmakers at the Federal High Court in Abuja over the legislators' alleged failure to complete the required resignation processes before defecting from the party.

The suit seeks judicial interpretation and enforcement of constitutional provisions regulating the defection of elected lawmakers from the political parties on whose platforms they secured their mandates in the 2023 general elections.

In an affidavit in support of the originating summons, the NNPP challenged the alleged defections of the 45 lawmakers, comprising members of the Kano State House of Assembly, the House of Representatives, and the Senate.

It alleged that the affected lawmakers abandoned the party for others, while retaining the legislative seats they won on its platform without complying with the procedures.

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FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup

Flamingos battle Brazil for historic final spot

By **Christian Okpara**

IT'S the biggest game in their fledgling careers. At stake is a historic spot in the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup final, and the Flamingos say that they are ready to do all it takes to create a new chapter in Nigeria's women's football story.

However, the obstacle is none other than Brazil, a country that has a tradition of winning games when the stakes are high.

The Nigerian girls have been growing in confidence since their opening-day defeat by Portugal at the championship, with their 3-1 defeat of defending champions, North Korea, one of the high points of the championship thus far.

Against a Brazilian side that has not lost any game, the Flamingos know that they must be at their very best if they want to become the African country to make the final of the competition. The girls know this.

Looking forward to a bruising encounter with the sleek Brazilians, Flamingos Coach Akeem Busari describes the match as the game that defines what his team is fighting for.

He said: "Reaching the semifinals is a dream come true for me and a great achievement, and I'm looking forward to it because I want to make my country proud.

"We want to give our best in the next match and show everyone what we can do".

Top scorer, Oluebube Umejiaku, was more emphatic when she said: "Having come this far, all we want is to win the cup, and that means we must beat Brazil.

"We have worked hard to get to the semifinals and with the final just a game away, we will do everything to get there."

The match at the Mohammed VI Football Complex - Pitch 3 in Rabat pits together two teams with contrasting routes to the semifinals.

Brazil come into this match undefeated thus far in Morocco, but have been made to work hard for all of their results. A rollercoaster 6-2 win over Canada set the tone for their campaign, with enthralling 3-3 draws with Ghana and Poland following. Rilany's side then found themselves behind against China PR, but rallied with two goals after the break to make it to a second successive semi-final.

On the other hand, Nigeria fell to defeat in their opener, losing 2-1 to Poland, which left Akeem Busari's side with a battle to keep their knockout hopes alive.

They downed Puerto Rico 2-0 to get back on track, before their tournament-shaking victory over DPR Korea saw them soar into the second round.

Mexico were dispatched in the last 16, with Venezuela next to fall thanks to an 89th-minute Azeezat Oduntan penalty.



Flamingos top scorer, Oluebube Umejiaku

Today's UEFA Champions League Matches

AEK Athens	v	Real Madrid
Fenerbahçe	v	Liverpool
Borussia Dortmund	v	Real Betis
Lens	v	Como
PSV	v	Club Brugge
Porto	v	Napoli
RB Leipzig	v	Man City
Slavia Prague	v	Arsenal
Viking	v	Sabah FK
UEFA Europa League		
Rennes	v	Olympiakos

West Ham approach Parker after sacking boss Nuno

WEST Ham United are expected to appoint Scott Parker as head coach after sacking Nuno Espírito Santo, reports BBC.

The 52-year-old Portuguese head coach has paid the price for West Ham's disappointing start to the Championship season, having overseen their relegation from the Premier League last season.

BBC Sport wrote yesterday that the club are in advanced talks with former Burnley, Bournemouth and Fulham boss Parker and he could be confirmed before Wednesday's Championship trip to Cardiff City.

The former England midfielder had four seasons as a player with the Hammers and led Bournemouth and Burnley to promotion from the Championship as a manager.

Widely seen as favourites for automatic promotion, the London side are currently eighth in the table, six points behind leaders Middlesbrough.

They have won two of their past six games and have lost back-to-back home matches - going down 3-2 to Southampton and then 3-1 to West Bromwich Albion on Saturday - losses that have seen them drop down from second place.

Spanish police investigating goalkeeper as player dies after on-field collision

SPANISH police have opened an investigation into possible involuntary manslaughter after a football player died following an on-field collision with the opposing team's goalkeeper in a second-division match, reports *abcnews.com*.

Tenerife forward Jesús de Miguel died after he suffered cardiac arrest following the on-field collision, his club said yesterday. He was 30.

De Miguel was challenging for the ball near midfield on Monday when he was struck in the chest by Andorra goalkeeper Jesús Owono, who came running from the opposite direction in an apparent attempt to make a clearance.

Owono was shown a straight red card for the incident, which happened in added time.

The country's National Police said yesterday that an investigation was opened. Under Spanish law, deaths from non-natural causes, including accidents, are subject to judicial investigation.


EL-Amin players showing off their prizes during the closing ceremony of the 2026 Kaduna International Polo Tournament at Murtala Mohammed Square in Kaduna.

Kaduna International Polo Tournament

EL-Amin earns 17th Georgian Cup title, takes Argentine Ambassador's Cup

Home teams sweep top laurels

From **Ernest Nzor**, Abuja

THE 2026 Kaduna international polo tournament that celebrated the 31st anniversary of EL-Amin and Nigeria's rich heritage came to a thrilling climax with EL-Amin setting a record of 17 Georgian Cup victories.

The international polo tournament highlighted a historic, record-setting edition that concluded at the legendary Murtala Muhammed Square in Kaduna, with Kaduna Sublime defeating determined opposition to clinch the glittering Emir of Katsina Cup.

Marking its 107th anniversary, the tournament featured an extended 10-day high-octane format for the first time in its century-plus history, attracting over 40 teams and top-tier professional players from Argentina, Europe, and South Africa.

Kaduna Musaco ran an impressive campaign, defeating a crowded field of ambitious opponents to cart home the Imani Cup. Duku Rocks polo team rampaged through a battery of turbo-charged rivals to clinch the popular El-Amin Cup.

Youth Olympics: Team Nigeria's focus shifts to athletics

From **Gowon Akpodonor**, Dakar, Senegal

TEAM Nigeria's medal hope at the ongoing Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games may have shifted to track and field, after the nation's two flagbearers in table tennis, Favour Ojo and Mathew Kuti, lost out in their single group matches. Nigeria's beach volleyball also waved goodbye in the early hours of yesterday, losing their last game to the Netherlands. But Nigeria's four swimmers (two male and two female) are still battling it out with their counterparts from other countries. The swimming event will end on November 6.

Despite the setback from table tennis and beach volleyball, Team Nigeria officials have great hope in athletics, which accounts for Nigeria's largest contingent of nine athletes (five female and four male) at the Games.

Kuti foresees brighter future

Led by sprinter Rosemary Nwankwo, the athletics team has other promising stars, including Rita Chisom Ezeh, Treasure Omosiwe, Faith Ezechukwu, Praise Ugoh, Gift Bright, Obanla Ehuwa, Gift Oghenerunor and Godswill Nkemakolam.

At the inaugural edition of the Games, Singapore 2010, Nigeria recorded its best moment by winning a total of four medals made up of two gold, one silver and one bronze to be ranked 29th overall in the world. And at Argentina 2018 World Championships in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Nigeria also got a total of four medals made up of one gold and three silver to finish in 48th position in the general medal table.

Diouf, Adebayor, Song, others hit Lagos for African legends game

By **Gowon Akpodonor**

AFRICA is set for a football spectacle as some of the continent's biggest football legends battle celebrated Super Eagles icons in the Legends Football Game on Sunday at the Mobolaji Johnson Arena, Onikan, Lagos.

Headlining the African Legends squad are former African Footballer of the Year Emmanuel Adebayor, Senegal's El-Hadji Diouf, Ivorian legend Didier Zokora and Ghana's ex-captain Stephen Appiah, whose illustrious careers left an enduring mark on the global game.

The star-studded African contingent is expected to feature alongside other celebrated names, including Ghana's John Paintsil and Anthony Baffoe, Senegal's Khalilou Fadiga, Burkina Faso's Aristide Bancé, Cameroon's Rigobert Song and Alexandre Song, Zimbabwe's Peter Ndlovu and Benjani Mwaruwari, as well as South Africa's Brian Baloyi.

They will take on Super Eagles legends from Nigeria's iconic 1994 and 1996 squads in a special encounter celebrating three decades since Nigeria became the kings of African football.

Solution

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FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup: Flamingos battle Brazil for historic final spot /31



Guest Writer

Babatunde Adekanmbi

Nigeria must reject politics of bitterness ahead of 2027

AS Nigeria gradually approaches the 2027 general elections, the growing intensity of political conversations across the country calls for sober reflection, restraint and a renewed commitment to democratic values. Although political competition is an essential feature of democratic governance, the emergence of hostility, intimidation, destruction of campaign materials and increasingly divisive rhetoric raises legitimate concerns about the direction of our political culture.

In an important intervention titled "Rejecting the Politics of Bitterness: A Call for Peaceful Democratic Engagement in Nigeria," Professor Ojo Emmanuel Ademola, First African Professor of Cybersecurity and Information Technology Management, offers a timely perspective on the dangers of allowing political ambitions to undermine national cohesion and democratic stability.

His central message is both compelling and necessary: Nigeria must not sacrifice its democratic progress on the altar of political bitterness, personal ambitions and partisan loyalties.

At a time when political alignments, electoral predictions and presidential ambitions are increasingly dominating public discourse, Professor Ademola's position reminds us that no individual, political party, ethnic group or region possesses a monopoly on political power, public dissatisfaction or the democratic right to participate in governance.

This is a fundamental principle that Nigerians must uphold as preparations for another electoral cycle gather momentum.

Political competition must not become political hostility

One of the most significant concerns raised by Professor Ademola is the growing tendency for political competition to degenerate into intolerance and hostility. Reports of harassment against political aspirants, destruction of campaign posters and billboards, and the use of inflammatory political language are troubling developments that deserve collective condemnation.

Democracy derives its strength from diversity of opinion, freedom of association and the constitutional right of citizens to support candidates of their choice. Consequently, political disagreement should never become an excuse for intimidation, victimisation or violence.

Professor Ademola's argument is particularly relevant because political intolerance rarely emerges as a full-blown crisis. It often begins with verbal aggression, hostile campaigns and seemingly insignificant acts of provocation before escalating into more serious confrontations.

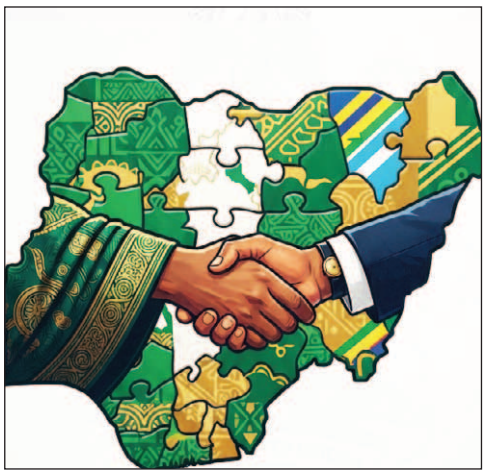
Nigeria must therefore recognise these early warning signs and resist every attempt to normalise political aggression.

The destruction of another person's campaign materials does not strengthen one's preferred candidate. Harassing political opponents does not demonstrate political superiority. Rather, these actions expose the inability to accommodate democratic pluralism.

No democracy can thrive on bitterness

At the heart of Professor Ademola's intervention is the conviction that politics must remain a platform for service, development, constructive engagement and nation-building.

Political offices are temporary, electoral victories are never permanent, and the dynamics of political alliances can change at any time.



Today's political opponent may become tomorrow's governing partner, while former allies may eventually find themselves on opposing sides.

This reality should encourage political maturity and discourage the culture of vengeance that increasingly characterises political conversations.

Leadership should not be measured by the number of opponents humiliated, reputations destroyed or insults exchanged. It should be measured by the capacity to build consensus, accommodate divergent perspectives and pursue the collective interests of society.

As Professor Ademola rightly emphasises, the true test of democratic leadership goes beyond winning elections. It lies in preserving peace, promoting justice and serving the people.

Nigeria needs political actors who understand that national stability is more important than personal political advancement.

Poverty requires governance, not just charity

Another important dimension of Professor Ademola's argument is the relationship between poverty, social vulnerability and the responsibility of government.

Nigeria's socioeconomic difficulties cannot be explained exclusively through individual choices, personal attitudes or the absence of family and community support. Such explanations overlook the structural conditions that continue to expose millions of citizens to economic hardship.

While religious institutions, charitable organisations and community networks provide commendable humanitarian assistance, their interventions cannot replace effective governance and comprehensive social protection systems.

This distinction is particularly important in a country where millions of citizens continue to confront unemployment, rising living costs, inadequate healthcare and limited access to quality education.

Professor Ademola's position challenges political leaders to look beyond temporary interventions and embrace sustainable solutions that address the underlying causes of poverty.

Meaningful poverty reduction requires employment opportunities, productive economic policies, accessible public services, institutional accountability and social safety nets that protect vulnerable populations.

The responsibility of government is not merely to respond to suffering but to create the conditions that prevent citizens from remaining trapped in cycles of deprivation.

Consequently, the 2027 electoral conversation should place greater emphasis on policies capable of improving the living conditions of ordinary Nigerians rather than allowing political personalities and rivalries to dominate the national agenda.

Political leaders must take responsibility for their words and actions

Professor Ademola also draws attention to the responsibility of political leaders and their supporters in maintaining a peaceful democratic environment.

The language of political leadership carries considerable influence. Statements made by candidates, party officials and influential supporters can either reduce tensions or intensify existing divisions.

In a diverse country such as Nigeria, political mobilisation must never exploit ethnic, religious or regional identities to create hostility among citizens.

Our diversity should remain a source of national strength rather than a weapon for electoral manipulation.

Political leaders must demonstrate restraint, discourage inflammatory rhetoric and ensure that their supporters understand the importance of peaceful engagement.

Equally, citizens must recognise that political loyalty should never supersede their responsibility to the nation. Supporting a candidate does not require endorsing every statement, action or strategy associated with that individual.

Democratic maturity demands the ability to question political leaders, acknowledge opposing viewpoints and maintain mutual respect even in moments of intense disagreement.

The digital age demands responsible political engagement

Professor Ademola's perspective becomes even more relevant when considered against the realities of contemporary digital communication.

Social media platforms have fundamentally transformed political participation in Nigeria. Citizens can now engage public officials, circulate information, question government decisions and influence national conversations with unprecedented speed.

> "Nigeria's socioeconomic difficulties cannot be explained exclusively through individual choices, personal attitudes or the absence of family and community support. Such explanations overlook the structural conditions that continue to expose millions of citizens to economic hardship."

However, these opportunities also introduce serious risks, particularly the spread of misinformation, disinformation, online harassment and politically motivated propaganda.

The circulation of fabricated electoral predictions and inflammatory narratives can deepen existing divisions and undermine public confidence in democratic institutions.

As a Professor of Cybersecurity and Information Technology Management, Professor Ademola's emphasis on responsible digital engagement carries particular significance.

The digital space must not become an unrestricted environment for political abuse, malicious propaganda and incitement. Citizens must exercise discernment, verify information before sharing it and distinguish legitimate political criticism from deliberate attempts to mislead or provoke.

Democracy requires informed citizens, and an informed citizenry cannot be built on rumours, fabricated narratives and emotional manipulation.

The responsibility to protect the integrity of public discourse therefore extends beyond political institutions to every individual participating in the digital environment.

National unity must be greater than political ambition

Perhaps the most important message running through Professor Ademola's intervention is the need to choose national unity over political division.

Nigeria is confronted by challenges that demand collective attention. Insecurity, unemployment, poverty, infrastructural deficiencies and governance concerns cannot be adequately addressed in an atmosphere dominated by resentment and political hostility.

No political party can independently resolve every national challenge, and no individual possesses all the answers required to move the country forward.

The ability to cooperate across political, ethnic, religious and regional boundaries is therefore essential to sustainable national development.

Professor Ademola's appeal reminds Nigerians that peaceful elections are not solely the responsibility of government institutions and security agencies. They are a collective responsibility involving political leaders, party supporters, religious institutions, the media, civil society and ordinary citizens.

Every Nigerian has a role to play in protecting the country's democratic future.

The democracy we must preserve

As Nigeria approaches the 2027 general elections, the country must deliberately reject the politics of bitterness and embrace a culture of tolerance, civility and constructive democratic engagement.

Professor Ojo Emmanuel Ademola's intervention offers more than a warning against political intolerance; it presents a call for a more responsible political culture in which leadership is defined by service, disagreement is accommodated through dialogue and national interests take precedence over partisan ambitions.

Read the remaining part of this article on www.guardian.ng

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