

INTERVIEW/PAGES 24&25

'Development Transcends Policies, It Is About People And Opportunities Available To Them'



SCAN TO READ GUARDIAN LIFE

INSIGHT/PAGE 26

SIDF: Creating Ambience Where Welfare Of Every Child Is Guaranteed



The Guardian

Conscience, Nurtured by Truth

www.guardian.ng

WEEKEND

Vol. 43, No. 18,252 ■ ■ November 7 - 8, 2026

Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guar... N500

₦238.4 Billion Allocation:

WHERE IS OSUN'S MISSING LG MONEY?

PAGES 4,5&6



FG Mulls Mobile CNG Stations To Cut Farmers' Energy Costs, Expand Rural Gas Access NEWS/Page 2

Abandoned Power Equipment: FG Begins Immediate Evacuation At Lagos Port NEWS/Page 2

Soyinka, Murray-Bruce Others Seek Stronger Policies, Funding To Unlock Africa's Creative Economy NEWS/Page 3

Who Will Protect Uni-Abuja From Untouchable Wike? InsideSTUFF – Back Page



Abandoned Power Equipment: FG Begins Immediate Evacuation At Lagos Port

By Adaku Onyenucheya

• Trucks Transport Equipment To Nasarawa, Kaduna, Osun, Calabar
• Terminal Operators Lament Waiver Of N500m Demurrage

THE Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) has commenced the release and evacuation of 98 containers of power sector equipment out of the over 300 abandoned across the nation's ports for between 14 and 20 years, following a presidential directive to remove bottlenecks delaying critical electricity projects.

The Comptroller-General of Customs, Dr. Bashir Adeniyi, in a meeting with the Minister of Power, Joseph Tegbe, at the Apapa Customs Command, released the first 44 containers at the ENL Consortium Terminal and APM Terminals in Lagos on Friday, November 6, 2026, which were loaded on trucks heading to Kaduna, Osun, Nasarawa and Cross River states for immediate deployment to ongoing power projects sites.

He said another 54 containers at other terminals in Tin Can and other ports will also be released in due course, noting that the containers had been inspected and certified as containing equipment suitable for the projects for which they were imported.

Adeniyi listed the abandoned equipment to include high-capacity transformers, high-tension wire, cables, switchgear, conductors, hydro, gas-fired, solar and other transmission materials for substations to generation points, imported through the Federal Ministry of Power and government agencies, including the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) and Niger Delta Power Holding Company (NDPHC).

"This is just a symbolic start. This process will continue until the last container related to the power projects is taken out of our ports. As we are doing this here, we are also going to do similar things in other ports on the western and eastern axes," he said.

He attributed the prolonged stay of the equipment to outstanding charges and administrative bottlenecks and what he described as a disturbing pattern of contractors importing equipment for government projects only to abandon the consignments at the ports without executing the projects.

The Customs boss disclosed that the exercise had exposed cases of contractors who secured government permits to import project equipment but failed to fulfil their contractual obligations after the goods arrived in Nigeria.

Adeniyi said the Customs Service would work with relevant government agencies to identify such contractors and ensure they were held accountable.

Adeniyi said Customs had deployed facilitation measures, including priority processing, dedicated officers for joint examinations and approved waivers on charges incurred while the consignments remained at the ports.

This is just as APM Terminals said containers in its facility had accumulated over N500 million in waiver.

He noted that after clearance, technical experts would assess the equipment, with serviceable items deployed to ongoing and stalled projects, including transmission corridors and substations across the country, while obsolete materials would be disposed of in line with relevant regulations.

The Minister of Power, Joseph Tegbe, disclosed that the equipment would be moved immediately to Kaduna, Lafia and Akwanga in Nasarawa State, as well as Ilaro in Osun State, to support ongoing transmission projects and strengthen connections between substations and generation points.

Tegbe explained that the equipment, which includes towers used to support high-voltage transmission lines and conductors for electricity transmission, had been inspected and certified fit for the projects for which they were imported.

Tegbe said the stranded equipment was originally procured for projects designed to expand the national transmission network, relieve overloaded substations and improve electricity delivery across the country.

He noted that the prolonged storage of the equipment had resulted in significant consequences, including delays in material supply, stalled transmission infrastructure projects and reduced operational flexibility for existing substations; and restricted the ability of the transmission network to deliver electricity to areas requiring additional capacity.

The minister described the evacuation as part of the Federal Government's efforts to address longstanding structural challenges in the power sector, noting that some of the equipment had remained at the ports for between 10 and 14 years.

Tegbe added that the government was working to evacuate the remaining equipment from other ports, including Apapa and Tin Can Island ports, Onne, to ensure that stranded assets were delivered to their intended project locations.

The minister stressed that improving electricity supply remained central to the administration's economic agenda, noting that reliable power was critical to industrialisation, economic growth and national prosperity.

He said the government was pursuing improvements across different energy sources, including hydro, gas-fired and solar power, while addressing transmission constraints that have continued to limit the delivery of generated electricity to consumers.

He particularly commended the Nigeria Customs Service for its cooperation in facilitating the evacuation, adding that the ministry's technical team had inspected the equipment and matched them with the projects for which they were originally procured.



Former Governor of Imo State, Rochas Okorocha (left); Akwa Ibom State Governor, Umo Eno; President Bola Ahmed Tinubu; First Lady Oluremi Tinubu; Wife of the Vice President, Hajiya Nana Shettima; Vice President, Kashim Shettima; and President of the Senate, Godswill Akpabio, during the commissioning of projects in Akwa Ibom State...on Friday. PHOTO: STATE HOUSE

FG Mulls Mobile CNG Stations To Cut Farmers' Energy Costs, Expand Rural Gas Access

From Kingsley Jeremiah and Terhemba Daka (Abuja)

• Claims CNG Cuts Transport Fares By 40%
• Seeks More Private Investment As 160 Stations Become Operational

THE Federal Government is considering the deployment of mobile Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) stations in rural communities to expand access to cheaper energy and reduce production costs for farmers, particularly those dependent on fuel-powered irrigation systems.

This is even as the government has claimed that the adoption of CNG has reduced transportation fares by between 30 and 40 per cent on some routes.

It also disclosed that it was intensifying efforts to expand refuelling infrastructure and attract more private-sector investment into the alternative fuel market.

The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Presidential CNG Initiative and Electric Vehicles (Pi-CNG & EV), Ismaeel Ahmed, disclosed this at an Abuja roundtable on 'Promise to Proof: The Renewed Hope Conversation,' organised by the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Progressive Strategy Roundtable.

Ahmed said the proposed mobile facilities would serve remote communities where the establishment of permanent CNG refuelling stations might not be commercially attractive to private investors.

He explained that consultations with state governments, particularly in northern Nigeria, had revealed growing demand for CNG beyond the transportation sector, with farmers increasingly exploring gas-powered irrigation as a cheaper alternative to petrol and diesel.

According to him, the Initiative was considering ways to make CNG readily available to farmers who want to reduce the cost of agricultural production through the adoption of gas-powered mechanical pumps.

Citing Jigawa State as an example, Ahmed said the governor had informed the Initiative that the state had more than two million farmers who could benefit from affordable energy for irrigation.

He noted that mechanical irrigation pumps could cover approximately three hectares of farmland, compared with solar-powered alternatives, which typically serve about one hectare.

Acknowledging the growing adoption of solar-powered irrigation, he said some farmers preferred mechanical pumps because of their wider coverage and operational capacity.

Ahmed said President Bola Tinubu had authorised the Initiative to intensify its activities as part of efforts to expand the country's gas infrastructure and accelerate the transition to cheaper and cleaner energy alternatives.

Speaking during the commissioning of a CNG Integrated Refuelling Unit (IRU) established by Pi-CNG & EV and Rolling Energy Limited along New Karu Road, Saint George Akume Way, Karu, Abuja, on Friday, Ahmed said about 160 CNG refuelling stations were operational nationwide, while another 170 were at various stages of development, approval and licensing by the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA).

He disclosed that approximately $2.6 billion in private-sector investments had been committed to the initiative, arguing that the programme had moved beyond its experimental stage and was attracting growing interest from investors.

According to him, the Federal Government was prioritising faster deployment of infrastructure to meet the country's transportation and energy needs, particularly given Nigeria's population of over 220 million people and an estimated 12 million vehicles.

Ahmed said President Bola Tinubu had directed the deployment of 1,500 additional infrastructure and mobility units in February and another 500 in August, with the facilities expected to become operational between this year and early 2027.

He urged more entrepreneurs to invest in the sector, noting that the government could not single-handedly finance and operate the infrastructure required to support nationwide CNG adoption.

On the impact of the initiative on commuters, Ahmed said CNG-powered buses had helped reduce fares by between 30 and 40 per cent on selected routes in Abuja, Lagos and Kano, including services connecting Kano and Katsina.

He cited instances where passengers who previously paid between N3,000 and N4,000 on certain routes now pay about N1,500 when travelling in CNG-powered buses.

He, however, acknowledged that the number of buses currently deployed remained inadequate to meet demand. Ahmed explained that the government's estimates were based on comparisons between fares charged by operators before and after introducing CNG-powered buses, rather than an independent assessment of transportation costs.

Earlier, the Permanent Secretary, State House, Temitope Fashedemi, said the commissioning demonstrated how government could stimulate private investment by making existing public infrastructure available for commercial redevelopment.

He disclosed that the State House partnered with the PCNGI and Rolling Energy to rehabilitate an abandoned fuel depot, providing the location and existing infrastructure, while the private operator financed the rehabilitation and upgrade.

Fashedemi said the facility also housed a vehicle conversion centre, adding that some State House vehicles and buses had already adopted alternative energy, while interested staff members would be encouraged to convert eligible vehicles.

Chief Executive Officer of Rolling Energy Limited, Mubarak Danbatta, said the facility could serve approximately 150 vehicles daily, depending on cylinder size and pressure, while its conversion centre was projected to handle 12 vehicles daily.

He described the project as evidence of the benefits of government-private sector collaboration, noting that the integrated refuelling technology combines the dispenser and compressor in one system.

In a related development, the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Domestic Affairs, Toyin Subair, said the Federal Government and state governments were expanding investments in CNG-powered buses, trucks, tricycles and other mass transit vehicles to ensure that the benefits of cheaper fuel translated into reduced transportation costs.

Travel Ban: U.S. Misinterpreted Judgment, Says Retiring Supreme Court Justice

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

A retiring Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice Uwani Musa Abba Aji has revealed that the travel ban imposed on a seven member panel of the court by the United States of America (USA) was occasioned by misinterpretation of a judgment delivered by the justices.

The Yobe born Supreme Court justice, who made the revelation on Friday in Abuja, explained that the travel ban to the United States of America was still subsisting against the justices till today.

Justice Abba Aji, who spoke on the occasion of a valedictory Supreme Court session held in her honour, however noted that the ban was part of inconveniences and a small price to pay by judicial officers to preserve the chastity of justice.

Abba Aji will formally bow out of the Supreme Court on November 7 upon attainment of the mandatory retirement age of 70 years.

Recalling her experience while on the bench, she said: "My time on the Supreme Court bench was filled with challenges, some of which have served as additional opportunities to stand firm on the side of justice, regardless of the consequences.

"One of such challenging judgments was widely misinterpreted and led to a travel ban to the United States of America being imposed on all members of the panel, a ban which still holds today."

Oborevwori Delivers Keynote As NUJ Honours Oloja, Other Media Icons

By **Suliyat Tella**

DELTA State Governor, Sheriff Oborevwori, will headline the 2026 Milestone Recognition of Media Icons in Nigeria, as the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) honours veteran journalists for their contributions to the country's media industry.

Oborevwori, who will attend as Special Guest of Honour, is expected to deliver the keynote address at the event scheduled for November 7 at the Abuja Continental Hotel.

It will be held under the theme, 'Strengthening Democracy Through Responsible Journalism and Good Governance.'

In a statement released by the union, the Chairman of the National Organising Committee, Otunba Gbenga Onayiga, said the event would bring together distinguished media professionals and communication experts to celebrate journalists who have made significant contributions to the profession.

"For once, we want to celebrate ourselves. We are honouring colleagues who have paid their dues in journalism; acknowledge their courage, sacrifices, dedication, excellence and enduring contributions to the noble profession," he said.

Onayiga described the recognition as different from conventional award ceremonies, saying it was designed to appreciate journalists for their service and contributions while they are still alive.

According to him, "Milestone Recognition of Media Icons is in a class of its own. It is not one of those 'awards.' The event is NUJ's unique way of appreciating and celebrating the service, resilience, sacrifice and integrity of the recipients over the years."

Bayelsa, Delta Govs, Others To Receive SSME Awards

By **Eniola Daniel**

THE second edition of the South South Media and Entertainment Awards (SSMEA) will take centre stage in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, on Sunday, December 6, 2026,

Delta State Governor, Sheriff Francis Orohwedor Oborevwori and his Bayelsa State counterpart, Douye Diri are among distinguished individuals of South South extraction that will be honoured at the event including bankers, captains of industry, academicians, organisations and institutions that performed creditably in their respective fields and disciplines in the year under review.

Two licensed Nigerian commercial banks, TAJ Bank and Globus Bank will also receive special awards at the event, which is generally viewed as the most prestigious awards event in the Southern region of the country.

Two members of Nigeria's movie industry, actor/producer, Sam Dede and actress/producer, Monalisa Chinda will also be honoured at the star-studded gala.

The event will be held at the prestigious Aztech Arcum Event Centre, 77 Ken Saro-Wiwa Road (formerly Stadium Road), Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

The Red Carpet of the event commences at 5p.m. while the event proper will begin at 6p.m. and last for two hours and 15 minutes.

Popular television star and filmmaker, Frank Edoho, best known as the host of the Nigerian television game show, 'Who Wants to Be a Millionaire' will serve as Master of Ceremonies at the event.

Soyinka, Murray-Bruce Others Seek Stronger Policies, Funding To Unlock Africa's Creative Economy

By **Helen Oji**

NOBEL laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka, has urged African youths to take advantage of changing global circumstances to drive a new renaissance that would reposition the continent and reverse its history of exploitation and deprivation.

Soyinka, who spoke during a panel session on 'Building a Creative Economy in Global Africa', at the ongoing Creative Africa Nexus (CANEX) WKND 2026, organised by Afreximbank in Lagos, on Friday, said the continent needed to look inward and develop its own capacity rather than depend on external support.

He argued that the younger generation must use opportunities in creativity, technology, artificial intelligence and the economy to demonstrate Africa's productive capacity and strengthen its position in the world.

He also challenged young Africans to build on the experiences of previous generations and use their skills and opportunities to transform the continent.

According to him, the changing global order provides an opportunity for Africa to rethink its position and take advantage of new developments.

He also called for regular engagements between political leaders and creative practitioners, stressing the need for relationships based on equality, trust and mutual respect.

Soyinka said such engagements would help reduce suspicion between those in government and people in the creative industry and encourage more productive discussions.

In her contribution, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Division Director for West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea, Natalie Koussi Akon, said changing attitudes among parents, artists and financial institutions were creating new opportunities for the creative industry.

She said the industry had not received the attention and financing it deserved for many years, but financial institutions were increasingly recognising its commercial potential.

Akon disclosed that the IFC had channelled $1.6 billion into the creative industry over the past five years.

She said the institution was working to strengthen the sector through improved visibility, capacity building, market access and stronger connections between creative businesses and markets.

According to her, technology offers opportunities to improve the visibility of creative professionals and generate data that can help identify businesses and artists with investment potential.



Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (retd) (left) who was Guest Speaker at the Second Regimental Sergeant Majors' Convention 2026 being presented with a plague by the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt. General Wahab Shaibu at the end of the convention organised by the Nigerian Army in Benin City, Edo State on... Friday.

APC Mocks ADC Over Court Judgment Nullifying Mark-led NWC

From **Adamu Abuh**, Abuja

THE All Progressives Congress (APC) has mocked the African Democratic Congress (ADC) over the Federal High Court judgment that sacked the Senator David Mark-led National Working Committee (NWC), declaring that a party unable to manage its internal affairs cannot govern Nigeria.

The ruling party also challenged the opposition party to stop blaming it and the judiciary for its leadership crisis, insisting that the dispute was self-inflicted and had nothing to do with the APC.

The APC National Publicity Secretary, Felix Morka, stated this in a statement issued in Abuja on Friday, following the judgment delivered by Justice Peter Lifu of the Federal High Court, Abuja.

Morka accused the ADC of adopting double standards in its attitude towards the judiciary, alleging that the opposition party celebrates court decisions whenever they favour it but attacks judges and accuses the APC of interference when rulings go against its interests.

He said the ADC's conduct demonstrated a lack of respect for the independence of the judiciary, which he described as an indispensable pillar of democracy.

According to him, the legal dispute was initiated by aggrieved national officers of the ADC against the Mark-led faction and had nothing to do with the APC.

"The APC is neither a party nor an interlocutor in the matter. Nothing about the case has anything to do with the APC. And the APC has absolutely no role in the party's judicial quagmire," he said.

Morka alleged that the leadership crisis resulted from what he described as an attempt by Mark and his associates to take over the party's structure to advance former vice president Atiku Abubakar's presidential ambition.

He maintained that the court's decision exposed what he called violations of the ADC's internal democracy and the rule of law by the factional leadership.

Unions Accuse NSA, NCAA Of Compromise In Alleged Air Peace Safety Breach

By **Olusegun Koiki** and **Gloria Ndidi**

AVIATION workers' unions have accused the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) and the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) of compromising the investigation into the alleged safety and security breach involving Air Peace at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA), Lagos, on August 11, 2026.

The unions claimed that the NSA was shifting attention from the airline's purported violation of aviation safety regulations to the demand by the Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON) for the abolition of the five per cent Ticket Sales Charge (TSC) and Cargo Sales Charge (CSC).

The unions, National Union of Air Transport Employees (NUATE), Amalgamated Union of Public Corporations, Civil Service Technical and Recreational Services Employees (AUPCTRE), National Association of Aircraft Pilots and Engineers (NAAPE), Air Transport Services Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (ATSSSAN) and the Association of Nigeria Aviation Professionals (ANAP) made the allegation on Friday at the Murtala Muhammed Airport (MMA), Lagos during a joint press briefing with aviation correspondents.

Speaking on behalf of the unions, the General Secretary, ANAP, Ocheme Aba, warned that any attempt to abolish the statutory charges without providing an alternative funding arrangement could undermine the financial capacity of aviation agencies and jeopardise safety oversight, air navigation services and accident investigations.

The unions emphasised that they were particularly concerned by information that the NSA had convened a meeting of the Nigerian Intelligence Community to deliberate on the possible abolition of the TSC and CSC, allegedly following demands by airline operators.

Special

www.guardian.ng

The ₦238.4 Billion Question: Tracing

Despite receiving 238.4 billion in allocations between January 2025 and June 2026, Osun's 30 LGAs still grapple with poor roads, struggling health centres, under-resourced schools and broken water systems. The leadership tussle between the ruling and opposition political parties across the 30 LGAs hasn't just led to fratricidal killings, but also the unknown whereabouts of the huge public funds. ***CHRISTIANAH ALABI-AKANDE, SODIQ MOJIBOLA*** *and* ***OLANSHILE AKANHO*** *write.*



Bad road in Odofun

WHEN Suliat Oyetunji went into labour, the health facility closest to her home in Oore, a village near Iragbiji in Osun State's Boripe Local Council, could not provide the care she needed.

For months, she had struggled to access reliable antenatal care at the Oore Primary Healthcare Centre. Health workers, she said, were rarely available whenever she visited, leaving her to seek medical attention in Iragbiji, a town about four kilometres away.

When the time came to be delivered of her set of twins, there was no dependable care at the facility. She eventually gave birth at home.

"Whenever I went to the PHC, nurses were not always available," she told *DevReporting*.

Her experience points to a troubling reality for residents of Oore where having a health centre does not necessarily mean having access to healthcare. When *DevReporting* visited the facility, it was locked up.

Across Osun, similar concerns emerged in communities visited by *DevReporting*. Yet, between January 2025 and June 2026, the state's 30 local councils received more than N238 billion in allocations.

During the period under review, Boripe LGA received 8.41 billion, averaging about 467 million monthly. Ife East received the highest allocation, totalling 9.56 billion, while Ifelodun received 6.53 billion.

Despite the billions of naira allocated during the period under review, residents in several communities continue to decry deteriorating basic amenities. Some have resorted to providing or repairing basic infrastructure themselves while others struggle to access essential services.

Like Oore, like Okebode

At Okebode in Atakunmosa West LGA, the challenges facing the Abebi Afilaka Health Centre include shortages of drugs, inadequate personnel and unreliable electricity. Ayoola Odunayo, a healthcare worker at the facility, lamented the difficulties staff encounter when attending to pregnant women, particularly during childbirth.

"In fact, we use the flashlight of our phones to deliver pregnant women because there is no power supply," she said. "We also do not have the necessary equipment or drugs. In addition, we need more beds for our patients."

The secretary of the Okebode palace, Adebowale Adeorike, said a community indigene paid for the repair of the maternity centre after a storm damaged it in 2019.

"When it happened, we wrote to the government requesting assistance, but all we received were promises. Nothing was done," she said.

The indigene, he said, later renamed the facility Abebi Afilaka Maternity Centre after his mother.

In Olugunna, Osogbo LGA, Folasade Adeleke said residents had lost confidence in their local health centre because of shortages of drugs and the absence of qualified personnel.

"This health centre is not a health centre. They cannot administer medications to our children if we take them there for treatment," she said.

Ms Adeleke, who said she had lived in the community for more than 35 years, added that none of her children was delivered at the facility because residents no longer considered it a reliable option for maternal care.

Roads that leave communities stranded

For residents of Odofin, a community in Ifelodun LGA, rainfall can bring everyday movement to a halt.

Sulaiman Adeyemi, who has lived in the community since 2002, said the absence of proper drainage makes the road vulnerable to flooding.

"There is no drainage in this community. That's why floods take over the road. Whenever it rains, vehicular movement stops for the flash floods to wash away," he said, adding, "Only community efforts of sand-filling the road have kept it in this shape."

He recalled that the road connecting Odofun to Inisa, a community in Odo-Otin LGA, was last repaired over 15 years ago, when a former council chairman, Bola Ajao, intervened.

"There are big houses down the road, but bad roads have forced many residents and property owners out," he said.

Isa Afolabi, a commercial motorcyclist, said the community's difficulties extend beyond roads to water supply, electricity and access to healthcare.

With limited public intervention, residents have also had to contribute money to replace stolen electricity cables. The community, he added, has no public health centre and depends on private facilities for medical care.

In Ikire, Irewole LGA, Oni Oluwaseyi said a bridge had been swept away by floodwater on a road linking the high court area to Apomu in the town, leaving it in poor condition and forcing farmers to take longer routes to transport their produce to market.

"If the government can fix this road that links Apomu to Ikire, this area will rapidly develop," he said.

In Ilobu, headquarters of Irepodun LGA, Taiwo Ishola, who said he had lived in the Konda area of the town for more than 40 years, said the community had remained in poor condition for over a decade, with rainfall worsening the situation and exposing properties to flooding.

"Whenever it rains, we are not able to use the road, and the bridge is also bad. When it rains, it



Professor Mojeed Alabi, Former Speaker, Osun State House of Assembly

Tajudeen Lawal, APC Chairman, Osun State

Osun State Commissioner for local goverments, Dosu Babatunde

Hon. Sikiru Ajibade, Irepodun Local Government Chairman

Feature

Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

Osun's Missing LG Funds





A classroom littered with dirts and feaces in CAC Grammar School, Ikoyi

destroys people's properties," he said.

Schools struggling to keep pupils

The difficulties extend to public education, where some communities say inadequate staffing and deteriorating facilities are undermining children's access to learning. Our reporters also found public schools littered with faeces and dirt.

At Oore village, *DevReporting* observed that the only public school had recently been renovated but continued to face a shortage of teachers.

The Baale of Oore, Adekunle Mudashiru, said the community's renovated school lacked enough teachers to cater for its pupils.

"We have only one teacher in the school who is also the headmaster. We need at least five teachers," he said.

According to him, Oore has about 1,200 residents, while the school previously had approximately 120 pupils. However, some parents have withdrawn their children and enrolled them in private schools because of the shortage of teachers.

Omotayo Timilehin, a former pupil of the school, said the absence of basic learning facilities made it difficult for him to continue his education there. His parents eventually transferred him to a school in town, about 10 miles away.

In Abiri-Ikoyi, Isokan LGA, the condition of CAC Primary School has also raised concerns among residents. Tajudeen Olowookere, who finished from the school in 1999, said its condition had deteriorated considerably.

"This school was beautiful before I graduated in 1999, but the situation on the ground now is worrisome. I feel really bad. From the building you see, you cannot say this is a school now," he said, appealing to the government to rehabilitate the school so pupils can learn in a conducive environment.

The Odofin of Ikoyi land, Adejare Abdulfatai, also decried the bad state of public schools in the community, saying many are roofless and dilapidated.



An abanoned classroom in Cummunity primary school, Oore

He appealed to the government to come to their aid.

The situation is the same at Okebode, where residents said the community's primary and secondary schools are also struggling with shortages of government-employed teachers.

Other irregularities

Beyond roads, healthcare and education, access to clean and reliable water remains a concern in several communities visited by *DevReporting*.

In Ikoyi, Ajisafe Abdulafeez said the town had not had public water supply since 2010. For years, residents have depended on wells, streams and boreholes provided through community efforts to meet their water needs.

He added that some communities in the area had also gone without electricity for two years.

At Okebode, Mrs Adeorike said a government water project had stopped functioning, forcing the community and its traditional ruler to provide an alternative.

The consequences of failing water infrastructure are also evident in local markets, where traders and customers struggle with inadequate public toilets.

Adetomiwa Bolanle, the Iyaloja of Oba Oyegunle Market in Ikire, said the market's public water system no longer functioned properly, while its public toilet had stopped working.

"The toilet that the government made for us no longer works. There are no general toilet facilities in this market, and that's not fair enough," she said.

Some traders have made private arrangements to access water, but these are insufficient to meet the needs of the wider market, *DevReporting* gathered.

Adesokan Adeola, a trader at Obada market in Ikire, said: "People who need to defecate in this market will have to go to their houses or neighbouring houses to do so," adding that some resort to a nearby landfill.

"The market's access road also needs reconstruction and widening," she added.

For traders, these infrastructure problems exist alongside declining sales and financial pressures. Mrs Adesokan, who sells textile materials, said she had diversified into other goods because of low demand.

"I sell textile materials, but I now also sell salt and condiments to prevent hunger. Everyone is complaining that there's no money," she said.

She recalled a time when increased commercial activity in the market provided an informal indication that public workers had received their salaries or that government allocations had arrived. That pattern, she said, had changed.

Meanwhile, the Babaloja of Olobu market, Azeez Ajagbe, said roads within the market had been washed away by floods, while public toilets and water facilities were inadequate.

BudgIT reveals gaps

The concerns raised by residents are reflected in findings by BudgIT, a civic organisation that monitors public spending and service delivery.

Between January and June 2026, the organisation tracked 28 primary healthcare centres across 10 local councils in the state. None of the facilities met all the standard benchmarks.

Head of Tracka at BudgIT, Joshua Osiyemi said only one of the 28 facilities had an ambulance, three had laboratories, and just four had doctors. 12 had functioning water facilities.

Mr Osiyemi said the findings were particularly concerning given the increased funding available to primary healthcare facilities through the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF). According to him, funding had increased from about 300,000 to 600,000, while facilities with high patient volumes received approximately 800,000 quarterly.

"These are monies that should go into more service delivery, more improvement in terms of the quality of healthcare that you get," he said.

BudgIT's monitoring of school projects also raised questions about project delivery. Of the 13 projects monitored, eight had been completed, two were ongoing, and two had not been carried out. The organisation also reported a case in which payment had been made for the construction of a school pit latrine, but the facility had not been built.

Mr Osiyemi said BudgIT had submitted a Freedom of Information (FoI) request to the Osun State Government seeking an explanation for the project, but had yet to receive a response at the time of the interview.

Beyond the projects tracked, he said the organisation had found schools without roofs or furniture, with some pupils still sitting on the floor to learn.

Background

Beyond the service-delivery gaps identified by residents and monitoring organisations, local government administration in Osun has been hampered by a prolonged political and legal crisis over who controls the councils and their finances.

The dispute dates back to the local government election held on 15 October 2022, which produced APC chairmen and councillors across the state. The Federal High Court in Osogbo subsequently nullified the election, ruling that it contravened Sections 29 and 32 of the Electoral Act 2022.

Following the high court ruling, the Osun State Government led by Ademola Adeleke conducted another local council election on 22 February 2025, producing a new set of council officials. But shortly before the 22 February poll, a 10 February ruling by the Court of Appeal, Akure Division, had been interpreted by the APC to mean the reinstatement of its sacked LG officials.

Attempts by APC-aligned officials to reclaim council secretariats triggered violent confrontations, resulting in reported deaths, including that of Remi Abass, a former chairman of Irewole Local Council, and six others on 17 February 2025.

For the family of the deceased, the consequences of the crisis remain deeply personal. His younger brother, Abbas Oladipupo, said the family was still struggling with the loss of their breadwinner and appealed to the government to ensure that those responsible were brought to justice.

The leadership crisis in Osun was further complicated by the 11 July 2024 Supreme Court judgment affirming financial autonomy for local governments. Competing political

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Adegoke Ogunsola, Irepodun LG Chairman

Iyaloja of Ikire Market

Abdulrasheed Olaoluwa, Babakere to the Timi of Ede, Ede Land

₦238.4 Billion Question: Counting The Cost Of Osun's Missing Funds

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

interests sought control of council accounts and allocations, raising questions about who had the authority to manage the funds.

Meanwhile, workers under the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) embarked on a prolonged industrial action, disrupting council administration. Although the workers have since returned, uncertainty over control and authority has persisted.

In June 2026, the Federal High Court in Osogbo dismissed a suit by the APC-elected chairmen seeking an extension of their tenure, ruling that their three-year tenure had ended in October 2025. The APC rejected the decision and filed an appeal.

With competing claims to authority across the state's 30 local councils and the area council, questions remain over who is in charge, who controls the funds, and how financial autonomy can translate into effective governance. Despite billions of naira in federal allocations to the councils, transparency and accountability in the utilisation of the funds remain critical concerns.

"I can't access LG accounts" - Auditor-General

While political actors disagree over control of local government allocations, the Auditor-General for Local Governments in Osun State, Isiaq Awotunde, says he has been unable to access the bank statements needed to audit the funds.

Mr Awotunde said more than 238 billion in local government allocations had accumulated over nearly two years, but he could not access the financial records needed to examine how the funds were being managed.

"As the auditor-general for local governments, I am to be a watchdog on public funds. Almost two years now, we are hearing about our money, but we cannot touch it," he said.

He explained that during the dispute over local government administration, he had been asked to verify the authentic signatories to the councils' accounts. After completing the verification, he said he submitted the details to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and United Bank for Africa (UBA), where, according to him, the funds were domiciled.

However, obtaining the bank statements proved difficult.

"I told the CBN to avail me of the bank statement of some particular months. They turned the letter down," he said, adding that the bank requested the specific account number for which he sought the statement.

Mr Awotunde said he subsequently informed the state government and worked with the Ministry of Justice to submit another request to the CBN.

"I connected with the attorney-general; they gave me two lawyers; as the Ministry of Justice, we wrote another one. Till now, we have not heard from the bank," he said.

The auditor-general argued that his professional responsibility to scrutinise public funds should not be undermined by the dispute over local government administration.

"Politically I cannot say anything about that, but based on my professional area, I must be able to access it. Whether directly or indirectly, it is public funds; we need to audit it," he said.

DevReporting traces N238.4bn FAAC allocations to Osun 30 LGAs in 18 months

According to data generated through Amoye, a civic-tech artificial intelligence chatbot dedicated to open government and introduced by Insight Initiative for Community and Social Development (IICSD), the federal allocations to the state's LGAs within 18 months of January 2025 and June 2026 amounted to N238.4 billion. However, while the PDP-wing of the LGA leadership said it had no access to a penny from the allocations since its election, the APC-led leadership confirmed opening new accounts with UBA but insisted it could not confirm the exact amount paid into the accounts.

Adegoke Ogunsola is the APC-faction chairman of Irepodun LGA, who also doubles as the legal adviser to the state's chapter of the APC-led Association of Local Government of Nigeria (ALGON).

He said: "Yes, we followed the instruction by the CBN to open accounts in commercial banks. We approached many banks but they declined to open accounts for us because the ruling party in the state warned them against dealing with us. Only UBA agreed to open the accounts for us. But even as the chairman of my LGA, I cannot tell how much is in the account, because I do not receive alerts when it is credited".


A segment of road in Arinkinkin area of Ilobu

The state's Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Dosu Babatunde, described the opening of new accounts for local councils as an abnormality, criticising both the CBN and the commercial bank for engaging in illegality.

Mr Babatunde said: "To run the accounts of councils, there are officials like the directors of finance and personnel management who are constitutionally authorised to run them. But the APC-led chairmen now went to look for non-staffers of local governments- strangers, maybe vulcanizers- and appointed them as councils' treasurers, and opened new accounts for the councils, and are operating them."

He said the state government had to approach a law court for an order to bar the bank from releasing further funds to the APC-faction chairmen, noting that the matter was beyond the state's local government system.

Bank keeps mum

In response to an enquiry by **DevReporting**, UBA, through its Group Head of Media and External Relations, Ramon Nasir, said it could not comment on the matter because it was before a court.

"The case is subjudice. It is before a competent court for determination. We cannot make any comment so as not to run foul of the law. Our position on this issue has been clearly stated by our legal representatives on this issue before the courts," Mr Nasir said.

Local government funds consumed by political interests, says Alabi

A stalwart of APC and former Speaker of the state's House of Assembly, Mojeed Alabi, a professor, said the challenges confronting local governments had developed over several years. Drawing on his experience as a former secretary of Ejigbo Local Government in the early 1990s, he recalled when councils graded rural roads, constructed culverts, maintained health centres and maternity facilities, provided wells and awarded bursaries.

"It would be surprising to you that in Ejigbo Local Government alone, we had three graders," he said.

Mr Alabi attributed the decline in local government performance to the growing use of council resources to accommodate political interests.

"Once you start spending a preponderance of the money to pay a political office holder, there will be little left for development," he said, claiming that recurrent expenditure accounted for more than 80 per cent of local government spending, leaving limited resources for development projects.

"If you decide to use public funds for aggrandisement of the rulers, there will be little left for development. If you want to use it for development, there will be little left for the aggrandisement," he stressed.

On financial autonomy, Mr Alabi said direct allocation of funds to councils would not automatically guarantee accountability without effective public oversight.

Commenting on Osun, Mr Alabi acknowledged that the political dispute over local government leadership had disrupted council administration. He said the impact of the crisis on council operations could not be ignored.

Residents take on govt responsibilities

In several communities, residents say they have had to contribute their own resources to address problems they believe should be handled through public institutions.


Professor Damilola Agbalajobi, Former Head of Department, Political Science, OAU

Tajudeen Olowookere, alumni, CAC Grammar School, Ikoyi

Head of Tracka Department, BudgIT, Joshua Osiyemi


High court road, Ikoyi

In Ilobu, for instance, Olufemi Saibu, a professor of economics at the University of Lagos and president of the Ilobu Development Union (IDU), said the organisation had increasingly become a means through which residents pursued infrastructure and development projects.

"In terms of infrastructure and so on, the people see IDU as the viable framework through which their aspirations to have some infrastructure can be met," he said, adding that the union had helped facilitate infrastructure for government agencies and supported projects involving schools, primary healthcare, roads and other basic services.

Political crisis clouds LG responsibilities

Meanwhile, political actors and experts point to a prolonged dispute over who controls local government administration and resources in Osun.

Abdulrasheed Olaoluwa, a traditional titleholder in Ede, said the crisis had created uncertainty over who was responsible for running local councils.

"The current local government system has become confusing, and we don't know what's going on anymore," he said.

He said the dispute had affected Ede North and Ede South local councils, creating setbacks in the delivery of projects and services.

Having previously contested and served in local government, he said councils were important because their activities and projects directly affected rural communities.

Sikiru Ajibade, the PDP-faction chairman of Irepodun Local Government, similarly blamed the political situation for limiting their access to funds.

"Since we were elected in February 2025, we have not been able to use the local government," he said. "The elected chairmen of local governments have no access to the allocation, and that has been a major setback in terms of facilitating development".

Mr Ajibade contrasted the situation with his 11-month tenure as caretaker chairman, during which he said his administration tarred two roads, each measuring about 1.5 kilometres, constructed a building for Federal Road Safety Corps officials and provided a public toilet with a borehole and prepaid electricity meter at a market.

For the chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Osun State, Tajudeen Lawal, a former chairman of Ife East Local Government, the political crisis had prevented local governments from exercising full autonomy.

He said, "Although allocations are being released, we do not currently have full access to those funds. What is available is largely for salary payments, and salaries alone cannot drive development."

He also claimed that the state government was collecting revenues that local governments would ordinarily generate from markets, motor parks and other sources.

'Local government is supposed to provide basic services'

A former Head of the Political Science Department, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Damilola Agbalajobi, a professor, said local government is the tier of government expected to provide essential services closest to citizens.

"Those resources should be used to improve infrastructure, strengthen security and provide basic social services so that citizens can enjoy the dividends of democracy," she said.

She said the political crisis in Osun had created uncertainty about who was effectively in charge of local government administration, making it harder for residents to identify who should be held responsible.

"More importantly, it raises critical questions about accountability. If funds are being allocated to local governments, where are those resources going?" she queried.

Ms Agbalajobi added that paying salaries was not, on its own, a sufficient measure of effective governance.

"Effective governance is measured by the provision of security, protection of lives and property, functional healthcare facilities, quality public infrastructure and other essential social services," she added.

Diary



Deputy Comandant-General (DCG), Crisis Management, Pedro Awili Ideba (left); DCG Intelligence & investigation, Dr Nnamdi Nwinyi; Commandant General, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Abubakar Ahmed Audi; DCG, Technical Services, Zakari Ibrahim Ningi and Acting DCG Training and Manpower Development, ACG Lucy Samu at the flag-off ceremony for the construction of a new Gatehouse, Headquarters Inroad, Solar-powered Lighting and Quarter Guard at the Corps' National Headquarters in Abuja by the Commandant General.



Participants at the Chef's Roundtable organised by Bountip, for chefs and food service professionals in Lagos.



Senior Vice President, DStv Media Sales, Doris Ohanugo (left) Executive Head, Corporate Affairs, Caroline Oghuma; Chief Executive Officer, Kemi Omotosho; Senior Vice President, Content, Nigeria, Dr Busola Tejumola, and Senior Vice President, Communications, Tope Oshunkeye,all of MultiChoice, a CANAL+ company, at the launch of the new DStv and GOtv packages held in Lagos.

PHOTO: AYODELE ADENIRAN



Vice President, Women In Energy Network, Dr Ifeoma Ukabiala (left); President, Lagos Country Club, Mr. Seyi Adewunmi; former Minister of Power/ Chairman, Geometric Power Limited, Prof. Barth Nnaji; Group Managing Director of Geometric Power Group, Mrs. Agatha Nnaji, and Managing Director, Alfcom Energy, Mr. Sola Scott, during the Lagos Country Club Business Forum 3.0 held in Ikeja, Lagos.

Metronotes

The Criterion Marks Four Decades Of Grace, Sisterhood, Service To Humanity

By **Shakirah Adunola**

FOR four decades, the call to righteousness and communal harmony has found a steadfast anchor in *The Criterion* (Association of Muslim Women in Business and the Professions).

The celebrations kicked off on October 24, 2026, with a special virtual interview and podcast series featuring founding members, trustees, and past leadership.

Former Lagos Ameerah and current International Naibatul Ameerah, Dr. Dhikrat Oshodi, was a special guest alongside District Ameerah, Hajia Khadeejah AbdulSalam. It will end on Sunday.

A centralised Jummat thanksgiving service followed across key designated centres, including the Alausa Central Mosque in Ikeja, the Ikorodu Companion Mosque, and the Lafiaji Mosque in Lekki, the site of an ongoing pet project by the group.

Founded in 1986 on the enduring Quranic mandate to *cooperate in righteousness and piety,* (Qur'an 5:2), the faith-based organisation has announced its landmark 40th anniversary celebration, '*The Criterion @40*' themed '*40 Years of Sisterhood, Faith & Impactful Service.*'

Lack Of Accountability Undermining Confidence In Real Estate – Itepu

By **Kehinde Olatunji**

THE Chief Executive Officer/Co-founder of Abode, Jeffrey Itepu, has identified lack of trust as a major challenge confronting Nigeria's real estate sector, calling on operators to strengthen transparency and accountability to attract investments and broaden participation in the industry. Itepu said the failure of some property developers to fulfill their obligations to subscribers had eroded public confidence in the sector, making prospective investors hesitant to commit funds to property transactions.

Speaking at the 2026 Africa Wealth Festival organised by Abode in Lagos, he said the company was leveraging technology to promote transparency in property transactions and give customers greater control over their investments.

He explained that Abode's digital platform enables customers to monitor payments, track outstanding obligations, access documents and receive payment receipts without relying on physical files or repeatedly contacting company representatives.

Culture Can Be Nigeria's Major Economic Asset – Ayoade

By **Gbenga Akinfenwa**

NIGERIA'S rich culture can become a major economic asset if properly harnessed and packaged by the Federal Government and other industry players for investment.

An investment banker and Chief Executive Officer of MBC Securities Ltd., Prince Olutoyin Ayoade, who disclosed this at the weekend, at the sidelines of the *Odun Omo Olowu* festival, in Abeokuta, Ogun State, said cultural festivals across Nigeria generate huge, verifiable cash flows that can be transformed into bankable products and listed on the Nigerian Exchange.

Ayoade, who is also the Standard Bearer of Akinoso Ruling House in Owu Kingdom, said festivals like *Odun Omo Olowu* were no longer just cultural celebrations but global economic events.

KOVI 2027 To Deepen Public Engagement, Dissect Lagos' Promise

By **Sunday Aikulola**

AN independent support and public enlightenment movement aimed at bringing Dr. Kadri Obafemi Hamzat's vision for Lagos has been launched. It is also to promote awareness and understanding of Ìlérí Èkó – (The Lagos Promise).

Built on four defining pillars: Knowledge, Opportunity, Vision and Inclusion — KOVI 2027, it seeks to bring the manifesto closer to Lagosians by translating its proposals into clear, accessible information and encouraging meaningful conversations.

The Coordinator, KOVI 2027, Dapo Saheed, disclosed that "the movement believes political participation should go beyond campaign slogans."

Saheed said residents deserve opportunities to understand the policies, priorities and commitments of those seeking to lead them, particularly on issues affecting their daily lives. "Through community engagement, media programmes and digital communication, the movement would promote public understanding of the manifesto's proposals on education, healthcare, infrastructure, transportation, employment, security and economic opportunities."

Bountip Advances Digital Transformation In Nigeria's Food Service Industry

By **Opeyemi Babalola**

A SOFTWARE company focused on food business operations, Bountip, has convened chefs and food service professionals in Lagos for its Chef's Roundtable, an industry engagement examining how technology can address inventory management, food waste, rising operational costs and efficiency challenges in Nigeria's restaurant industry.

The event featured product demonstrations, industry discussions and networking, providing participants with an opportunity to share experiences and explore how digital solutions can improve cost management and business performance.

Discussions highlighted recurring challenges confronting restaurant operators, including tracking ingredients between storage facilities and kitchens, monitoring food waste, calculating production costs and integrating restaurant management software with existing accounting systems.

President of the Restaurant, Cafés, Bars and Clubs Association and Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of Viande D Enterprise, Dr. Morenike George-Taylor, emphasised the importance of flexibility in adopting business software, saying food businesses have different operational structures and requirements.

Lagos Country Club To Host Uzodimma At Maiden Policy Dialogue

By **Oguejiofor Emmanuel**

THE Lagos Country Club will on Friday, November 13, 2026, host the maiden edition of its Policy Dialogue with Government Leaders designed to serve as a high-level platform for strategic engagements between business leaders, policy experts, and public office holders.

A statement signed by its Secretary General, Mrs. Damilola Ikpe, said the maiden session would focus on economic decentralisation and community-driven development under the theme: "The Future is Local: Stimulating Grassroots Economies for Inclusive Growth."

Imo State Governor, Senator Hope Uzodimma, will deliver the keynote address as the Special Guest Speaker.

The governor is expected to share insights on sub-national economic development, enterprise creation, and strategies for expanding local economic capacity to drive sustainable national growth. the President of Lagos Country Club, Mr. Seyi Adewunmi, stated that the dialogue series aims to foster actionable public-private sector conversations that directly address Nigeria's pressing socio-economic opportunities.

By **Kayode Akinmade**

2027: Why Trump's Midterm Defeat Cannot Predict Tinubu's 2027 Fortunes

THE sweeping defeat suffered by President Donald Trump's Republican Party in the November 3 American midterm elections has predictably provided fresh ammunition for Nigeria's opposition politicians, who are already attempting to draw parallels between the political fortunes of the American president and those of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu ahead of Nigeria's 2027 general election. While the comparison may offer an attractive political talking point, it is, at best, superficial and, at worst, a deliberate attempt to transplant the political circumstances of one country into another.

There is no doubt that the Republican defeat represents a significant setback for Trump. Democrats secured control of both chambers of Congress, delivering a powerful electoral rebuke to the Republican administration and signalling widespread dissatisfaction with some of its policies. The result has opened a new chapter in American politics and raised questions about the direction of Trump's presidency.

However, the critical question is whether the circumstances that produced this outcome in the United States are sufficiently comparable to Nigeria's political and economic realities to justify the conclusion that Tinubu is destined for a similar electoral fate in 2027.

The answer is no.

America is not Nigeria. Trump is not Tinubu. And the political dynamics of the United States cannot be mechanically imported into Nigeria's electoral calculations.

Indeed, one of the most important factors behind the Republican Party's defeat was the controversial war involving the United States and Iran, a foreign policy decision that has generated enormous economic, diplomatic and security consequences for the Trump administration.

The conflict, which has lasted several months, has heightened concerns about American military involvement abroad, increased pressure on energy markets and contributed to rising fuel prices. For American households already grappling with the cost of living, the war became another source of economic anxiety. Its financial implications, military casualties and uncertain strategic objectives also generated questions about the wisdom of the administration's foreign policy choices.

Significantly, the political consequences were acknowledged by the highest levels of the American government. Trump admitted that the Iran conflict contributed to his party's electoral difficulties, although he maintained that the military action was necessary. His Vice President, JD Vance, was considerably more direct, declaring that "the reason we lost is the war."

That admission is particularly instructive. It establishes that the Republican defeat was not simply an abstract expression of public dissatisfaction with a sitting president. It was substantially connected to identifiable policy decisions and their consequences for American voters.

The question, therefore, is why Nigeria's opposition should expect the political consequences of Trump's decision to engage Iran to automatically translate into an electoral liability for Tinubu.

Nigeria did not initiate the conflict. Tinubu did not authorise American military operations against Iran. He does not determine American foreign policy, the direction of Trump's trade tariffs or the domestic political calculations of the Republican Party. To suggest that the electoral consequences of these decisions constitute a direct verdict on Nigeria's President is to stretch political analogy beyond its reasonable limits.

Of course, the opposition is entitled to draw lessons from developments elsewhere. Political parties routinely study elections in other countries, particularly when they reveal the relationship between public expectations, government performance and electoral accountability. But learning from another country's political experience is fundamentally different from assuming that its electoral outcome must be replicated elsewhere.

There is an even more important distinction that deserves attention: the American midterm elections are not presidential elections.

The midterms are held halfway through the president's four-year tenure and determine the composition of Congress. They frequently become a referendum on the sitting president and his party, as voters use the opportunity to express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the administration. Historically, the party controlling the White House has often faced considerable losses during midterm elections.

Nigeria's 2027 general election, by contrast, will be a presidential contest in which voters will choose the individual and political party they believe are best equipped to govern the country for another four years. The candidates will have to present their records, programmes, leadership credentials and policy alternatives before the Nigerian electorate.

The difference is fundamental. A congressional election in the United States, influenced by a controversial foreign war, cannot automatically become a reliable predictor of a presidential election in Nigeria.

But beyond the political comparison, there is a more substantive issue that Nigeria's opposition must confront: the country's economic circumstances and the choices available to any government seeking to address them.

Nigeria's economic difficulties did not begin on May 29, 2023. The country entered the Tinubu administration with longstanding structural weaknesses, including an expensive petrol subsidy regime, multiple exchange-rate arrangements, weak revenue mobilisation, infrastructure deficits, excessive dependence on imports and a productive sector constrained by years of economic distortions.

These challenges accumulated over successive administrations and progressively reduced the government's fiscal room for manoeuvre.

The new administration decided to confront some of these problems through the removal of petrol subsidy, foreign exchange reforms, fiscal restructuring and efforts to improve domestic revenue generation. These were not politically convenient decisions. Neither were they painless.

Millions of Nigerians have experienced considerable hardship since the introduction of the reforms. The rising cost of food, transportation, electricity and other essential services has placed enormous pressure on households and businesses. No credible assessment of the Tinubu administration can ignore this reality, and no amount of economic statistics should be deployed to dismiss the daily struggles of ordinary citizens.

However, the existence of hardship does not eliminate the need to examine the structural problems that necessitated reform in the first place.

What would have happened if the government had continued to finance an increasingly expensive subsidy regime without addressing the distortions it created? What would have been the consequences of maintaining multiple exchange rates and the associated opportunities for arbitrage? Could Nigeria have continued accumulating fiscal liabilities while expecting its economy to become more competitive and attractive to investors? These are legitimate questions that the opposition must answer if it wishes to present a credible alternative.

The more important issue is not simply whether the reforms have imposed hardship. It is whether they are correcting the structural weaknesses of the economy, whether implementation is sufficiently effective and whether the government is doing enough to ensure that the benefits eventually reach ordinary Nigerians.

There are already indicators suggesting that the Nigerian economy is experiencing some improvement in its macroeconomic fundamentals. The Federal Ministry of Finance's macroeconomic dashboard reported real GDP growth of 4.43 per cent in the second quarter of 2026, compared with 4.23 per cent in the corresponding period of 2025. Headline inflation declined to 15.39 per cent in August 2026 from 23.14 per cent a year earlier. External reserves also rose to approximately $54.7 billion as of September 18, 2026. Federation Account revenue increased from approximately N15.2 trillion in 2024 to N21.9 trillion in 2025, representing an increase of about 44 per cent.

These figures provide evidence of improved revenue mobilisation and strengthening external buffers. They are significant developments in an economy that previously struggled with severe revenue constraints and foreign exchange pressures.

Nevertheless, these improvements must be understood within their proper context. A decline in inflation does not mean that prices have returned to previous levels. It means that the rate at which prices are increasing has slowed. Similarly, stronger foreign reserves and increased government revenues do not automatically translate into improved purchasing power for households.

The real challenge for the Tinubu administration is to convert these macroeconomic gains into tangible improvements in the lives of Nigerians. This requires more affordable food, improved electricity supply, lower production costs, better security, employment opportunities and stronger social protection for vulnerable citizens.

It is here that the government must concentrate its attention as the 2027 elections approach.

The administration's performance must also be assessed beyond the immediate cost-of-living debate. Its infrastructure programme, investments in transportation, efforts to strengthen food production, reforms in the education sector and initiatives to improve the business environment are all relevant components of national development.

Projects such as the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway and the Sokoto-Badagry Superhighway reflect the administration's ambition to expand strategic transport infrastructure and improve national connectivity. Their ultimate value, however, must be measured by delivery, quality, economic impact and the benefits they provide to communities and businesses.

Governance is multidimensional. A country's economic performance cannot be reduced to the price of a bag of rice, just as the success of an administration cannot be established merely by announcing infrastructure projects.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng



Tinubu

2027: How Sanwo-Olu's Record Can Bolster Hamzat's Chances Of Victory

From transforming rail transportation and road infrastructure to improving healthcare, education, jobs creation and economic development in Lagos State, Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's record in office could provide his Deputy, Obafemi Hamzat, who is the governorship flag bearer of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the forthcoming 2027 elections, a formidable campaign edge against his ***ONYEDIKA AGBEDO*** *opponents, writes.*

THE most politically consequential moment of Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's crowded last week of October did not come during his engagement with investors, his economic presentation in Abuja or his address to some of Nigeria's leading bankers. It came on Friday, October 30, when he endorsed his deputy, Dr. Kadri Obafemi Hamzat, as his preferred successor in the 2027 governorship election.

At the unveiling of Hamzat's manifesto at the Wole Soyinka Centre for Culture and Creative Arts, Iganmu, Sanwo-Olu revisited their political relationship, particularly Hamzat's decision to step aside during the contest for the Lagos State All Progressives Congress (APC) governorship ticket in September 2018.

The governor recalled how their relationship had evolved into a working partnership, repeatedly insisting that Hamzat was "in the room" when critical decisions were taken, including those concerning the COVID-19 response and infrastructure development.

Beyond personal loyalty, the argument was about experience, institutional knowledge and continuity. Sanwo-Olu was presenting his deputy as someone who understood the workings of government and had participated in shaping its policies.

For Hamzat, however, the more substantial opportunity lies in presenting the Sanwo-Olu administration's record to Lagos voters as evidence of what another four years under the APC could offer.

That record provides campaign talking points in transportation, road infrastructure, healthcare, education, enterprise development and the digital economy. But it also comes with unfinished projects and persistent social challenges that the candidate must address.

Since assuming office in 2019, Sanwo-Olu and Hamzat have presided over substantial investment in Lagos infrastructure. The completion and commencement of operations on the Blue and Red rail lines are among their most visible achievements.

The Blue Line began commercial operations in September 2023, while the Red Line was commissioned in February 2024. Both projects offer alternatives to road transportation in a city where congestion continues to affect productivity and residents' quality of life.

Government figures put passenger patronage on the two rail lines at nearly 11 million, while the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system is credited with more than 700 million passenger journeys.

The Lekki Deep Sea Port, although conceived and developed before the present administration, also became operational during its tenure, strengthening Lagos' position as a major commercial and maritime centre.

The administration has also recorded interventions in road infrastructure. Government figures indicate that 362 roads, covering approximately 347 kilometres, have been completed since 2019.

These projects provide Hamzat with evidence of physical development to present during the campaign. However, their political value will depend on how residents experience them, particularly in terms of affordable transportation, reduced commuting time and improved access to neighbourhoods.

Healthcare is another area where the administration can point to measurable interventions. Its Ilera Eko health insurance scheme has expanded towards a membership target of two million, while investments in medical facilities have continued. The ongoing construction of Massey Children's Hospital, with a proposed 150-bed capacity; Ojo General Hospital, with 280 beds and Somolu General Hospital, with 150 beds, is expected to expand access to medical services.

The Lagos Private Health Plans, launched during the week, also seeks to widen health insurance coverage, with mandatory enforcement scheduled for January 1, 2027.

For Hamzat, these initiatives provide an opportunity to demonstrate how he intends to improve healthcare access, complete ongoing projects and make medical services more affordable.

Education and employment are equally important components of the administration's record. Through EKOEXCEL, the state has pursued technology-driven improvements in public primary education, covering more than 1,000 schools. Government figures also indicate that about 33,000 teachers have benefited from capacity-building initiatives.

The establishment of Lagos State University of Science and Technology and Lagos State University of Education in 2022 further expanded the state's tertiary education landscape.

On employment and enterprise development, the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund and related interventions have provided financial and technical support to businesses. Government figures indicate that more than N15 billion has been disbursed to over 21,000 businesses.

The administration also cites the training of more than 116,000 people, including about 30,000 young people in digital and technology-related skills, while approximately 15,000 beneficiaries have been placed in employment. It also attributes more than 300,000 jobs to its broader employment and enterprise initiatives.

These interventions, alongside the establishment of 91 digital hubs, could help Hamzat frame his campaign around entrepreneurship, youth employment and Lagos' ambition to become a technology and innovation hub.

Nevertheless, he must explain how these opportunities can be expanded to address the employment needs of a growing population, particularly amid rising living costs and pressure on small businesses.



Hamazat

However, the distinction between completed achievements and campaign promises will be important. Hamzat must demonstrate that his proposals are practical, properly funded and capable of delivering measurable results.

The Significance Of A Crowded Week

It was against this background of achievements and continuing challenges that Sanwo-Olu's activities during the last week of October acquired a political undertone.

On Monday, October 26, the governor participated in the 32nd Nigerian Economic Summit in Abuja, where he spoke on regional trade corridors, infrastructure and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

His intervention reflected Lagos' position as a commercial gateway whose economic fortunes are closely connected to international trade, national economic policy and regional infrastructure.

Tuesday brought him back to the social responsibilities of the government. At the 26th National Women's Conference of the Committee of Wives of Lagos State Officials (COWLSO), Sanwo-Olu acknowledged women's contributions to leadership, entrepreneurship and community development.

The occasion also produced a widely discussed personal moment when he presented his wife, Dr. Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu, with a bouquet of flowers and kissed her publicly.

Beyond the gesture, the conference was significant because the 2026 edition was the last to be held under the present administration. At its conclusion on Wednesday, the governor urged COWLSO to ensure that its contributions survived beyond his tenure.

During the conference, Mrs. Francisca Olaitan Lawal, a retired teacher after 33 years of service, won a three-bedroom apartment, while Mary Odofin of the Lagos State Ferry Services emerged winner of an SUV.

Tuesday also featured the launch of the Lagos Private Health Plans, another initiative whose implementation will extend into the next administration.

On Wednesday, Sanwo-Olu turned to business confidence and investment. At the Nigerian-British Chamber of Commerce executive business breakfast, he outlined his administration's vision for a more competitive Lagos economy, highlighting transportation, digital public services and infrastructure.

His subsequent meetings with the French Development Agency and CMA CGM addressed waterways transportation, electric ferries, maritime investment and the Lekki Deep Sea Port.

These discussions concerned partnerships and investments requiring long-term planning and institutional continuity. For Hamzat, they offer an opportunity to present himself as a candidate familiar with the state's investment priorities. But familiarity with ongoing projects also means accepting responsibility for their completion.

Thursday brought fewer major publicly reported activities, leaving Friday's political engagement as the week's defining moment.

The Succession Argument

At Hamzat's manifesto presentation, Sanwo-Olu recalled the succession of administrations from Bola Tinubu through Babatunde Fashola and Akinwunmi Ambode to his own, likening the process to a relay race in which each administration receives responsibility from its predecessor and passes it to the next.

The analogy was an argument for continuity, with Hamzat presented as the person best positioned to sustain Lagos' development because of his participation in the present administration.

His manifesto, titled 'The Lagos Promise (Ileri Eko),' contains 100 commitments across seven policy pillars: People, Renewal, Opportunity, Machinery, Inclusion, Security and Resilience, and Everyday Dignity.

Among its proposals are increasing the number of buses from 1,000 to 4,000; expanding Ilera Eko towards covering one in every three Lagos residents; establishing 100 primary healthcare centres and improving maternal and child healthcare.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Bamidele's Transformative Strides Across Ekiti Central On The Slab

By **Mohammed Akingbolu**

FROM the construction of roads and modern markets to the provision of healthcare facilities, educational infrastructure, agricultural equipment and thousands of solar-powered streetlights, the Senate Leader, Senator Michael Opeyemi Bamidele, is leaving development footprints across Ekiti Central Senatorial District.

The district, comprising Ado, Efon, Irepodun/Ifelodun, Ijero and Ekiti West local councils, has witnessed massive people-oriented projects and programmes through Bamidele who has pursued a broad constituency development agenda covering education, healthcare, agriculture, road infrastructure, sports, commerce and community empowerment.

His activities also extend beyond the constituency. As Senate Leader, he has become an influential figure in the management of the 10th National Assembly, where his ability to build bridges across political divides and manage disagreements has earned him the reputation of a stabilising force.

The most significant of Bamidele's interventions in the education sector is the Federal University of Technology and Environmental Sciences, Iyin-Ekiti. For Bamidele, an indigene of the community, the institution represents more than another federal university; it is an opportunity to bring higher education, research, employment and economic activities closer to his people.

Bamidele sponsored the bill for the establishment of the university, which was passed by the Senate in October 2023 before President Bola Tinubu assented to it on February 20, 2025.

The institution's establishment marked a major milestone for Iyin-Ekiti and the state, creating new opportunities for young people seeking university education and opening up prospects for investment and development around the host community.

His involvement did not end with the passage of the bill. In March 2026, he pledged N1 billion to support research development at the university, to be released in annual instalments of N200 million over five years.

He also donated more than N31 million and food items to support pioneer students during the university's first matriculation ceremony for the 2025/2026 academic session. Each of the 1,564 matriculating students was given N20,000.

The senator has further outlined plans for additional academic facilities and a medical complex incorporating an intensive care unit, diagnostic centre, eye-care centre, dental-care centre and kidney and dialysis facilities.

If implemented as planned, these investments could strengthen the university's academic and research capacity as well as create opportunities for specialised training and healthcare development.

Beyond the federal university, education has featured prominently in Bamidele's constituency development agenda. One of his notable interventions is the renovation of Government Science College, Iyin-Ekiti.

The project covered the boys' hostel, administrative and classroom blocks, girls' hostel, dining hall and kitchen. A bus was also donated to the school to improve transportation and support its operations.

At Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Bamidele's imprints are visible. His interventions included construction of internal roads and first-class hostels for medical student. Other facilities at the university were the second phase of male and female hostels, a modern stadium and an FM radio station project.

Healthcare, another critical aspect of human development, has also received attention. Projects associated with Bamidele's constituency interventions include intensive care and amenity centres in communities such as Aramoko-Ekiti and Iyin-Ekiti.

He has also participated in medical outreach programmes designed to bring healthcare services closer to residents. In April 2026, a free medical outreach was organised in collaboration with Governor Biodun Oyebanji and other lawmakers.

The exercise offered free medical consultations, diagnostic services, medicines and eyeglasses, while patients requiring further attention were referred to the Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital.

For residents who may not have the financial means to access regular medical services, such intervention provided an opportunity to receive free consultations and treatment without the burden of immediate medical expenses.

In a state where agriculture remains a major source of livelihood, Bamidele has also extended his interventions to farmers in Ekiti Central Senatorial district. His agricultural interventions have included the distribution of farm equipment, agricultural inputs and other items intended to improve productivity and reduce the difficulties faced by farmers.

As part of his 2024 empowerment programme, the senator supported farmers with 10 diesel-powered tractors, power tillers, corn seeders, cassava-grinding machines and organic liquid fertiliser.

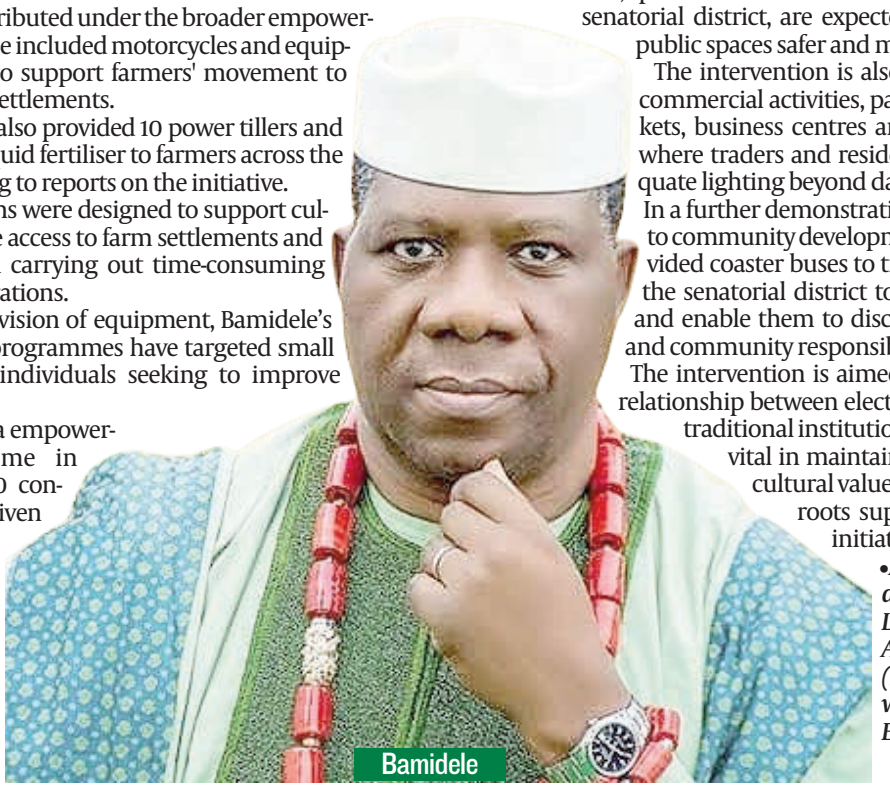
Other items distributed under the broader empowerment programme included motorcycles and equipment intended to support farmers' movement to their farms and settlements.

In May 2025, he also provided 10 power tillers and 100 cartons of liquid fertiliser to farmers across the district, according to reports on the initiative.

The interventions were designed to support cultivation, improve access to farm settlements and assist farmers in carrying out time-consuming agricultural operations.

Beyond the provision of equipment, Bamidele's empowerment programmes have targeted small businesses and individuals seeking to improve their livelihoods.

During the Mega empowerment programme in 2024, over 5,000 constituents were given lifeline with 1,900 beneficiaries receiving grants of N100,000 each. Others received sewing machines, chest freezers, motorcycles, tricycles and minibuses to support their businesses and economic activities.



Bamidele

Road infrastructure is another major component of Bamidele's constituency development efforts. His interventions have included construction of over 80 kilometres of township roads in Ijero, Iyin and Efon, as well as the Iyin-Ilawe road, to improve connectivity, ease transportation and boost economic activities across the communities.

Sports infrastructure has also featured prominently in Bamidele's development agenda. The Senate Leader has facilitated construction of 11 mini stadia in communities across Ekiti Central district, with the projects intended to promote youth development, sporting activities and community engagement.

The facilities span communities in the five local councils, including Aramoko, Okemesi, Ijero, Efon and other locations. He also facilitated the construction of a modern stadium at Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, to promote sports development and provide students with facilities for sporting activities.

In the area of commerce, Bamidele facilitated the construction of the Oja Oba Ultra-Modern Market in Igede-Ekiti, alongside the modern market in Aramoko and market projects in Iyin-Ekiti. The facilities are designed to provide traders with better business environments, boost commercial activities and strengthen the local economy.

Bamidele has also installed more than 6,000 solar-powered streetlights across communities in Ekiti Central as part of efforts to improve public lighting and enhance security. The installations, spread across towns and neighbourhoods in the senatorial district, are expected to make roads and public spaces safer and more accessible at night.

The intervention is also aimed at supporting commercial activities, particularly around markets, business centres and other public places where traders and residents often require adequate lighting beyond daylight hours.

In a further demonstration of his commitment to community development, Bamidele has provided coaster buses to traditional rulers across the senatorial district to ease their movement and enable them to discharge their traditional and community responsibilities more effectively.

The intervention is aimed at strengthening the relationship between elected representatives and traditional institutions, whose roles remain vital in maintaining peace, promoting cultural values and mobilising grassroots support for development initiatives.

•Akingbolu, the immediate past President of the Law Students' Association of Nigeria (LAWSAN), UniAbuja) wrote from Aramoko-Ekiti.

Elites, Masses As Nigeria's Only 'Two Tribes'

By **Banji Alabi**

LET us stop deceiving ourselves in real economic term and in real social status. Nigeria does not have 250 tribes; Nigeria does not have three major tribes. Nigeria has only two tribes and two major tribes. What truly obtains, in reality, is that the country parades only two tribes who are present across the two geographical divides, North and South, visible and identifiable all over the country. In truth and in reality, it is difficult if not impossible to distinguish a Yoruba man from an Igbo man; a Tiv man or woman from an Effik man/woman or Hausa man from a man from Ogbomoso.

Members of the masses tribe are identifiable and united by common factors of poverty, lack or poor economic opportunities, poor health and educational opportunities, uncontrolled procreation and large families, lack of access to political power, poor transportation, lack or poor access to credit, servitude lifestyle etc. Whether in the South or in the North, like birds of the same feather, they flock together in shanties or homes without modern facilities. A poor man in the South is the same as a poor man in the North; poverty does not distinguish between religion and geographical location. Your tribe is not determined by whether you are Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa; your tribe is not determined by whether you are Christian or Muslim; your tribe is determined by your bank account, your access to power and where your children school.

Conversely, the elites are defined and bound by common indices that are exact opposite of the masses' tribe. Closely related to the above is the reality that in Nigeria today, there are only two social classes (statuses): the higher socio-economic class and the lower socio-economic class. The middle class has been completely wiped off. Those who are supposed to belong to the middle class have been submerged and subsumed in the lower class and this remains one of the major causes of conflicts in the country; that is frictions emanating from the coexistence of two strange bedfellows.



Banji Alabi

Once you have money and power, you automatically defect to the tribe of elite. Once you are broke and powerless, you remain in the tribe of the masses. And what is the grand deception? The greatest weapon of the elite tribe is not corruption, it is division, often called divide and rule.

When an elite wants to be governor or aspire to power, he does not campaign as an elite. He comes to you as an "Igbo man" or "Yoruba man" or "Hausa man." He shouts "our religion, ethnic group is under threat!" He tells you "they hate us!" He weaponises your poverty, your illiteracy and your sentiments and you, a youth with no job, no hope and no future, will carry a machete, insult another tribe on Facebook, fight your childhood friend, and even die for him. But watch what happens after the election.

For example, the Igbo elite who told you "Yoruba is your enemy" will immediately fly to Lagos and hug his Yoruba elite brother. They will share contracts together in Abuja. Their children will marry each other in London. And you remain in your village, still fighting the war they have already ended in the boardroom.

Now, this is the message: my clarion call to all as we approach another election season is do not put yourself in harm's way. Do not snatch ballot boxes. Do not die for Atiku. Do not die for Peter Obi. Do not die for Tinubu. Don't die for any contestant. Campaign for your candidates if you so wish. Vote for your chosen candidates, that is your democratic right. But don't fight your neighbour because of a politician. After their victories they will abandon you in the hand of your same neighbours! Don't burn down your community and the only available socio-welfare facilities. They are hard to replace and the politicians you did this to elect may not remember the community for a long time to come until probably when they are seeking re-election.

Do not burn the edifice called Nigeria. This is our only country. Nigeria is a beautiful place. Hear the bitter truth they will not tell you: the children of Atiku, Peter Obi and Tinubu are best of friends. They sometimes eat together, party together and holiday together. They enjoy all our commonwealth while you are on the street planning to kill your neighbours, friends or brothers for their sake.

When you are sick at 2a.m., is it the President that will carry you to the hospital? No! It is that same neighbour you want to fight today because of politics.

•Alabi is a legal practitioner and public affairs analyst.



APC

DANMODI LIKEMINDS WARMLY WELCOMES

HIS EXCELLENCY

BOLA AHMED TINUBU GCFR

PRESIDENT, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

FOR A STATE VISIT

Tuesday 10th November, 2026 | **Jigawa State**



HIS EXCELLENCY
BOLA AHMED TINUBU GCFR
PRESIDENT, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VISIT HIGHLIGHTS:

- COMMISSIONING OF KEY DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS
- STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION FOR GREATER DEVELOPMENT
- BOOSTING SUPPORT FOR THE 2027 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

HIS EXCELLENCY
MALLAM UMAR A. NAMADI FCA
EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR, JIGAWA STATE

AUTHORIZED BY:
MUHAMMAD SALIHU ATAFI (COMMANDER)

COMMITTEE PANEL:

ENGR. IBRAHIM G. AHMED | HAYATU SULEMAN | ENGR. A.D. DUTSE | ENGR. ABBA ABDULKADIR | ENGR. NAJIB IBRAHIM GWIWA

Editorial

www.guardian.ng Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

How Lagos Can Achieve Goal Of Road Safety Education In Schools

ACROSS the world, inculcating safety culture in children early in life remains one of the cost-effective and high-impact strategies for preventing the young citizens from accidents that could lead to loss of life or permanent disability. It is in the light of this that some recent initiatives of the Lagos State government meant to boost public safety, including the reinvigorated Operation Catch Them Young, are commendable. But for the goal to be achieved, the government has some responsibilities to perform, including strict and unbiased enforcement of the traffic laws.

The initiative at the behest of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA), and the interactive storytelling programmes in schools all point to a shifting focus toward grassroots education on safety to prevent accidents rather than by pure law enforcement.

By partnering with the children's educational brand, Lumi, to promote road safety awareness among schoolchildren through storytelling, the state government is not only raising a new generation of responsible road users, it is also boosting the percolation of safety education among young Nigerians.

At the St. Saviour's School, Ikoyi, where the latest initiative was rolled out, pupils, educators and transport officials were brought together in an engaging programme to teach the children safe road practices, what they need to know about public transportation and responsible travel behaviour from early age.

It was exciting how Lagos State Tourism Ambassador/Founder of the Lumi Initiative, Pelumi Nubi, who is also the first woman to drive solo from London to Lagos, held the pupils spellbound with the story of "Lumi," a brave little purple car whose adventures were used to communicate vital lessons about safety, courage and resilience.

Nubi recalled how her 74-day journey across Europe and Africa was made possible and successful by determination, preparation and a strong commitment to safety as she navigated through countries, including France, Spain, Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, Ghana and Benin before eventually arriving in Lagos.

The unabating casualty figures arising from road accidents every year remain a major source of concern, especially considering the health and economic toll that maiming and avoidable deaths from the crashes foist on society.

In many parts of the world, countries embed robust road safety in the school curriculum, a development that has proven to dramatically lower traffic accidents among youths. Rather than relying solely on textbook rules, these countries, including the Netherlands, Japan, South Korea, Lithuania, Poland and Hungary, utilise mandatory curricula, simulation parks, and immersive community practices. These should be made to happen in Nigeria where reckless driving is rampant.

Promoting safety culture in children is critical not because it builds from the scratch, but because children process the environment and risks differently than adults. In other words, they have a narrower field of vision to judge the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles. Most times, they are easily distracted or are prone to impulsive movements. But when children are abreast of traffic rules, they are often quick to check and correct errant adults who throw caution to the wind. This can be gleaned from the way they regularly remind their parents to wear seatbelts, put away mobile phones when driving, or stop at zebra crossings, among others.

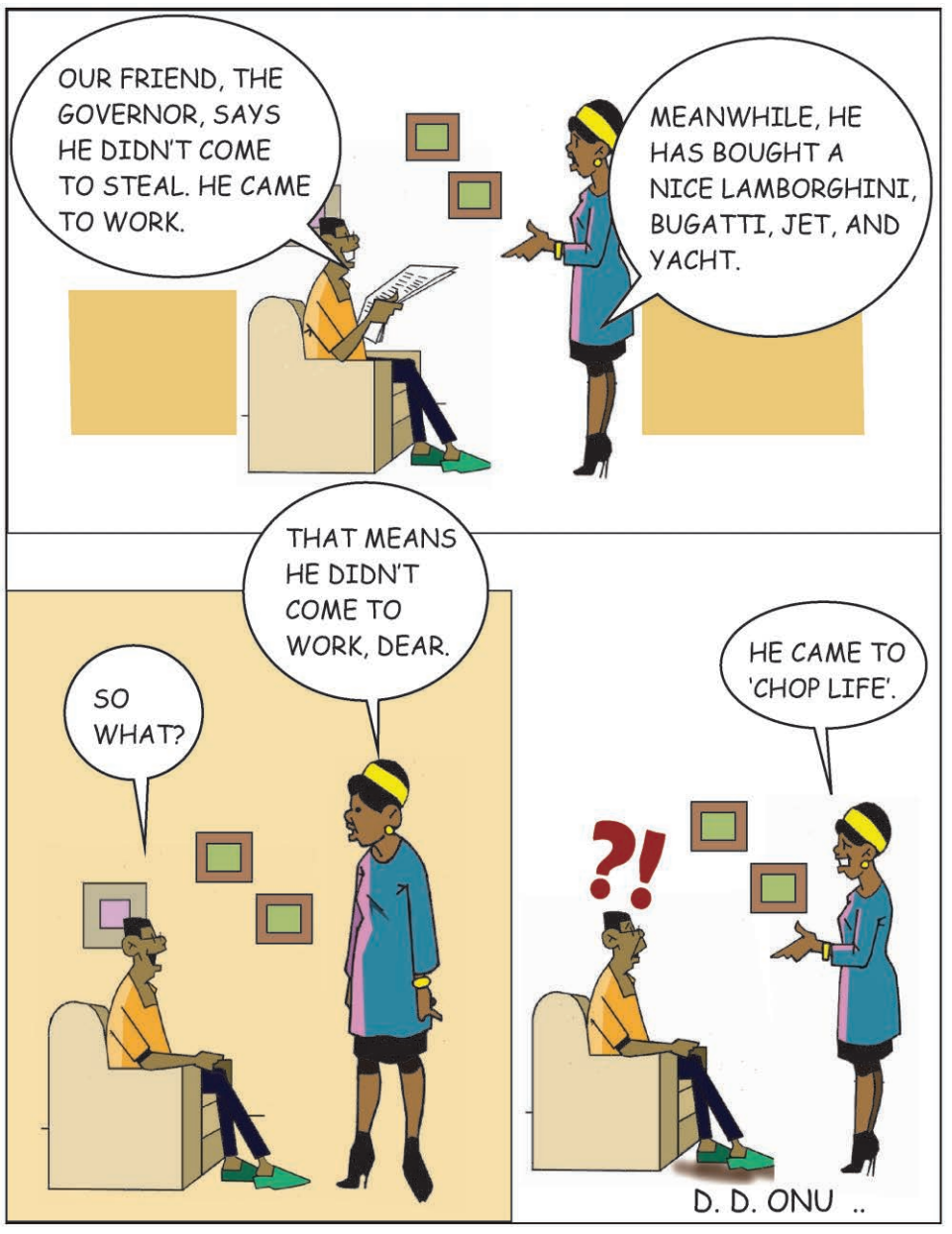
In the task of building safety culture in the children, the state government should note some factors that may undermine smooth assimilation of safety rules and culture by the teenagers. Prominent among such factors is the flagrant violation of traffic laws daily by commercial drivers, motorbike operators, or even parents. This constant breach simply dilutes the educational message. Therefore, school-based safety education must be reinforced by community enforcement.

The government should note that norms learnt early in life become lifelong habits, hence the children should be taught the effective use of pedestrian bridges, how to wait for signal lights, or the wearing of seatbelts in moving vehicles, among others, to accept these practices as standard routine rather than inconvenient restrictions. On the other hand, teaching a child to use a zebra crossing or a footpath will only be effective if such infrastructure exists around the child's school or residence, hence the need for the government to provide them or find another way to expose the children to the facilities to boost practical understanding of the messages.

As canvassed by the Commissioner for Transportation, Oluwaseun Osiyemi, there will be need for more initiatives and partnerships that communicate the important lessons in formats that children can relate to, enjoy and remember. Beyond the lessons, the government must ensure that roads are in good condition because dilapidated roads are a lead-up to accidents. There is a need for stronger collaboration among government agencies, schools and private organisations to ensure that road safety messages are delivered in ways that children can easily comprehend.

The government should also ensure roadworthiness of vehicles, especially commercial vehicles, which it has failed to do seriously thereby inadvertently contributing to road crashes and the attendant loss of precious lives. Commercial drivers are not above the law, contrary to what the government position suggests. Focus has been majorly on private vehicles with a few passengers while commercial buses transporting close to 20 people at a time are left to remain rickety, violate traffic rules and put the lives of passengers at risk.

Lagos State must ensure that road traffic officers are properly trained and their performance and conduct duly monitored to bring back sanity in road traffic management.



LETTER

LASCOPA: Ask Ikeja Electric To End Incessant Power Outage

SIR: For the past three months, residents of Laiyeode and Mopelufa communities in Ikorodu North Local Council Development Area (LCDA) have been languishing in perpetual darkness. Despite the upgrade of electricity supply in the area from B and C to Band B, residents hardly enjoy up to two hours of uninterrupted power supply. Recently, we have endured as long as two consecutive weeks without electricity.

This situation has brought untold hardship to residents of the communities. Many businesses have been forced to shut down, crime rate has increased, and the area is gradually becoming uninhabitable.

We, therefore, appeal to the Lagos State Consumer Protection Agency (LASCOPA) to call Ikeja Electric to order and compel the electricity distribution company to find a lasting solution to the incessant power outages affecting our communities.

Residents deserve reliable and uninterrupted electricity supply, and this prolonged neglect must be urgently addressed.

• *Omitope Ayomide is the CDA Chairman in Laiyeode Unity Estate, Ikorodu. 08067610176*

Opinion

www.guardian.ng Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

Inside The Ka'abah: A Rare Honour And The Message From Makkah

By Tunde Rahman

WHEN President Bola Ahmed Tinubu arrived in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, on Thursday, October 29 for Umrah, the lesser Hajj, it was a private spiritual journey. By Sunday, November 1, it had become a moment of national symbolism.

In a rare gesture reserved only for visiting Heads of State, monarchs and top dignitaries, the Saudi Royal Court ordered the doors of the Holy Ka'abah to be opened for the Nigerian President on Sunday, November 1, 2026. It is a privilege granted only a few times a year.

Accompanied by several state governors, his son Yinka, captains of industry, including BUA Chairman, Abdul Samad Rabiu and Oando CEO Wale Tinubu, and other officials, President Tinubu entered Islam's holiest site, the Ka'abah, offered prayers, and kissed the Black Stone (Hajar al-Aswad).

For those of us who were there, it was an emotional moment. The symbolism was unmistakable. The Kiswah fencing around the Ka'abah was draped in Green-White-Green, the Nigerian national colour.

After arriving late on Thursday, President Tinubu, dressed in white Ihram, performed the Umrah rites early on Friday, October 30, at Masjid al-Haram. He circled the Ka'abah seven times and went further to perform the Safa and Marwa rituals. Afterwards, he prayed for peace, unity, stability, and prosperity for Nigeria.

But his interview after entering the innermost part of the Ka'abah frames the moment in political terms.

In an interview with the Nigerian Television Authority Correspondent Musbau Dan-Wahab, who covered the Umrah, President Tinubu said the pilgrimage had strengthened his commitment to building a prosperous Nigeria. He thanked the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for the honour.

"I want to say a big thank you for the faith, for the recognition. I can't believe the fencing of the Ka'abah is in Green-White-Green, which reminds us of the Nigerian identity," the President said.

"It is an honour that I enjoyed, and it is gracious of them to have allowed me to enter inside the Ka'abah. This is history," he added.

When asked what he prayed for inside the Ka'abah, his answer was telling: "Well, I asked for wisdom and resilience to continue to serve the people. And I know that prayer has been granted."

Alhaji Abdul Samad Rabiu, who entered with the President among others, described it as an "honour beyond measure" and a once-in-a-lifetime blessing. The businessman had performed many Hajj and Umrah, but he had never been allowed inside the Ka'abah. The same was true for virtually everyone in the Nigerian delegation.

Late President Muhammadu Buhari and his delegation enjoyed that honour too, as the Saudi authorities granted them access to enter and pray in the inner chambers of the Ka'abah in February 2016 during an official visit to Saudi Arabia.

For President Tinubu, this is a fulfilled vow. For any Muslim, stepping inside the Ka'abah is a once-in-a-lifetime spiritual fulfilment. Although this just-ended Umrah was not President Tinubu's first, it was his first inside that sacred Ka'abah. He has performed many Umrahs, including one before the 2023 election and another after the poll. During an official visit to Riyadh in November 2023, he made time to go to Makkah for Umrah, then proceeded to Guinea-Bissau.

During his visit to Makkah before the 2023 elections, he prayed for Allah's blessings and grace, promising to return to express his gratitude to God if he won. The 2026 return completes that spiritual circle.

However, beyond the spirituality behind Sunday's entry into the inner chambers of Ka'abah, the Saudi gesture towards President Tinubu bears a few implications. These fall into three categories: a strong diplomatic signal, political resonance, and moral renewal for governance.

On the diplomatic front, the opening of the Ka'abah, outside its traditional ceremonial schedule, is a state honour, not a tourist gesture. It is a clear sign of the high esteem in which Saudi Arabia holds Nigeria. Saudi Arabia's decision to grant the honour to President Tinubu, at a time Nigeria is seeking more investment, increased oil cooperation, and a larger Hajj quota, signals that the bilateral relationship remains strong. President Tinubu described it as a reflection of the two countries' longstanding friendship.

At the political level, the images of President Tinubu in Ihram inside the Ka'abah praying for Nigeria will resonate deeply across Northern Nigeria and among Muslim voters nationwide. Coming just days after his campaign flag-off on October 24 in Kaduna, it reinforces his identity as a leader who respects faith and tradition.

In the forthcoming January 2027 contest where faith and Northern votes will be decisive, this spiritual moment will be politically priceless. The Northern Muslims will see in the race a Muslim honoured at the holiest site in Islam. His expanding Christian base in Southern Kaduna, the Middle Belt, and the South-East will also see a President who prays for all in Makkah. This neutralises the old religious debate where one candidate campaigned solely on ethnic and religious grounds.

There is also the moral renewal of commitment to governance. President Tinubu himself sees it as a recommitment. The President has demonstrated a strong commitment to reforming and improving Nigeria's governance story. From the removal of the fuel subsidy, eliminating many foreign exchange windows, stabilising the naira and modernising the taxes, to improving workers' welfare through a minimum wage increase, credits for civil servants under the Creditcorps scheme, clearing pension backlogs, providing student loans, and ensuring timely graduation for tertiary institution students, the Tinubu administration is keeping the promise and steadily resetting the Nigerian economy.

Now, he says, "My commitment to Nigeria is stronger than ever." And after praying for wisdom and resilience in Ka'abah, he is returning to Nigeria to face the final stretch of reforms and a campaign that promises to be heated. On arrival, he would first visit Akwa Ibom to commission some projects. Then he would head to Port Harcourt, Rivers State, for the campaign on Saturday, November 7. As the 2027 race intensifies, the image of President Tinubu inside the Ka'abah, praying for Nigeria, will be more powerful than any campaign billboard. That image indicates that leadership is not just political. It is spiritual. Indeed, from the Ranchers Bees Stadium in Kaduna, the heartland of Northern Nigeria, to the inner recesses of Ka'abah in Makkah, the cradle of Islam, President Tinubu has, in the last two weeks, framed his re-election message in two powerful arenas- the political and the spiritual. Is there any reason to think that victory in 2027 is not already guaranteed?

• *Rahman, Senior Special Assistant to President Tinubu on Media and Special Duties, is a Fellow of the Nigerian Guild of Editors.*

Ogun Pregnancy Termination Law: Legalising Abortion,Criminalising Conscience?

By Joshua Nwachukwu Esq

BY now, many of us would have heard of the Bill passed by the Ogun State House of Assembly which, under the guise of reducing maternal morbidity and mortality, seeks to legalise abortion in the state.

For those of us who don't know what abortion is, abortion is not just the death of an unborn child, it is intentional killing of an unborn child either through surgical or non-surgical means, for whatever reason.. Little wonder, it is not like any other medical procedure.

Upon learning of the Bill, I began searching for a copy. Unfortunately, as is often the case with proposed legislations in Nigeria, it is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than for one to get a copy of a proposed bill or passed legislation.

However, after considerable searching, I eventually got a copy.

Having read the Bill analytically several times, I became convinced that it requires serious scrutiny, as it raises substantial legal, medical, religious and ethical questions which should prevent Governor Dapo Abiodun from giving his assent.

The Bill's stated objective of reducing maternal mortality is undoubtedly important. But that objective, however laudable, does not automatically justify every provision contained in the proposed legislation.

In this article, I will focus on one particularly troubling aspect of the Bill: conscientious objection.

One may ask, what is conscientious objection? Conscientious objection is the refusal of a health care professional to provide a legal "medical" service or treatment because of personal or religious grounds.

One of such practice which many physicians object to is abortion.

When a doctor opts out of doing a procedure based on personally held moral principles, they are not making a decision for the patient but rather for themselves and this right is recognised under our laws and several international treaties.

In Nigeria, section 38 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, protects freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Article 18 of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), provides that "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion" and "to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

It is against this background that section 11 of the Ogun State Safe Termination of Pregnancy Bill, 2026, which provides for conscientious objection must be examined.

At first glance, section 11(1) appears to recognise this constitutional protection. It provides: "No individual health care provider shall be under any legal duty to participate directly in the provision of abortion services if the provider objects on grounds of conscience." That sounds reassuring. A doctor who believes, on moral or religious grounds, that deliberately terminating an unborn child's life is wrong should not ordinarily be compelled to participate in a procedure that violates that conviction.

This protection is still limited, as it does not protect the rights of non-health workers who may be required to be involved in the termination of a pregnancy in an administrative capacity or non-direct way.

But reading the subsequent provisions, and the apparent protection begins to look considerably less reassuring.

Section 11(2) provides that: "The right to conscientious objection shall not apply where the procedure is necessary to save the life of the woman or prevent serious injury to her health."

Although this sub-section seeks to provide an important distinction between requiring a doctor to participate in an elective abortion and requiring a doctor to provide necessary emergency treatment to a woman whose life is in danger. There is ambiguity as to what it means to "save the life of the woman" and to "prevent serious injury to her health" as these cases may not really be medical emergency. What constitutes "serious injury" to a woman's health? Must the danger be immediate? What clinical threshold must be satisfied? Who determines whether the procedure is necessary, and what happens when medical professionals disagree?

The Bill does not appear to provide sufficient precision on these questions. A provision that limits a constitutionally protected freedom should not leave its boundaries so uncertain that healthcare professionals are unable to determine when their conscientious objection will be respected and when it will expose them to disciplinary consequences.

The next provision is even more troubling.

Section 11(3) states: "A health care provider who objects on grounds of conscience shall, in writing, refer the woman to another provider or facility where such services may be accessed without delay."

In other words, the doctor who conscientiously objects to participating in an abortion must nevertheless facilitate access to the very procedure to which the doctor objects.

A referral obligation is automatically unconstitutional because it conflicts with a practitioner's moral convictions.

But it is subsection (4) that raises perhaps the most significant concern.

It provides: "Conscientious objections cannot be exercised by health institutions and all approved public facilities must ensure availability of qualified personnel to provide lawful abortion services."

Let us pause to consider what this means in practice.

The Bill recognises the conscience of an individual healthcare provider but expressly denies that protection to a healthcare institution. Consequently, a religiously affiliated hospital cannot invoke institutional conscientious objection to decline participation in abortion services.

Consider Sacred Heart Hospital, Lantoro, and tens of other religiously owned or operated healthcare institutions. By this Bill they will be required to carry out abortion. If they don't provide, will the government shut them down?

Approved public facilities, meanwhile, would be required to ensure that qualified personnel are available to provide lawful abortion services. There is also a possibility that having conscientious objection may be a litmus tests for employment in government run facilities.

This is not merely a question of whether an individual doctor should be permitted to say no. It is also a question of whether the State may compel an institution to organise its services in a manner that contradicts its deeply held religious convictions.

Why should the conscience of an individual doctor receive express recognition while the religious identity and ethical commitments of the institution in which that doctor works receive none?

The concerns surrounding section 11 do not end with constitutional freedom of conscience. They also invite scrutiny of the professional obligations governing medical practitioners in Nigeria.

The applicable Rules of Professional Conduct for Medical and Dental Practitioners contain provisions relevant to this discussion.

Rule 9(g) provides that practitioners are at liberty to choose whom they will serve, while requiring them to endeavour to render service without discrimination in emergencies, to the best of their ability and according to the prevailing circumstances.

• *Nwachukwu is a lawyer and writer. He can Can be reached at nwachukwujo@gmail.com*

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

JAMES HOPE COLLEGE



JAMES HOPE COLLEGE

knowledge•Character•Truth

FUTURE LEADERS DO NOT JUST HAPPEN...THEY ARE FORMED

AT JAMES HOPE COLLEGE, LEKKI, LAGOS

NOVEMBER 2025 CAMBRIDGE IGCSE EXAMINATION RESULT	
A*	GRADES: 67%
A*- A	GRADES: 96%
A*- B	GRADES: 99%
A*- C	GRADES: 100%

MAY/JUNE 2026 WAEC EXAMINATION RESULT	
A^1 - B^3	GRADES: 94%
A^1 - C^6	GRADES: 100%



- State of the art classrooms, laboratories, boarding and sporting facilities.
- Exceptional educators who challenge minds, nurture and bring out the best in every learner.
- Proud winners of prestigious international and national awards.
- Beautiful, serene and secure world-class campus where learning thrives.

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FOR YEAR 7 (JSS1) DAY AND BOARDING STUDENTS FOR THE 2027/2028 ACADEMIC SESSION IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE AS FOLLOWS:

LAGOS

Dates: **Saturday, 30th January and 6th February, 2027**

Location: James Hope College, Twin Lakes Estate, Lekki, **Lagos.**

Time: 10AM

ABUJA & PORT HARCOURT

Date: **Saturday, 6th February, 2027**

Locations: 71 Usuma Street, Opp. Transcorp Hilton, Maitama, **Abuja.**

15 Nnamdi Azikiwe Road, Port Harcourt, **Rivers State.**

Time: 10AM



APPLICATION CLOSES: FRIDAY, 22ND JANUARY 2027

Application forms can be downloaded from www.jameshopecollege.edu.ng under the "admission" tab or can be collected from James Hope College, Twin Lakes Estate, Lekki, Lagos.

OPEN DAYS

DATE: SATURDAY 14TH NOVEMBER, 2026 & SATURDAY 9TH JANUARY, 2027

TIME: 9AM TO 12:30PM

DOWNLOAD APPLICATION FORMS

Follow us on all our social media handles:

@jameshopecollege James Hope @JHCLekki

Tel: +2347083662229, +2347018282065, +2347085369376, +2347015349257

Email: admission@jameshope.edu.ng

Web: www.jameshopecollege.edu.ng

Guardian Arts

www.guardian.ng

At Sartcol Colloquium, Mbonu Probes Intersection of Art, Technology

By **Gregory Austin Nwakunor**

ALEXANDRA Bardon, in *The Intersection of Art and Technology in Visual Culture*, noted, "Art and technology have long influenced one another, but never has their intersection been as transformative as it is today. In the digital age, the fusion of technology and art is reshaping visual culture in unprecedented ways — altering how we create, perceive, and experience artistic expression. As technological advancements accelerate, the landscape of visual arts is continually evolving while opening new horizons for creativity and cultural discourse."

The growing influence of artificial intelligence (AI) and technology on visual arts was the subject of discussion at this year's Society for Art Collection (Sartcol colloquium), which held at the Alliance Française, in ikoyi, Lagos, on October 31.

Themed, *Art Collecting and Technology: Innovation Meets Legacy*, the conversation explored issues that were germane to the growth of art in Nigeria, with stakeholders calling for a stronger art market structure in the country.

The intense and engaging session opened new vistas on how innovation could support the growth of the Nigerian art sector while protecting its heritage.

The President and Chairman of Sartcol's Governing Board, Prof. Okey Anueyiagu, said the theme reflected the realities of the modern world, where technology has become an important part of art collection and preservation.

"Last year, we reflected on preservation and best practices in documenting collections. In our time, technology has become inseparable from this responsibility," he said.

Early experiments, in the 60s, artists such as Frieder Nake and Harold Cohen began integrating computers into their creative processes, with Cohen developing the drawing programme "AARON."

By the 90s, the internet enabled artists hadto share their work globally, leading to the emergence of net art and interactive online installations.

Integration of artificial intelligence (21st century) – Artists have incorporated AI into their work, allowing for new forms of collaboration between human creativity and digital creativity through machine learning.

Emergence of NFT art and blockchain technology – The development of non-fungible tokens (NFTs) has transformed the commercialization and authentication of digital art. This creative tech has provided artists with new revenue streams and addressed issues of ownership.

Anueyiagu noted that digital provenance, blockchain authentication, AI-driven cataloguing and virtual exhibitions were expanding the possibilities of art ownership and appreciation while helping to protect shared heritage.

The Director-General of the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC), Obi Asika, who joined the event virtually, commended the organisers and expressed the council's support for the initiative.

He disclosed that Nigeria had an enormous national art collection built over 30 to 40 years, much of which was held by the National Gallery of Art and stored in Abuja.

According to him, the government, through the Ministry of Finance Incorporated (MOFI) and the Minister's Office, has begun a process to establish a national intellectual property (IP) registry. The process also includes the valuation of the country's heritage and national art collections.

Asika said the development, alongside the implementation of the IP framework and the IP monetisation pilot report by KPMG, would help Nigeria build a structured art and intellectual property market.

He explained that valuable intellectual property, including art, music, literature and other creative works, could be valued and used as collateral to support production and the creation of new works.

The keynote speaker and founder of Art Exchange, Robert Mbonu, called for Nigeria to develop a professional art market structure similar to those in major art markets such as the United States, the United Kingdom and China.

He said these countries had established systems and indices for rating artists based on the value of their works, adding that Nigeria needed to adopt similar practices one of which is the AE Index Series, which tracks the value of Nigerian artists, both living and deceased.

Mbonu said that the global art market is almost 70 billion dollars a year, but Nigeria is just a little player in that sector. He raised the need to build and support the infrastructure for financing, insurance and deepening this art market.



Prof. Okey Anueyiagu



Pix: Prof. Okey Anueyiagu

Director of Goethe-Institut Nigeria, Dr. Nadine Siegert (left); Executive Director, Commercial, VFD Group Plc, Niyi Adenubi; founder of Atsur Technology, an art and blockchain company, Ada Orajiaku; Okechukwu Ekweanya, legal practitioner and partner at Kenna and Group Executive and Chief Marketing and Communications Officer at Coronation, Ngozi Akinyele.

In *Tales Of True Religion*, Ayodeji Explores Love, Faith

By **Benjamin Alade**

POET and visual artist, Hameed Ayodeji, has unveiled *Tales Of True Religion*, a collection of 20 poems exploring love, spirituality, romance and the relationship between humanity and God.

The collection, developed over nine years, from 2017 to 2026, reflects Ayodeji's belief that love transcends cultural and personal differences, serving as a universal language that connects people and gives meaning to life.

Combining poetry with illustrations, the work presents love not only as an emotion but also as an enduring conviction and an art form through which people can communicate their deepest thoughts and experiences.

According to Ayodeji, the title, *Tales Of True Religion*, reflects his belief that love is the greatest religion, extending beyond formal religious practices to encompass the shared experiences and connections that define humanity.



For him, love represents beauty, connection and a fundamental aspect of human existence. This philosophy runs through the collection, which draws on both romantic experiences and spiritual reflections.

The project also reflects Ayodeji's interest in communicating ideas through different artistic forms. While poetry provides the words, illustrations offer a visual dimension to the emotions and messages conveyed in the poems.

His preference for abstract communication, he explained, makes poetry a suitable medium for expressing thoughts and feelings that may be difficult to articulate directly. The combination of literary and visual art allows him to explore these ideas through complementary forms of expression.

The journey to publication involved compiling the poems, preparing the collection for digital distribution and working with an illustrator. The production process took more than a year, adding another phase to a creative project that had evolved over nearly a decade.

Ayodeji said his inspiration comes from God, whom he regards as the source of his creativity. However, translating emotions into words and expressing them with the desired clarity and precision presented some of the challenges he encountered during the writing process.

Sterling Bank, Aké Festival Partner To Put Africa At Centre Of AI Debate

By **Florence Utor**

STERLING Bank has renewed its partnership with the Aké Arts and Book Festival, one of Africa's foremost gatherings of writers, artists and thinkers, as the festival returns to Lagos from 19 to 21 November 2026 with a conversation about Africa's place in an increasingly technology-driven world.

Now in its 14th edition, the festival will explore the theme 'Native Intelligence', examining the relationship between the knowledge Africans have developed and passed down for generations and the artificial intelligence systems increasingly influencing how people live, learn, work and communicate.

The theme stems from a simple fact: Africa was thinking long before machines were. The elder, the proverb and the folktale represent systems of knowledge refined over centuries. Today, artificial intelligence is changing how stories are told, how elections are fought and how truth is reported across the globe. Yet questions remain about how adequately African languages, experiences and cultural contexts are represented in the technologies increasingly shaping the world.

For the bank, which has supported the festival since 2018, the partnership represents a continued investment in the people and ideas shaping Africa's cultural and intellectual future



Lola Shoneyin

Over the years, Aké has provided a meeting point for established and emerging writers, artists and thinkers, bringing together more than 1,000 creative voices and creating opportunities for African stories and perspectives to reach wider audiences.

Commenting on this year's convening, Chief Marketing Officer at Sterling Bank, Donatus Okpako, stated, "every society has an intelligence, the instinct and judgement employed to read a situation and solve a problem. Africans have always had it in abundance. As AI reshapes how we work, bank, vote and learn, the real concern is whether Africa's own ways of thinking help shape the technology it relies on. For fourteen years, Aké has placed African ideas at the centre of global conversations. That is a platform worth standing behind."

'Native Intelligence' does not treat African knowledge as a relic to be kept behind glass. It treats it as a living intelligence with a claim on the future. Over three days, novelists, poets, journalists, technologists, filmmakers and scholars will examine who gets to decide what counts as knowledge. They will also ask the question at the heart of the festival: whose intelligence are we building the future on?

Lola Shoneyin, Founder and Director of the Aké Arts and Book Festival, said, "A machine knows only what it has been fed, and it has not been fed much of us. Native Intelligence is about power: who decides what is true, what is worth remembering, and whose voice the future speaks in? Sterling understands our goal to support and celebrate creativity on the African continent and beyond. We are delighted to work with them again."

The festival programme includes book chats, panel discussions, film screenings, conversations and poetry performances and music.

Broadcast Content Across Borders

By Shaibu Husseini

CANEX Weekend Ends Today

CREATIVE Africa Nexus (CANEX) WKND 2026, which opened on Thursday November 5 in Lagos will close on November 8. Hosted by the Federal Government of Nigeria and organised by African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) through its Creative Africa Nexus (CANEX) programme, this year's event which held under the theme "One People, United in Culture, Creating for the World" brought together leading creatives, investors, policymakers, business leaders and cultural figures from across Africa and the diaspora for four days of conversations, deal-making, performances, exhibitions and industry-focused sessions. The 2026 programme spans film and television, music, fashion, sport, literature and publishing, gastronomy and visual arts, with a strong focus on finance, intellectual property, technology, skills, investment and market access. Across the four-day programme, CANEX WKND provided platforms for deal-making, industry dialogue and sector-specific engagement, including the CANEX Deal Room, which aimed at turning creative talent and ideas into stronger businesses, partnerships and commercial opportunities. That ambition reflects the evolution of Afreximbank's commitment to Africa's creative and cultural industries in 2020, subsequently doubling this to US$1 billion before quadrupling the original commitment financing available to US$2 billion. The opening ceremony and other events of CANEX featured addresses by Ministers of Culture and Creative Industries across 11 African countries, Dr George Elombi, President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Afreximbank, H.E. Dr Olajumoke Omoniyi Oduwole, Nigeria's Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, H.E. Wamkele Mene, Secretary-General of the African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat, and H.E. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Governor of Lagos State among other dignitaries. Other very important participants included Nobel Laureate, writer and playwright Professor Wole Soyinka; Emmy Award-winning actor Uzo Aduba; filmmaker; alongside leading figures from Africa's music, film, fashion, sport and creative business sectors. The event also included performances and appearances from musicians and entertainers such as Davido, Fally Ipupa, Flavour, Libianca and Charlotte Dipanda, reflecting CANEX WKND's combination of industry engagement with live cultural programming. But beyond the headline names, the programme placed a strong emphasis on the business of Africa's creative economy. Financing was also central to the programme as the Creative Economy Finance Summit, presented by Afreximbank in partnership with the Creative Economy Practice at Co-Creation Hub, brought financial institutions and investors together to examine how creative-economy transactions can be structured, financed and de-risked. CANEX WKND 2026 also featured a major concert bringing together artists from across Africa and the diaspora. The weekend closed on November 8 with cultural excursions, gastronomy activities, the CANEX Music Factory Songwriting Camp and the Legends Football Game.

39th TIFF Closes In Grand Style

THE 39th Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) came to a close on November 4, following 10 days of screenings and events at the festival's venues in the Hibiya-Marunouchi-Yurakucho-Ginza area and elsewhere around the capital. TIFF screened 204 films, many of them world premieres and nearly all of them with guest appearances, with 69,072 admissions and another 89,269 audience members attending related events. This year's highlights included a vibrant procession on the soaking-wet opening Red Carpet, masterclasses with singular filmmakers Wayne Wang and Tsukamoto Shinya, crowd-pleasing Opening, Closing and Centerpiece films from Japan and Korea, which included memorable monsters from both countries. During the Closing Ceremony at Hulic Hall Tokyo, recipients were announced for a range of awards, culminating in the Tokyo Grand Prix, The Governor of Tokyo Award, which comes with 3 million yen in prize money. This year's competition jury was chaired by Rolf de Heer while competition jury members were Alex Lo , Oh Jungwan, Watanabe Makiko , Yov Moor. The closing ceremony film was ***Colony***: Yeon Sang-ho (Director), Hailey Yoo-min Yang (Executive Producer), Koo Kyo-hwan (Actor), Nao (Actor) and Kaji Yuki (Voice Actor). The Tokyo Grand Prix, The Governor of Tokyo Award was awarded to Sister Brother Manhole Cover (North Macedonia/Bulgaria/Serbia/Albania/Italy/UK) while the Special Jury Prize went to Magic Atlas (Singapore). The award for Best Director went to Lisandro Alonso (Double Freedom, Chile/Argentina/Luxembourg/Germany/UK), while the award for best actress and best actor went to Hu Ling (The Night That Binds Us, France/Hong Kong) and Narita Ryo (Two Cigarettes, Three Nights, Japan)

AFRIFF Wraps Up In Lagos

THE Africa International Film Festival which returned to Lagos for its 15th edition, running from Sunday November 1, closed on Saturday November 7, 2026 with the Globe awards. Screenings, conversations and events for this year's edition took place across the festival's homes on Victoria Island and Lekki. This year's theme, 'Frames of the Future: Africa's Creative Intelligence', examined the new business models, formats and trends reshaping African and global film — and at the people building them. Founded in Lagos in 2010, AFRIFF has grown into the biggest platform on the continent where African storytellers meet the international film business. Each edition brings filmmakers, artists and industry leaders together to encounter the work and each other — in the cinema, on the panels and long after the lights come up. This year, the Africa Film & Content Market (AFCM) returned for its second edition from November 2-5, 2026, putting creators, buyers, investors and distributors in the same room in Lagos. Across four days, the market hosted industry sessions on production, distribution, financing, policy and audiences, alongside curated meetings, investment roundtables and project showcases. Full list of winners of the Globe Awards can be sourced on the festival website at www.afriff.com.



Tokyo Festival



Shuaib Admitted As IPRA Fellow, Earns FIPRA Designation

By Omotoyosi Erinle

THE International Public Relations Association (IPRA) has admitted award-winning public relations practitioner, Yushau A. Shuaib, as a Fellow, conferring on him the prestigious post-nominal designation FIPRA in recognition of his professional standing and sustained membership of the global body. Shuaib's Fellowship certificate was signed by IPRA President Esther Cobbah and follows more than six years of continuous professional membership of the association.

According to IPRA Secretary-General Philip Sheppard, the Fellowship category was introduced to recognise members who have maintained continuous membership while demonstrating commitment to global public relations standards and ethical practice.

Shuaib is the Chief Executive Officer of Image Merchants Promotion Limited (IMPR), publishers of PRNigeria, Economic Confidential and Spokespersons Digest. Under his leadership, the company has earned multiple honours from the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), African Public Relations Association (APRA), SABRE Awards Africa and IPRA's Golden World Awards.

The Fellowship comes weeks after IMPR recorded its biggest international achievement at the 2026 IPRA Golden World Awards in Athens, Greece, where it won multiple category honours and the coveted Grand Prix, the competition's highest distinction, for its campaign, "AI in Crisis Communication: From Study to Strategy."

The award-winning campaign evolved from a 107-page empirical study led by Shuaib on the application of artificial intelligence in crisis communication in Nigeria. The initiative received support from the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Centre for Crisis Communication (CCC), Nigeria Customs Service and other stakeholders.

The Athens triumph followed a decade of IMPR's participation in the Golden World Awards and came in the historic city where IPRA adopted its Code of Athens in 1965. Shuaib had earlier personally received a Golden World Award for Crisis Management in Doha, Qatar, in 2016 while his firm IMPR was ranked the most creative public relations agency worldwide in the 2020 Global Creativity Index (GCI) produced by PRovoke (formerly the Holmes Report).

His journey in public relations dates back to his university years. Shuaib graduated in Mass Communication from Bayero University, Kano, in 1992, winning the NIPR President's Prize as the best graduating student in Public Relations. In 1995, he was named PR Person of the Year for Kano and Jigawa States. He later obtained a Master's degree in Public Relations from the University of Westminster, London, in 2010.



Before entering private practice, Shuaib built an extensive career in government communication. He served as Public Relations Officer at Government House, Asaba, Delta State, and subsequently held communication roles at the Federal Ministries of Information, Finance and Health. He later headed public relations at the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) before retiring from public service.

Shuaib convenes the yearly National Spokespersons Awards (NS-Awards) and the PRNigeria Young Communication Fellowship (PYCF), initiatives dedicated to recognising excellence in strategic communication and mentoring emerging journalists and communication professionals.

He is also the author of several books on media, public relations and crisis communication, including A Dozen Tips for Media Relations, Financial Public Relations in Nigeria, Strictly Personal: Writings for the Media, Award-Winning Crisis Communication Strategies and MNI Versus MNIPR in NIPSS.

Law Firm Boosts Art, Music Conversation On Financing Nollywood

By Omotoyosi Erinle

ON Wednesday, November4, 2026, the offices of Odujinrin & Adefulu became a gallery for *An Evening of Nigerian Art & Culture*. Works by select Nigerian artists filled the garden, meeting rooms and corridors, shown in collaboration with the Firm's partner art advisor, June Creative Art Advisory Limited.

Seven of the featured artists were present to experience their works in the setting created for the exhibition: Mary Adebayo, Bunmi Babatunde, Phillips Nzekwe, Julie Nzekwe, Victor Obot, Tunde Owolabi and Odinakachukwu Francis. The guided viewings provided guests with an opportunity to meet the artists, engage with them directly and hear more about the ideas and processes behind their works.

As Odujinrin & Adefulu approaches its 54th anniversary, the evening was a chance to welcome guests into the Firm and celebrate Nigerian art and culture. The firm is a commercial law practice of barristers, solicitors and notaries public, with offices in Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt.

The evening was graced by the presence of the Firm's founding partner, Chief Oladipo Odujinrin, together with the Managing Partner, Dr. Adeoye Adefulu, and partners Damilola Adetunji, Lucky Ayeki and Olubukola Olabiyi.

Music also featured prominently in the evening's programme, with a live saxophone performance by Temilayo Abodunrin, a 16-year-old musical prodigy, adding to the atmosphere.\

The programme also explored the business of creativity, shifting the conversation from the works on display to the practical realities of financing creative ventures. Zulumoke Oyibo, Co-founder and COO of Inkblot Productions, joined a fireside chat that offered candid insights into the funding landscape for Nigerian films.

She explained that filmmakers often rely on family and friends as sources of funding, particularly because they can be patient investors who believe in the vision behind a project. Access to institutional financing, however, remains a challenge, as banks typically require collateral before extending loans to film producers. On managing investment risk, she advised spreading investments across multiple film projects rather than committing all available resources to a single production, while emphasising the importance of working with partners who share a common vision.

The discussion also considered whether intellectual property could serve as bankable collateral for film financing. Zulumoke noted that this remains difficult in Nigeria, where lenders generally favour tangible assets over intangible ones.

Olotu Explores Identity, Body Politics, Displacement In *Before We Know Ourselves*

By **Tobi Awodipe**

UK-based Nigerian artist Onome Olotu, will examine the complexities of identity, body image, historical memory and belonging in Before We Know Ourselves, her debut solo exhibition in Nigeria, opening at SOTO Gallery on November 3.

The exhibition, sponsored by Art Audry and curated by Uche Obasi, will run until December 15 as SOTO Gallery's final exhibition for the year. It brings together two bodies of work, the Postcard Series and the Mask Series, through which Olotu interrogates how personal experiences, archival records and societal expectations shape perceptions of individuals and communities.

Drawing on her experiences of living and studying in the United States and the United Kingdom, the artist examines what it means to inhabit spaces where one's presence is questioned, while negotiating the pressures of cultural assimilation, racial identity and social acceptance.

The exhibition's title reflects an ongoing inquiry into how people come to understand themselves amid competing social narratives and the expectations imposed by others. Through painting and printmaking, Olotu invites viewers to reconsider the relationship between visibility and invisibility, particularly as it affects Black people, migrants and individuals whose bodies fall outside conventional ideals.

For the artist, the two series converge around the need to be recognised beyond surface appearances and dominant representations.

"The Postcard Series and the Mask Series coalesce at the point where we ask people to see us for who we are and for what we offer," Olotu said, explaining the thinking behind the exhibition.

The Postcard Series draws from her experiences as an international student and non-immigrant in the United States between 2021 and 2026, and her subsequent relocation to the United Kingdom. Using archival photographs, historical documents, newspaper headlines and reconstructed postage stamps, she explores displacement, longing and the complicated relationship between personal memory and recorded history.

Her use of the postcard as an artistic device reflects the familiar experience of leaving home and attempting to maintain connections with people and places left behind. However, the works extend beyond nostalgia to question how institutions and societies construct their histories, including the experiences and contributions that are excluded from dominant narratives.

She combines acrylic paint, plaster and paste to create heavily textured surfaces that obscure and reveal fragments of images and writing. The layers, she explained, represent the ways historical accounts can be altered, partially preserved or rewritten over time.

"The texture surfaces are metaphors for written historical records," she said. "Information, as it travels from one person to another, gets distorted, and at the end of the day, what is left is automatically taken as the truth, irrespective of what it was initially."

The works also incorporate carefully selected newspaper headlines and postage stamps highlighting figures whose contributions to their respective fields deserve recognition. Among those referenced are African and diasporic figures including Kwame Ture, Miriam Makeba, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Chinua Achebe, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Olaudah Equiano, Claudia Jones, Olive Morris, Mary Prince, Sade Adu and Chiwetel Ejiofor.

By bringing these figures into her visual compositions, Olotu considers the role of historical representation in determining whose achievements are remembered and how communities understand their place in the world. Two strands of the Postcard Series focus specifically on Black community histories in Princeton, New Jersey, and Ithaca, New York.

In developing Postcards from Princeton, the artist became interested in the history of the Witherspoon-Jackson community after questioning the relatively small number of Black families she encountered in the town. Research at the Historical Society of Princeton, assistance from the Arts Council of Princeton and conversations with residents helped her uncover stories spanning several generations.



Olotu

She also worked with Shirley Satterfield, a custodian of the community's history, who connected her with families willing to share their experiences and permit her to paint them.

The resulting works imagine the postcards she might have sent to Nigeria, preserving memories of Black life in Princeton before demographic and social changes altered the community.

Similarly, Postcards from Ithaca emerged from archival research at The History Center in Ithaca and Cornell University's Rare Manuscript Collections. Rather than reproducing historical photographs directly, Olotu reinterpreted them through painting, combining archival material with her own observations of the university town.

The resulting images question the apparently seamless histories of American educational institutions and the social relationships underpinning their public identities. Through the accumulation of paint and the partial concealment of images, she asks what experiences may have been obscured in the making of these histories.

The Mask Series shifts the focus from place and historical representation to the body, identity and the experience of being seen through other people's expectations.

Initially inspired by the widespread use of protective face masks during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020, the series began with literal representations of African masks. Olotu subsequently moved away from the physical objects, developing a visual language in which the body itself becomes a metaphor for masking.

Influenced by W.E.B. Du Bois's concept of double consciousness and Frantz Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks, the works explore the psychological tensions that arise when individuals are compelled to understand themselves through the standards of a dominant society.

Du Bois's concept describes the divided consciousness associated with being Black in a society shaped by racial inequality, while Fanon examines the psychological consequences of colonialism and the adoption of dominant cultural values. Olotu extends these ideas to the experiences of big-bodied women and the stigma associated with their appearance.

Her paintings feature full-figured subjects whose proportions and contours are distorted by layers of paint, screen-printing, plaster and other materials. The technique creates an interplay between concealment and revelation, reflecting the tension of being physically visible while remaining unseen as a complete person.

Works such as The Crime of a Little More Flesh challenge assumptions about body size and the tendency to reduce individuals to their physical appearance.

The series is also informed by the artist's personal experiences, particularly her younger sister's encounters with body shaming and body dysmorphia. Olotu said learning about the insults and judgements directed at her sister forced her to confront the difference between how she understood a loved one and how society perceived her.

"I saw her as just my sister, the baby that I watched grow up. So I assumed that society saw her in that lens also," she said. "Only for her to share screenshots of what people had told her. People had called her names, and I was brought back to reality that people were not seeing her as I did."

The experience prompted her to consider how artistic practice could challenge the assumptions that diminish people's self-worth.

During her postgraduate studies, she also invited people who felt insecure about particular parts of their bodies to participate in a project in which she made moulds of those areas, with their consent. Using construction net and other materials, she sought to create a sense of protection while allowing the forms to remain visible.

For Olotu, the project underscored the desire to be recognised for more than physical appearance and to have one's abilities, character and experiences acknowledged.

Her exploration of body image also draws on cultural practices in Nigeria, including the fattening-room tradition associated with parts of southeastern Nigeria, where a fuller female body has historically been linked to beauty, marriage and fertility. She contrasts such traditions with the pressure to conform to thinness promoted through Western media and commercial culture.

Archival research has helped her trace how these ideals have been constructed and circulated. In examining historical American magazines, including Ebony, she observed differences between representations of Black communities and the body-conscious advertising found in mainstream publications.

Ayima Lott-Jonathan's Gold Dust : Treasures of Quiet Years

By **Steve Sinikiem Azaiki**

SOME books tell stories of success; others reveal the struggles, sacrifices and quiet courage behind it. *Gold Dust*, the memoir and autobiography of Dr Ayima Lott-Jonathan, does both. Published in 2026 to mark her 50th birthday, it is a deeply personal account of a woman who journeyed from the creeks of Bayelsa State to the heart of Nigeria's capital, where she built an enduring educational institution.

Readers who know the Niger Delta mainly through headlines about crude oil, militancy and pollution should read *Gold Dust*. Dr Ayima Lott-Jonathan has written a memoir that is personal before it is anything else. It also tells a story about our region that is rarely told: an Ijaw woman, raised between the creeks of Bayelsa and the streets of Port Harcourt, who left the Delta and established a lasting institution at the centre of the federation. I wrote the Foreword to this book, where I reflected on the author's character and faith. Here I want to read it differently: as a document of the Niger Delta's place in the Nigerian project, and of what education can do where politics and



oil have so often failed.

Born in Yenagoa, Ayima is a reminder that behind every accomplished woman lies a journey the world may never fully see. Through her university years, marriage, the joys and pains of childbirth, the heartbreak of miscarriage, and the fears and dilemmas surrounding her decision to marry, she invites readers into the private moments that shaped her public achievements. Her honesty makes the book deeply human. She does not merely celebrate the victories; she allows us to understand their cost.

The book's first interlude, "Of Rivers and a New State," is among the most valuable passages for any reader trying to understand our part of the country. The author was born in Yenagoa in 1976, in what was then old Rivers State. Bayelsa State was created in 1996 under military rule. As she notes, it was carved out of a political temperature that had become dangerous. She also reminds the reader of a fact many Nigerians have forgotten: Oloibiri, where commercial oil was first struck in 1956, lies within Bayelsa. "It is a strange, bitter kind of irony," she writes, "to have been born on some of the most valuable ground in the entire country and to have grown up, as so many of our people did, without the basic comforts that ground's own wealth had built elsewhere."

Those of us who have spent our careers on the political economy of the Niger Delta have written that sentence in many forms. It carries special force from someone writing from lived memory rather than research. She sets it beside a frank picture of oil-boom Port Harcourt, where her family lived on the "professional-class rather than oil-money" edges of the Government Reserved Area. Together they show the contradictions of a region that was, at once, the engine of the national economy and one of its most neglected corners.

The book also respects traditional authority, which I welcome. The author's father, His Royal Highness Festus Dikebi Lott, Ogbian VIII, the Ebeneken of Famgbe, is a distinguished lawyer who served as Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice. Her mother is Chief Mrs Veronica Lott, the Igefina I of Atissa Kingdom. The memoir shows how those roots shaped the author. Her name, Ayima, means "His will be done." Her family chose a burial in Abuja for a brother killed in an accident rather than the customary riverside burial, and she explains that custom with care rather than condescension. Even her near drowning on the Ekule River, when a speedboat's wake overturned her canoe, reminds us that for riverine people the waterways are both a lifeline and a hazard.

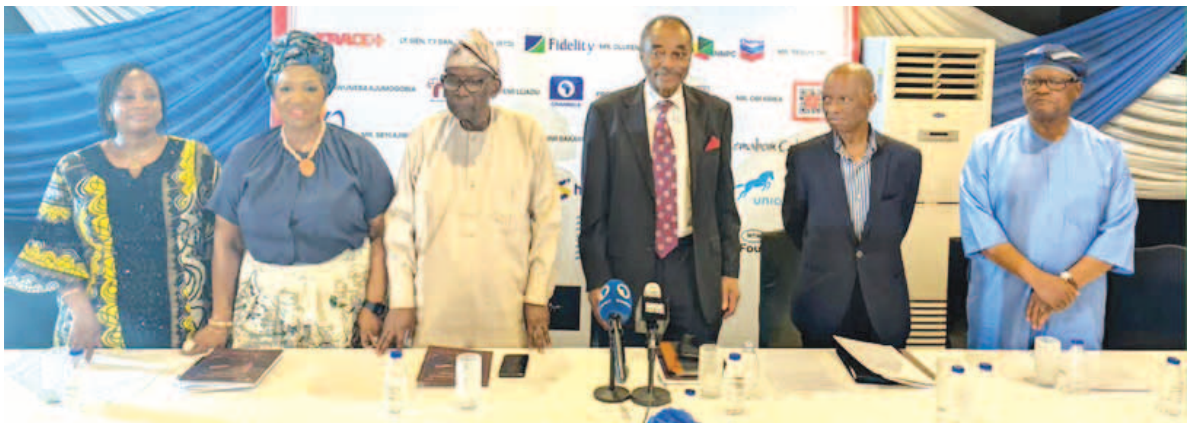
The most telling detail in the book is small. When she was introduced to the man she would marry, simply hearing her father's name "was apparently enough to make my husband sit up and listen properly." In our culture, a family name carries a reputation, and this book is in part a daughter's account of living up to one.

One of the most remarkable aspects of *Gold Dust* is the founding of Aduvie International School in 2008. What began in a rented five-bedroom bungalow in Wuse, Abuja, with just four staff members and two pupils, has grown into a major educational institution sitting on 6.1 hectares and serving more than a thousand children. This is not simply a story of building a school; it is a story of vision, faith, resilience and the courage to begin when success is far from guaranteed.The author is honest about the bank loan, the unfinished building, and the strict statutory requirements for registering a school. She is equally honest about the tragedies that test any institution, including the death of a student in a road accident.

As someone who has devoted much of his life to education, public service and institution-building, I appreciate the determination required to transform a modest beginning into an enduring legacy. I am particularly moved by the establishment of the Jewel Class for children with additional needs. It demonstrates that education is not merely about academic excellence, but also about compassion, inclusion and ensuring that no child is forgotten.

Festival Marks 30 Years, Spotlights Music, Technology, Education

By **Ruth Ononye**



ALL'S Well That Ends Well is one of William Shakespeare's most popular plays, and it best describes the 2026 Musical Society of Nigeria (MUSON). 'All's well that ends well' is a common English proverb meaning that if the final outcome of a situation is good or successful, any earlier mistakes, stress, or difficulties do not matter anymore, brought together established performers, music students, alumni and other stakeholders in the creative industry. It has also featured 10 major concerts and a symposium.

The 30th edition opened on Sunday, October 25, with a Musical Brunch at the La Scala Hall of the center. The brunch, which started at noon and ended by 3.00pm began the festival 's opening day activities before the evening's theatrical presentation at 6.00pm.

This edition came amid several milestones for the institution including 43 years since the establishment of the MUSON centre, 36 years of its basis school of music and 20 years of its diploma school of music programme sponsored by the the MTN foundation.

The programme reflected MUSON's longstanding commitment to music education and performance while creating opportunities to examine how emerging technologies are changing the production, teaching and experience of music.

A major highlight was the fourth edition of collabo: *Music Meets Technology*, which held on November 3 at the Shell Zenith Hall. The project was conceptualised and curated by Sade Doherty.

The symposium examined the growing interaction between musical creativity and technological innovation. The event featured a keynote remark by the Director General of the National Council for Arts and Culture, Obi Asika, who looked at the development of Nigeria's domestic music economy and the role of innovation in the creative industries.

According to Doherty, chairperson of the 2026 MUSON festival planning committee, previous editions of the symposium had explored artificial intelligence, machine creativity and the implications of AI for music.

This year's programme considered how automation, artificial intelligence and collaboration are reshaping music creation, performance and audience experience.

Beyond technology, the festival showcased different musical traditions through opera, jazz, classical performances, musical theatre and student productions.

The festival's emphasis on education remains central to MUSON's activities. Its school of music provides training in music theory , instrumental performance and singing, equipping students with foundations that can support careers in classical,contemporary and popular music. However, discussions at the briefing also turned to the financial demands of sustaining music education and arts institutions in Nigeria.

MUSON Day, which concided with the institutions anniversary on October 27, featured students solo performances, the Diploma school choir , alumni appearances, the school band and orchestra

The festival also featured opera performances including *The Milkado*, an English comic opera, by the composer, Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan, who is best known for 14 comic opera collaborations with the dramatist W. S. Gilbert, including H.M.S. *Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Amanar Group Positions Diaspora Week As Bridge For African Creativity

By **Daniel Anazia**

CULTURE-led strategy and project management company redefining how African creative ideas are structured, scaled, and delivered globally, Amanar Group's co-hosting of the Diaspora Week Lagos 2026 opening reception has brought renewed attention to the growing importance of connecting African creative talent with international markets, investors, and cultural institutions.

Held in Lagos on October 27, the reception was organised in partnership with Amplify Africa, The Temple Company, and Levitikal Group. The reception brought together local and international creative and business leaders, highlighting efforts to attract global investment, strengthen cultural exchange and create wider opportunities for African talent.

It also set the tone for two weeks of major creative, cultural and technology events, including Lagos Fashion Week, Art X, the Africa International Film Festival (AFRIFF), Moonshot by TechCabal and the Creative Africa Nexus (CANEX).

Commenting on the decision to host the reception, global business mogul and music executive, Abdul Quam Tadese, popularly known as AQT, who also spearheads the Amanar Group said, "The reason this is very important for us to do is that a lot of importing has to be done for there to be a balance. African excellence is continually taken abroad, and it's time for the world to start coming into Africa to see and connect first-hand."

The reception reflects Amanar Group's wider mission of building infrastructure for African creativity to thrive globally. Operating across music, live events, creator partnerships, fashion, and cultural initiatives, the company has delivered culturally authentic experiences at scale, from the Afrobeats Festival in Berlin in 2023 to the sold-out UNILAG Independence Day Festival and its Kaduna edition, which drew more than 10,000 people.

According to AQT, what the two-week events mean for Nigeria is about direction of travel. He noted that African talent and output already reach audiences abroad, and the aim is to draw more of the world to Nigeria in person.

Adinoyi's Award Puts Spotlight On Television's Role In Brand Protection

By **Daniel Anazia**

THE HitList N Cruzin and AIT Music Plus producer, Mursty Adinoyi, has called on corporate organisations to strengthen their use of newspapers, radio and television for public education, warning that reduced visibility of established brands on local media could make it harder for consumers to identify genuine products.

He made the appeal after receiving the African Outstanding Television Producer and Music Entertainment Personality of the Year 2026 award at the African Global Excellence Award (AGEA) ceremony in Lagos at the weekend.

While the recognition celebrates his contribution to television and music entertainment, his message also draws attention to a wider responsibility of the media and corporate sector: helping consumers make informed choices in a market where counterfeit products remain a public concern.

He urged corporate leaders, particularly in the food, beverage and pharmaceutical industries, to work with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) and other relevant bodies to promote awareness and protect consumers.

Adinoyi argued that trusted media platforms could play a stronger role in helping the public distinguish authentic goods from counterfeit alternatives. He expressed concern that consumers were finding it increasingly difficult to recognise the original packaging of everyday household products, which he linked to their reduced presence on Nigerian television.

According to him, public education and brand-protection campaigns should form a central part of companies' corporate social responsibility programmes, rather than being treated solely as commercial advertising.

The appeal gives the award significance beyond personal recognition. For Nigeria, where consumer awareness and product authenticity have implications for public health, sustained collaboration among manufacturers, regulators and media organisations could strengthen the reach of safety information. However, such campaigns would need clear, practical guidance to help consumers identify genuine products and report suspected counterfeits.

Reflecting on the honour, Adinoyi described it as a collective achievement, acknowledging the people and institutions that supported his work. He commended AGEA for recognising his contribution, saying the award was "a massive encouragement to keep pushing the boundaries of television and entertainment production."

Blaze Channel Unveils Platform To Monetise Nigerian Contents In US

BLAZE Channel, a US-based digital monetisation and streaming platform, has unveiled plans to revolutionise demand for Nigerian content in North America in a robust arrangement that would yield over $10m yearly.

The plan, which is aimed at financially empowering Nigerian creators as well as boosting foreign exchange earnings for the country, will target creatives across genres like Film/Nollywood, Afrobeat music, Fashion, Culinary Arts, Publishing, Visual Arts and Crafts, Pharmaceuticals and Tourism.

In a statement, Chief Operating Officer of Atlantic World Digital Communications, Ufuoma Okonoko, a lawyer, renowned actress, filmmaker and digital monetisation expert, said expectations are high for the massive potential of Blaze Channel as the primary avenue to monetise the Nigerian creative industry internationally as the company awaits funds from the Creative Economy Development Fund, CEDF.

"Nollywood filmmakers produce great films, but they find it very difficult to monetise them. We created Blaze Channel as a Digital Monetisation platform in the U.S., not only to stream and monetise the movies, but more importantly to monetise Nigerian creative industry products.

"The strategy utilises the huge power of Nollywood films and Afrobeat music to attract international eyeballs and earlobes to the digital monetisation platform where creative industry products such as Fashion, Culinary Arts, AI, Publishing, Pharmaceutical products and Arts and Crafts are displayed for sale to the international market thus creating huge tourism potentials and FDI for Nigeria." Ufuoma said.

In a related development, the Chairman/CEO of Atlantic World Digital Communications, Tony Abulu, a prolific Nigerian-American filmmaker, has expressed confidence in Ufuoma's skills in realising the set goals and plans to introduce her innovation to American filmmakers and businesses through the various American Chambers of Commerce.

TEETH 4 TEETH ... With Justin Akpovi-Esade

Please, Leave Aunty Hilda Alone!

VETERAN Nollywood actor, Hilda Dokubo, has been under fire in the last couple of days from the 'Soro Soke' and #Endsars Nigerians. There was nothing both young and old on social media did not tell the over 50 years old woman and she was so riled up, she had to do a video to push back on her traducers and that even made matters worse because the comments section of the video, was taken over by the same attackers and at a point, T4T felt very sorry for the actor whose trademark during her prime in Nollywood was her prowess for crying convincingly in every movie.

Now, what was Hilda Dokubo's crime(s)? Before T4T will answer this question, let him first give you a background to the issue. When Dokubo's Nollywood career dimmed, she delved into politics and in 2023, she became, well, a force in Rivers State political arena and even became the women's leader of her political that almost pulled an upset in that year's general elections even though it failed to upend the ruling party. Since then, she has not let up. As the general elections scheduled for early next year gathers momentum, a big political masquerade in the state has taken over the entire space with his coalition, perhaps the first of its kind in Nigeria that cuts across all political parties, all in support of the ruling party.

The political actor is not so popular among the youths even though that does not matter to him or other real players as he appears to having his way. Also, aunty Hilda has been 'forming' activist alongside her political career. She belongs to the present set of Nigerians that believe if you don't tow their line, or support the candidates they support, you "hate" Nigeria and don't want her to make progress. As twisted and intolerant as this line of reasoning is, it is really popular among a small number of the younger generation. Hilda is among the few older people driving this warped ideology.

And then, something happened late last week. Hilda Dokubo and another popular actress were photographed with the man who is driving the coalition for the ruling party, the same man some young people cuss daily when they wake up as if he is responsible for the current rising cost of petroleum products across the world.

That was when they turned against their beloved aunty Hilda, accusing her of 'selling out' and joining the camp of the 'oppressors'. T4T saw the flustered actress first trying to explain her presence at the home of the 'oppressor', and not that she visited in the dead of the night, she was even photographed grinning from ear to ear. At a point in her push back video, she resorted to bluffing the issue away, claiming she did not join any coalition and even if she wanted to, she won't join through the window, "I will go through the door", she said, suggesting she was too big a political figure in the state to quietly belong to any association without a loud ceremony. But what more loud ceremony does she want again when all the political bigwig were present at the event where she was photographed?

Anyway, aunty Hilda, this is an advise from T4T. There is no shame in politics especially in Nigeria, so, enough of this braggadocio. Politics is a game of interest, most of it, personal. Go and join coalition in Rivers state if you wan join, nor dey look your fans face. Broker a deal for your fans and yourself and save us this drama.

Vocational Training Key To Job Creation –Sokoto Deputy Governor



Sokoto State Deputy Governor, Alhaji Idris Mohammed Gobir (middle)and others at the event

VOCATIONAL training has been identified as a major tool for creating employment opportunities and promoting self-reliance among youths in the modern world.

Sokoto State Deputy Governor, Alhaji Idris Mohammed Gobir, stated this while speaking at a public lecture organised as part of activities marking the 13th Sheikh Usmanu Danfodio Week in Sokoto.

The lecture, entitled "Skills Acquisition as a Means of Self-Reliance: A Lesson from the Jihadist Scholars," was delivered by Dr Usman Bugaje at the Auditorium of Sultan Maccido Institute for Qur'an and General Studies.

Gobir called for the establishment of more vocational and skills acquisition institutions to equip young people with the requisite knowledge and practical skills needed to achieve economic independence.

He observed that developed countries had, over the years, prioritised science and technology, thereby contributing significantly to their economic growth and technological advancement.

The Deputy Governor, who chaired the lecture session, emphasised the importance of intellectual engagements in enlightening youths on modern approaches to achieving economic prosperity. He assured that the Sokoto State Government remained committed to considering useful recommendations that would promote technological development and accelerate the state's overall progress.

Earlier, the Chairman of the Lecture Planning Committee, Malam Muhammad Lawal Maidoki, said the programme was organised to encourage young people to embrace skills acquisition as a pathway to self-reliance.

In his presentation, Dr Usman Bugaje traced the historical contributions of Islamic scholars to the advancement of science and technology several centuries ago. He stressed the need for Nigeria to accord greater priority to science and technology as essential drivers of sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

The public lecture formed part of activities organised to mark the 13th Sheikh Usmanu Danfodio Week.

ShortStory

By **Segun Durowaiye (08055356855)**

Heavy Knocks For Your Money! (1)

BARRISTER Phillips Langbodo was such a wicked man that everybody feared him, despite the fact that he was very wealthy. He was the devil incarnate. He was a multi-millionaire and legal icon in the society. He was amazingly rich that he spent millions of Naira on a daily basis. But that is not the end of the story.

Barrister Phillips always employed drivers almost every month because they couldn't cope with his weird, wicked and inhuman behaviour and attitude towards them. Once he started showing them his true colours, they always ran away instantly. Some would abscond without even taking their accrued salary. He had a strange habit of given his drivers heavy and painful knocks on their heads if they didn't drive his car to his satisfaction. He often found faults with the way they drove. No driver could satisfy him on wheels. For one whole year, he had changed close to 30 drivers. So, instead of correcting them by word of mouth, he would descend heavily from behind (the owner's corner) and give them knocks that sounded like earthquake, thunder or atomic bomb!

He was such a big, fat, tall and dark-skinned man. He had an imposing, huge and gigantic stature. He was in his early 50s but he looked fresh and younger than his age because of the wealth factor.

That very month of October, Barrister Phillips had just employed another driver by name Sanjo Oluwanishola, who was in his early 30's. Sanjo came from a very humble background as he was an orphan who lost his parents at an early age. So, he had endured poverty and penury for many years. If being poor had a title Sanjo should be crowned king of all poor people. The very day, Sanjo started work with Barrister Phillips Langbodo he received 10 heavy knocks on his head. The young man cried and wept like a baby when persistent headache hit him as he got home. His amiable wife asked him what exactly was the matter but he couldn't disclose it. His two children wept along with their poor dad as he lamented his gloomy and sad fate.

That was the agonising story and heart-breaking experience of Sanjo Oluwanishola. He had to endure such pain, such injustice and inhumanity for three years since there was nothing he could do because he was poor and couldn't find another job. Most times when he received his meagre income he would go to a nearby pharmacy shop and buy drugs that would heal him of persistent headache and excruciating migraine. He was a thin and gaunt-looking man with a frail stature.

One day he cried, "When would this hardship and pain end Almighty God? I'll commit suicide very soon because I just can't bear it any more…" He was shedding sorrowful tears as he lamented his unfortunate plight in the presence of his immediate family. Sanjo continued to endure the pain and sadness for a couple of years with no solution or end in sight. The third year, still working with him, Barrister Phillips ordered Sanjo to drive him to Victoria Island, Lagos for a crucial business meeting. It was exactly the month of July and the rains came in high torrents. The heartless Barrister lived in Ikeja GRA, where the rich resides in their splendour and opulence. After the all-important meeting, the heavens opened and thus came a torrential downpour. Sincerely, it was a heavy and thundery rainfall.

They were moving on the long, Third Mainland Bridge amidst the heavy rainfall when the demonic Barrister suddenly gave Sanjo five heavy knocks in quick succession! The knocks came just like lightning. "Don't change your lane you, son-of-a-bitch!" growled the despotic Barrister…

To be concluded.

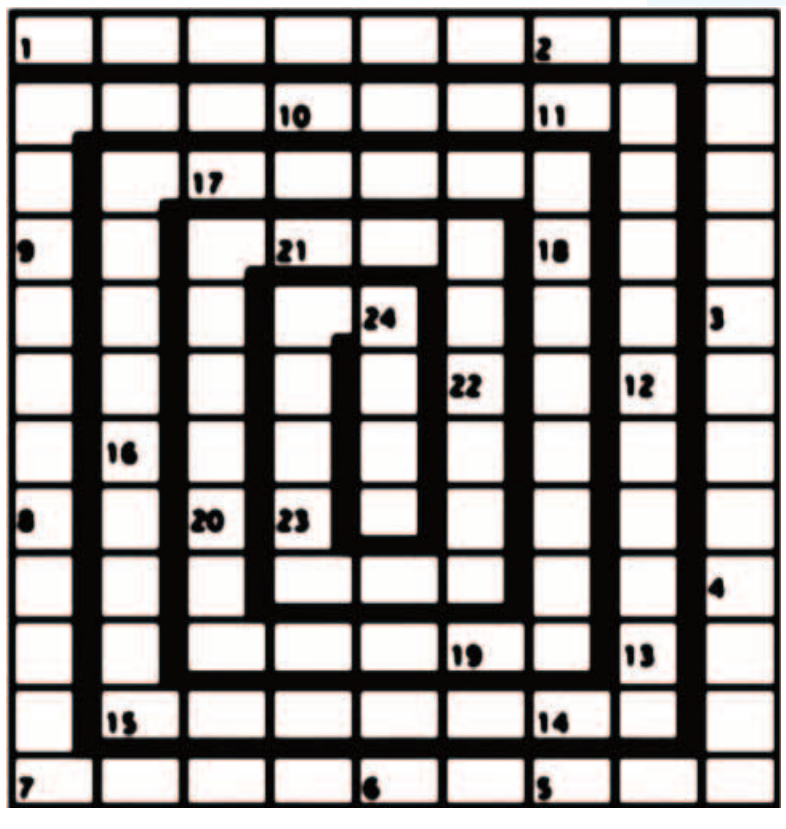
Interested sponsor/sponsors for this SHORT STORY column should please contact: 08023015115 or 08055356855.

Overlapping Word Game

with OLULANA KAYODE 08023183727
olulana3@yahoo.com

Solution

1 Biriniwa
2 Wayward
3 Duplex
4 Expert
5 Tile
6 Legume
7 Meddle
8 Legible
9 Blemish
10 Shake
11 Keyhole
12 Legate
13 Test
14 Studious
15 Ouster
16 Enlarge
17 Germany
18 Nyctalopia
19 Pianist
20 Strange
21 Gearbox
22 Boxhaul
23 Lagelu
24 Lump



Overlapping Word Game

1 FIFA President, (9).
2 Without carbon, (9).
3 Suitable place for somebody, (5).
4 Cry out loudly and suddenly, (7).
5 Mental picture, (5).
6 Not becoming older, (7).
7 Short non-fiction prose piece, (5).
8 Rude person, (5).
9 Sturdy lace-up shoe, (6).
10 Become involved superficially, (6).
11 Spoiling fault, (7).
12 Darkened shape of something in light, (6).
13 Young owl, (5).
14 Plant grown for its edible leaves, (7).
15 Long-stemmed vegetable, (6).
16 Traditional Japanese hotel, (6).
17 LGA in Enugu state, (6).
18 Ekiti state capital, (3, 5).
19 LGA in Enugu state, (3, 3).
20 LGA in Ebonyi state, (6).
21 Ondo state capital, (5).
22 LGA in Ondo state, (8).
23 Mention, (5).
24 Something done to deceive others, (4).

Word Search

Past Soccer Golden Boot Winners

Zeid	Milla	Traore
Diba	Hamid	Mbono
Keita	Afriye	Omondi
Yekini	Berlet	Mccarty
Abega	Labied	Odegbami
Bwalya	Menad	

O	M	A	R	C	B	E	R	L	E	T
M	D	E	B	A	W	M	B	O	B	O
O	K	E	Y	R	A	B	E	G	A	O
N	E	W	G	T	L	R	T	Y	N	D
D	I	E	Z	B	Y	H	T	O	J	E
I	T	J	I	T	A	E	B	Y	M	I
B	A	N	N	M	A	M	D	G	H	B
A	L	K	I	W	E	Y	I	R	F	A
H	L	D	K	E	R	O	A	R	T	L
D	I	M	E	N	A	D	R	E	T	U
V	M	H	Y	T	R	A	C	C	M	H

(c.) Olukayode Olulana

Birthdays

OMOTOSO, Gbenga, multiple award winning journalist, columnist, media strategist, social critic, Member of Nigeria Guild of Editors (NGE) and Commissioner of Information and Strategy, Lagos State will be 65 on November 11, 2026.

Born on November, 11, 1961, he attended the University of Benin, Edo State, where he bagged a Bachelor of Arts Degree (B.A) in English and Literature in year 1984 and followed it with a Master of Public and International Affairs (MPIA) at the University of Lagos, Akoka, which he successfully completed in 2007.

His professional competencies include: Information Management, Policy Formulation and Human/Reputation Management amongst others.

His nearly 35 years experience in the media began as a Trainee sub-Editor at *The Guardian*, where he rose to become Deputy Chief Editor, Editor of *Guardian Express* and Editor of *The Guardian on Saturday*.

He was the pioneer Editor of *The Comet* in 1999 until it was rested in year 2006 when he joined *The Nation* as Editor. The publication has since grown into Nigeria's widest circulating newspaper.

In 2019, the Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu appointed him as the Commissioner for Information and Strategy. He was reappointed for the same post for Sanwo-Olu's second term in office.



Omotoso

Among the awards received in course of his career include the DAME Informed Commentary (2010), Nigeria Media Merit Award (NMMA), Editor of the Year (2013), NMMA Editor of the Year (2015) and NMMA Editor of the Year (2017).



Bankole

BANKOLE, Oladimeji Subar, businessman, former Speaker, House of Representatives and Presidential aspirant in the 2023 election, will be 57 on November 14, 2026.

He was born on November 14, 1969 and attended Baptist Boys High School, Abeokuta, 1979; Albany College, London, England; University of Reading, Reading, England; University of Oxford's Officer Training College, Oxford, England, 1991; and Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States in 2005. He holds professional certificate in Public Finance from the Harvard University, USA.

He took courses for military officers at Oxford University where he was the Artillery Corps. He worked with the Freight Agencies Nigeria Limited between 1985 and 1998; Executive Director of Operations of West Africa Aluminum Products Limited between 1998 and 2003, and Director of ASAP Limited 2000 and 2003.

He was elected to the Lower House of Representatives on the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) ticket to represent Abeokuta South Federal Constituency of Ogun State, where he emerged as Speaker of the House, the post which he contested for again in April 2011 general election and lost. He contested the governorship seat of Ogun State in the 2019 election under the platform of the Action Democratic Party (ADP) and lost.

A few months ago, he dumped the ADP and joined the All Progressives Congress (APC). In the built up to the 2023 general elections, he was one of the Presidential aspirants under the APC umbrella and lost to President Bola Tinubu.

Compiled by Gbenga Akinfenwa, oluwagbenga.akinfenwa@guardian.ng or gbengaherkin@gmail.com

Events



Chairman/Chief Executive Officer (CEO), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Brig General Buba Marwa (rtd) decorating the NDLEA Director of Seaports Operations, Archie Abia Ibinabo, with the highest and prestigious rank of Deputy Commander General of Narcotics (DCG) aided by Goodluck Nana Opia. It was held at NDLEA Headquarters in Abuja ...last week



Prince Tajudeen Olusi (left) and President, Muslim Ummah of South West Nigeria (MUSWEN), Alhaji Rasaki Oladejo, during the MUSWEN's visit to the elder - statesman while canvassing for Chief Olusi's support for the group's National Assembly billed for November 15, 2026 in Ibadan, Oyo State.



Chief Business Development Officer, Noor Takaful Insurance Ltd., Ismaeel Ayanlere (left); one of award recipients / Group Chairman, First Adequate Benefits Insurance Brokers Ltd, Dr. Bola Azeez; Managing Director, Noor Takaful Insurance Ltd., Rilwan Sunmonu; and General Manager, Operations, Noor Takaful Insurance Ltd., Taofik Sholabi during the 2026 Noor Partners' Engagement Forum held in Lagos.



Founder and Chief Strategist, Chain Reactions Africa, Israel Opayemi (left); Founder of PRovoke Media and organiser of the PRovoke Global Summit, Paul Holmes,and Consultant, Strategy and Business, Chain Reactions Africa, Adedamola Danso, while receiving the Global SABRE Award for "From Promises to Proofs," a campaign on Nigeria's Economic Reform Programme for the Presidency recognised among the Top 40 PR Campaigns globally, at the PRovoke Global Summit 2026, held in Chicago, USA, from October 26–27.



Chancellor/ Chairman, Board of Regents of Covenant University, Bishop David Oyedepo (middle) shaking hands with Miss Queendolin Effa Emmanuel of Computer Engineering Department, College of Engineering with a CGPA of 4.99, one of the First Class students during the university's convocation ceremony in Ota, Ogun State.



Brand Manager, Premium Category, Lush Hair Nigeria, Buzugbr Victoria (left); Senior Brand Manager, Damilola Agboola; Brand Manager, Ese Alagbogu and Marketing Manager, Vivian Obiano at Lagos Fashion Week 2026 in Lagos

Oluponna Indigenes Urged To Support N2b Development Fund, Renovate Community School

By **Moyosore Salami**

THE 59th Oluponna Day celebration brought together traditional rulers, community leaders, indigenes and other guests to celebrate the town's cultural heritage and discuss its development aspirations.

Among the dignitaries present were the Oluwo of Iwo, Oba Abdul Rasheed Adewale Akanbi alongside other traditional rulers, political leaders whose presence added colour to the gathering.

Representing the Osun State governor at the celebration, the Special Adviser to the Governor on Public Enlightenment, Eniola Odeniyi, also attended the event.

Held at DC School, Oluponna, Osun State, the celebration provided an opportunity for sons and daughters of the community, both at home and in the Diaspora, to reconnect with their roots and renew their commitment to the town's progress.

Beyond the cultural activities and social gatherings, the event also provided a platform for discussions on education, infrastructure and community development, with the Oluponna Development Association (ODA) Worldwide calling for support towards a N2b fundraising drive for development projects.

Speaking at the grand finale, the National President of ODA Worldwide, Kayode Oketunde, appealed to indigenes and well-meaning individuals to support the renovation of Oluponna Community High School, whose facilities have deteriorated considerably.

He said the association had made education a priority in its development agenda, explaining that the proposed renovation was part of efforts to improve the learning environment and provide pupils with better conditions to pursue their education.



Caption: L–R: Wives of the Olupo; the Oluwo of Iwo, Oba Abdul Rasheed Adewale Akanbi; the Olupo of Oluponna, Oba Abdul-Rafiu Oyekanmi Mosobalaje; and two other monarchs, during the Oluponna Day celebration.



Principal, Chrisland High School, Lekki,Kolawole Cole Bewaji(left); Head Girl, Chrisland High School, Lekki/Captain, Division C, Oluwanifemi; Okungbure, student of Chrisland High School, Lekki/Captain, Division B,Rachael Faka, and Chairperson, Chrisland High School, Lekki PTA, Joy Kosowe,during the presentation of awards to the students of Chrisland High School Lekki who emerged the winners of Division B and C of Science Olympiad National Tournament, held at the school hall in Lekki, Lagos recently,

Guardian Fashion
STYLE ELEGANCE LIFESTYLE

Ugo Monye, The Pride Of African Fashion

By **Maria Diamond**

WHO steals a fashion show better than a designer who knows the craft from concept, to designing, creativity, sewing and clean finishing?

Who makes a runway audience cheer in awe of admiration like a designer with collection originality and styles that showcase relatable themes?

Ugo Monye was the spotlight at the 2026 Lagos Fashion Week as he always did on every platform available to him for showcase with his unmatched craftsmanship. Of course, it wasn't really about the exotic catwalk of the sleek looking Governor of Lagos State, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, as the incumbent President of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu (GCFR) or any other prominent person of the designer's choice would have been honoured to wear and catwalk in any of his carefully curated signature African attire on the runway.

Why not? Every human being consciously or subconsciously derives a sense of fulfillment in good clothing and fashion accessories, after all, looking good remains good business even for the most powerful person in the world.

Ugo Monye made it all worth the while showcasing African culture and heritage through his collections from Lagos Fashion Week runway to global stage.

A glimpse into the designer's world of creativity

UGOCHUKWU Monye is the Creative Director of the Ugo Monye fashion house, renowned for the bold and structured tailoring of African clothing, using African textiles such as A -oke, adire, George and other fabrics to create a fusion of traditional and contemporary attires for ceremonial and royal regalia that is relatable in global fashion.

He is best known for elevating traditional Nigerian attire like the Agbada, turning ceremonial wear into statement pieces worn at high-profile corporate events, weddings, coronations, and international runway shows.















By **Maria Diamond**

Cheering Into Experiential Soft-Life With Champagne Lanson

A Legacy Of French Heritage, Craftsmanship, Elegance



Guests, toasting to good life during the Champagne Lanson portfolio tasting experience in Lagos Nigeria recently...



Marketing Manager, Champagne Lanson Nigeria, Esther Abu and Director, Champagne Lanson Nigeria, Abidemi Muraina.



Global Export Director, Champagne Lanson, Emil Lecamp (left); with guests at the event.



Sallys Wine (left); CEO, Capston Bee, Bukkie Faniran and Olaumoke Oladimeji during the event.

WHEN wine aficionados and oenophiles from all walks of life gathered to clock into the soft life mode at the Alexis Galleries in Lagos, Champagne Lanson was the host, championing the cool evening into an elegant sip and savour tasting experience.

The guests discovered the house's portfolio through curated champagne tasting, with each cuvee paired with complementary culinary selections designed to highlight the distinctive character of each champagne while creating a memorable food and tasting experience.

From the gushing sparkling bubble that springs through the muselet cap of the cork, to the bright pouring into a fine glass, Champagne Lanson makes a craftsmanship statement that speaks heritage and distinctive elegance.

More than a repository of exceptional wines, these historic cellars preserve centuries of craftsmanship and the legacy of generations of men and women dedicated to the art of Champagne-making.

Remarking, during the tasting experience of four distinctive expressions, Marketing Manager, Champagne Lanson Nigeria, Esther Abu said: "A refined and distinctive vibrant lifestyle comes to play when you take a break from all the hustles and bustles of life just to sip and savour the fine series of Champagne Lanson – to calm your mind and soul into the rhythms of a good soft life.

"For the cultivated Nigerian hosts, who value character over display, Champagne Lanson represents a commitment to enduring standards because true distinction is carried, not announced," she said.

Crafted since 1760 in Reims, France, Champagne Lanson is officially established in Nigeria, bringing over 260 years of French heritage, craftsmanship and elegance to the country's discerning luxury market.

Champagne Lanson is one of the historic Champagne Houses, celebrated for its distinctive style, freshness, quality and elegant expression of Champagne. For over two and a half centuries, Maison Lanson has carefully crafted exceptional Champagnes distinguished by their vitality, fruitiness and inimitable freshness.

The House's distinctive signature is built on three fundamental pillars: the meticulous selection of Grand Cru and Premier Cru vineyards, a vinification approach that preserves the original principles of Champagne-making, and extended ageing in its historic cellars.

Located in the heart of Reims, fifteen metres underground, the Maison's cellars hold a remarkable collection of vintage Champagnes dating back to 1904. This treasured collection stands as a testament to Lanson's rich history, enduring savoir-faire and commitment to excellence.

The Signature Portfolio

CHAMPAGNE Lanson's portfolio brings together distinctive expressions, each reflecting the Hvouse's heritage, craftsmanship and signature style.

. Le Black Creation (Brut): This signature cuvée of Maison Lanson, Le Black Création embodies over 260 years of heritage and savoir-faire. It reflects the House's commitment to a fresh and elegant Champagne style. Each edition is carefully crafted to express the unique character of its harvest through a blend that combines creativity and precision. The number assigned to each creation edition represents the number of harvests since the House was founded in 1760.

. Le Rose Creation: Under the expertise of Cellar Master Herve Dantan, Le Rose Creation offers a distinctive interpretation of Rose Champagne. Beneath its delicate salmon-pink hue lies a rich aromatic expression of red and citrus fruits. Elegant, fresh and fruity, it captures the distinctive character of the Lanson style.

. Le White Label Sec: Harmonious and delicate, Le White Label Sec reveals a smooth personality and creamy texture. Its subtle balance of sweetness and freshness makes it an inviting expression of Champagne, offering a distinctive experience for those who appreciate a softer, more rounded style.

. Le Blanc de Blancs: Crafted from carefully selected Crus from the Côte des Blancs and Montagne de Reims, Le Blanc de Blancs is an elegant expression of finesse and precision. Selected by Cellar Master Herve Dantan following his appointment in 2013, this cuvee brings together delicacy and refinement, complemented by a fresh, mineral finish.

Through this curated tasting experience, guests had the opportunity to explore the versatility of Champagne Lanson across different flavour profiles and culinary pairings.

Le Black Creation (Brut) was paired with Smoked Salmon and Cream Cheese along a Mini Cheeseburger; Le Rose Creation was paired Chicken Suya and Sweet Chilli Prawns; Le Blanc de Blancs was paired with Shrimp Cocktail and Chicken Quinoa Salad; Le White Label Sec was paired with Blue Cheese and Petit Cake/Tart.

With its official establishment in Nigeria, Champagne Lanson is committed to building a strong and meaningful presence in the market through strategic partnerships, brand experiences and engagement with discerning consumers. The House seeks to connect with individuals and businesses that appreciate quality, sophistication, hospitality and exceptional experiences. From intimate gatherings and celebrations to luxury gifting, fine dining and hospitality, Champagne Lanson aims to become part of the moments and experiences that matter.

> *'A refined and distinctive vibrant lifestyle comes to play when you take a break from all the hustles and bustles of life just to sip and savour the fine series of Champagne Lanson – to calm your mind and soul into the rhythms of a good soft life'*

Betta Edu Joins VP, Governors, APC PCC Members At Calabar Rally

By Opeyemi Babalola

THE Co- Director of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Campaign Council (PCC) Women Mobilisation Directorate, Dr Betta Edu, has joined the vice president, governors and party leaders, stakeholders and supporters at a massive rally in Calabar, declaring Cross River State 100 per cent behind President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's and Governor Bassey Otu's re-election bid.

Speaking with journalists on the sidelines of the rally, Edu expressed confidence in the growing support for the APC across Cross River State, saying the state was poised to deliver overwhelming electoral victories for Tinubu and Otu.

She described the rally as a powerful demonstration of the unity, strength, and unwavering commitment of the APC family in Cross River, noting that the party remained resolute in consolidating the gains of the Renewed Hope Agenda.

According to her, Cross River State people have continued to identify with the leadership of President Tinubu and Governor Otu because of their commitment to development, economic transformation, and improved welfare for Nigerians.

Edu called on party members, women, youths, and grassroots mobilisers to sustain the momentum through intensified community engagement, grassroots mobilisation, and voter sensitisation ahead of the general elections.

She stressed that the APC's strength lies in its unity, organisational capacity, and ability to translate popular support into electoral victories, urging stakeholders to remain focused, united, and committed to the party's vision.

The high-profile rally was attended by Vice President Kashim Shettima, GCON; Senate President Godswill Akpabio; APC National Chairman, Professor Nentawe Yilwatda; the Governors of Cross River, Imo, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa and Edo states; the Director-General of the APC



Presidential Campaign Council; other PCC members; political leaders and enthusiastic supporters.

The gathering witnessed a massive show of party solidarity, with stakeholders and supporters reaffirming their commitment to Tinubu and Otu's re-election.

The rally further reinforced the APC's growing political momentum in Cross River State, signalling a renewed determination to deepen grassroots support and mobilise an overwhelming mandate for the party's candidates in the 2027 general elections.

MGHS Students Receive Eye Screening, Training On Eye Protection

By Isaac Taiwo

METHODIST Girl's High School has benefitted from free eye screenings, vital signs checks, and eye-health education organised by the Resource Center for the Blind (RCB).

The school's principal, Mrs. Oluyemisi Padonu, appreciated RCB for extending the gesture to the students and the teachers.

She told the students maximize the opportunity, imploring them to respect the unique capabilities of persons with visual impairments.

Beyond clinical care, the campaign focused heavily on social integration, highlighting the white cane as a symbol of independence and a vital tool for spatial navigation.

Speaking, the RCB Director, Mrs. Temitayo Ayinla emphasised early detection and routine screenings are essential to preventing degenerative eye diseases, which often begins without noticeable symptoms until significant damage has occurred.

Ayinla stressed the need for widespread public education to dismantle deep-seated social stigmas and misconceptions, reminding the students that visual impairment is not contagious and should never restrict an individual's participation in society.

She urged the government to implement accessible public infrastructure, such as pedestrian crossings equipped with audible signals. She also called on motorists to exercise greater caution around persons with disabilities.

On education, the centre advocated a shift towards fully inclusive school with adequate funding and specialized teachers.

"Currently, systemic gaps, such as inadequate access to adaptive learning materials, assistive technologies and specialized teacher training, continue to limit opportunities for students with visual impairments to study subjects such as mathematics and science.

Karsana Gains Attention As Abuja's Residential Landscape Expands

By David Emokpea

KARSANA, an emerging residential district in Abuja, is witnessing increasing development activity as expanding infrastructure, population growth and rising demand for housing continue to reshape the Federal Capital Territory's urban landscape.

The district is becoming part of the wider expansion of Abuja beyond its established residential neighbourhoods, reflecting the growing importance of peripheral communities in accommodating the city's housing needs. As development spreads towards previously less-developed areas, locations such as Karsana are increasingly featuring in conversations about the future direction of the capital's residential growth.

One of the factors influencing this transformation is the gradual improvement of road connectivity and supporting infrastructure. Accessibility remains a major consideration in the development of new residential communities, particularly as transportation networks determine how easily residents can connect with commercial centres, workplaces, educational institutions and other essential services.



Karsana

For Karsana, continued infrastructure development presents an opportunity to become more integrated into Abuja's expanding urban structure. However, the pace and quality of supporting infrastructure will remain important in determining how effectively the district accommodates its growing residential population.

The area's development also reflects the increasing participation of private-sector developers in addressing housing demand across the capital. As Abuja continues to expand, residential construction is extending beyond established districts, creating new development corridors and placing greater attention on the planning of emerging communities.

Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Exclusive Shelters, Ahmad Bello Kawuwa, emphasised the importance of integrating infrastructure, accessibility and long-term community needs into residential development.

"Residential development should go beyond providing houses. We must pay attention to the infrastructure, accessibility and planning that make communities functional and sustainable. Our focus is on contributing to Abuja's growing residential landscape while recognising the importance of creating an environment where people can live comfortably and plan for the future."

His remarks reflect a broader consideration within the housing sector: the need to approach residential development as part of a wider urban planning process rather than concentrating exclusively on the construction of individual buildings.

Across Abuja, the expansion of residential communities has increased the importance of coordinated infrastructure delivery. Roads, drainage systems, electricity, water supply, waste management and access to healthcare and educational facilities all contribute to the functionality of growing neighbourhoods.

Beta Glass Champions Breast Cancer Awareness Through #FromGreenToPink Campaign

By Suliyat Tella

BETA Glass Plc, the largest glass container manufacturer in West and Central Africa, has reinforced its commitment to employee's health and wellbeing through the 2026 edition of its #FromGreenToPink campaign. Launched in 2025, #FromGreenToPink is the company's breast cancer campaign that focuses on women's health and the importance of good environmental and sustainability practices.

Held in commemoration of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, popularly known as Pinktober, the initiative focused on an important aspect of preventive healthcare: ensuring that people have access to credible information about breast cancer and are encouraged to take appropriate steps towards early detection. This year's campaign featured an employee sensitisation session, breast cancer screenings across three Beta Glass locations and an awareness walk in Lagos.

The campaign commenced with a virtual breast cancer awareness session, during which healthcare professionals educated employees on breast cancer risk factors, potential warning signs, the importance of regular screening and the need to seek timely medical advice. The interactive session also provided an opportunity for employees to ask questions, address common misconceptions and gain practical information to support proactive healthcare.

Keeping Up With The Nwokos: Ned Nwoko Urges Public To Give Regina Space

By Suliyat Tella

SENATOR Ned Nwoko has appealed to the public to give his estranged wife, Nollywood actress, Regina Daniels, space to recover from her health challenges, urging her fans, friends and social media users to stop spreading false reports about her.

Nwoko made the appeal in a post on his Instagram page, saying the actress needed love, support and an opportunity to recover rather than public criticism and speculation about her personal life.

He said his appeal was also for the sake of their children, who, according to him, were well cared for and deserved to see their mother supported.

The senator's appeal follows a video Regina shared on her 25th birthday on October 10, in which she appeared in a wheelchair and spoke about health challenges that had affected her mobility for several months.

In the video, the actress explained that what started as a minor health problem gradually worsened, leaving her in severe pain. She said there were times she could walk normally and other times she struggled to move.

Regina also disclosed that she had undergone several medical tests and had experienced some improvement in her condition.

South African University Appoints LAUTECH Don, Agbaje Lateef, Honorary Professor

By Gbenga Salau

PROFESSOR Agbaje Lateef, a renowned scholar in the Department of Pure and Applied Biology at Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomoso, Nigeria, has been appointed Honorary Professor in the School of Agriculture and Science (SAS), University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

Lateef, who heads the LAUTECH Nanotechnology Research Group (NANO+), is a distinguished alumnus of the university, where he obtained all his academic degrees. He joined the institution as a Graduate Assistant in 1998 and rose to the rank of professor in 2013.

His appointment followed a nomination and extensive reviews of his research portfolio by the School of Agriculture and Science, College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science, Senate, and Governing Council of UKZN.

The honorary professorship recognises distinguished individuals for their academic excellence and contributions to research, teaching, postgraduate mentorship, and institutional development. UKZN is among South Africa's leading research-intensive universities.

Lateef's appointment reflects his contributions to industrial microbiology, biotechnology, and nanobiotechnology, as well as his longstanding research collaboration with UKZN scholars, which has produced more than 50 joint publications over the past decade. His collaborators include Professor Evariste Bosco Gueguim-Kana, Dr Lorika Selomi Beukes, and Ms Ntombozuko Matyumza.

Gueguim-Kana, a Cameroonian and also a LAUTECH alumnus, is a distinguished professor and academic leader for Research and Higher Degrees at UKZN's School of Agriculture and Science. He is recognised for his work in applying computer-integrated systems to fermentation technology.

Both professors share an academic background, having obtained their bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees under Professor Julius K la Oloke at LAUTECH. They also contributed to the university's recognition as the best state university in 2005 through research exhibitions on fructooligosaccharides and bioreactor design at the National Universities Commission's research and development fair in Abuja.

Gueguim-Kana joined UKZN in 2012 after leaving LAUTECH as a Senior Lecturer and has since received the university's Distinguished Teacher Award.

'Development Transcends Policies, It Is About People And Opportunities Available To Them'

Ayisat Agbaje is a public servant and development professional with experience spanning law, international development, youth engagement and governance. She began her career in the United Kingdom as a Legal and Administrative Assistant before moving into project management and youth development. She later served as Special Assistant to the Governor of Kaduna State and Senior Special Assistant for Development Partnerships and Economic Planning to the Governor of Lagos State. She is currently involved in leadership development at the Lateef Jakande Leadership Academy, where she contributes to preparing young Nigerians for public service and governance. Through her work, she advocates ethical leadership, institutional development and greater opportunities for young people to contribute to Nigeria's future. In this interview with ***MOYOSORE SALAMI****, she speaks about the power of leadership reproduction, the necessity for every sector in the country including the government to provide opportunities that develop a generation of ethical, informed, and purpose-driven leaders.*

In your career journey, which experiences shaped the woman you are today?

MY career journey was shaped by legal training, international development, public service, and a deep interest in people and the systems that shape their opportunities. I have worked with young people, local authorities, and community organisations to strengthen youth participation and civic engagement. Those experiences helped me understand that development is not just about policies or programmes; it is ultimately about people and the opportunities available to them.

My decision to work in public service was also an important turning point. I made the conscious decision to pursue a career in public service, driven by a sense of purpose and a desire to contribute to Nigeria's development. These experiences deepened my appreciation of what it means to prepare people for responsibility and the importance of equipping young Nigerians with the knowledge, exposure, and values required to serve effectively.

Looking back, each stage of my journey has shaped who I am today. They have taught me that leadership is not simply about the position you occupy, but about the people you impact, the systems you strengthen and the opportunities you create for others. Those lessons continue to inform my work.

What attracted you to the role at the Lateef Jakande Leadership Academy?

What attracted me was the chance to build something that would extend beyond individual achievements. It was an opportunity to help create an environment where young Nigerians could learn how government works, understand the complexities of policymaking, engage with experienced leaders, and develop the competence and character required to serve.

For me, it was not simply an appointment or a career opportunity. It aligned with a conviction I had developed over time: if we want better outcomes for our country, we must deliberately invest in the people who will shape its future.

My journey to the Lateef Jakande Leadership Academy was, in many ways, a natural progression of the work I had already been doing and the questions I had become increasingly interested in answering. Having worked in public service and experienced leadership development programmes myself, I became particularly interested in how we deliberately prepare people for leadership. We often talk about the need for effective leadership in Nigeria, but we don't always give enough attention to the structures, experiences, and opportunities required to develop it.

The Academy offered an opportunity to contribute to that process in a more intentional, institutional way.

I believe leadership is most powerful when it is reproduced. The opportunity to help develop a generation of ethical, informed, and purpose-driven leaders was therefore deeply meaningful to me.

'We often talk about the need for effective leadership in Nigeria, but we don't always give enough attention to the structures, experiences, and opportunities required to develop it'

Tell us about the core of your role in the academy?

My role ensures leadership development goes beyond theory and becomes a practical, transformative experience for our Fellows. Leadership cannot be fully understood from books, lectures or motivational conversations alone. You must understand how institutions operate, how decisions are made, how competing interests are managed and how policies translate into outcomes for ordinary people. At the Academy, we approach this through structured learning, mentorship, public-service immersion, executive engagements, leadership seminars, policy conversations, and experiential learning. Our Fellows have opportunities to engage with ministries, departments and agencies. They interact with senior public officials and other experienced leaders, and gain a better understanding of the realities of governance. We also encourage them to reflect critically on what they observe and to connect their learning to the challenges facing their communities and the country.

In my role, a significant part of my responsibility is building the partnerships and institutional relationships that make these experiences possible. It is also about creating an environment where our young people can ask difficult questions, learn from their mistakes, challenge their assumptions, and build the confidence to take responsibility.

Beyond the programmes and activities, however, I see my role as helping to shape a culture of leadership. We want our young people to understand that competence must be accompanied by character, that ambition must be guided by purpose, and that leadership requires a willingness to learn continuously.

Ultimately, success is not simply completing the programme. It is that they leave better equipped to contribute meaningfully wherever their careers and responsibilities take them.

What are the challenges you have encountered as a woman building a career in leadership and public-service development?

Like many women building careers in leadership, I have had to navigate expectations about how women should lead, how they should express themselves, and the standards by which their competence is sometimes judged.

Sometimes women feel they must work harder to establish credibility, demonstrate competence, or ensure their contributions are taken seriously. There are also expectations around how women balance ambition, responsibility and the different roles they may occupy in their personal and professional lives.

My experience has taught me the importance of being grounded in my values and clear about the contribution I want to make. I have learnt that I cannot build my professional identity entirely around other people's expectations. I must be willing to learn, do the work, take responsibility for my decisions and remain confident in the value I bring.

My work around gender equality has also shaped how I think about these issues. In my writing and advocacy, I have focused on the structures that shape women's access to opportunities and how laws, institutions, and social expectations can enable or constrain their participation.

For me, the conversation must go beyond encouraging individual women to be confident. Confidence matters, but so do the environments in which women are expected to operate. We must keep building workplaces and institutions where competence is recognised, opportunities are accessible and women can contribute meaningfully without negotiating unnecessary barriers.

These experiences have made me more intentional about the spaces I occupy and the opportunities I help create for others. They have also reinforced my belief that leadership comes with a responsibility to make the path a little more accessible for those who come after us.

What does the legacy of late Lateef Jakande, whose public service was strongly associated with people-centred development, mean, in the work you do in the academy?

The legacy of the late Alhaji Lateef Kayode Jakande reminds us that public service must ultimately be measured by its impact on people's lives.

His approach to governance, particularly his commitment to expanding access to education, housing and other essential services, reflects an understanding that leadership carries a responsibility to improve the conditions in which people live. His legacy challenges us to think beyond the visibility of leadership and focus instead on the substance of what we deliver.

At the Academy, that principle matters because we are not simply preparing young people to occupy positions of authority. We are preparing them to understand the responsibility that comes with those positions.

We want our young people to appreciate that public service is not a privilege to be enjoyed; it is a responsibility to be carried. They must understand the people behind the policies, the communities affected by government decisions and the



Agbaje

importance of ensuring that institutions work for the people they are designed to serve.

For me, honouring Alhaji Jakande's legacy means translating the values of his public service into how we prepare the next generation of leaders. It means helping young people develop the competence, empathy and sense of responsibility required to make a meaningful difference.

Young people make up nearly half of Nigeria's population, but they represent 100 per cent of our future. If we are serious about that future, then we must be equally serious about the quality of leadership we nurture today.

Having worked with fellows from different backgrounds and cohorts, what have you observed about the young people coming into leadership today?

One thing that continues to encourage me is the depth of talent, curiosity, and ambition among young Nigerians. Our Fellows come from different backgrounds and bring different experiences, perspectives and ideas to the table. What they share, however, is a desire to contribute and an interest in understanding how they can become more effective in their respective fields.

I have observed that young people are often more willing to engage with difficult questions than we sometimes give them credit for. They want to understand why certain things work the way they do, why some systems deliver better outcomes than others, and what they can do to influence change.

I have also seen how exposure can expand a young person's understanding of what is possible. When young people are given access to experienced leaders, practical learning opportunities and environments that encourage critical thinking, they begin to see leadership not as something distant or reserved for a select few, but as a responsibility they can prepare themselves for.

At the same time, potential alone is not enough. Young people need opportunities, mentorship, exposure and the confidence to translate their ideas into action. They also need to develop patience, discipline and an understanding that meaningful change often requires sustained effort.

I do not believe young Nigerians lack the capacity to lead. The more important question is whether we are creating the right structures to identify, develop and support that capacity. This is why leadership development matters. We must move beyond celebrating young people's potential to deliberately invest in preparing them.

What are the qualities you believe a young person must develop before stepping into public service?

I believe there are several qualities that are essential, beginning with integrity, a genuine sense of responsibility and a willingness to put the public interest above personal gain. Public service places you in a position where your decisions can affect people's livelihoods, opportunities and quality of life. That responsibility requires more than good intentions. It requires character, sound judgement, and an understanding of the consequences of your choices.

Competence is equally important. You must be willing to learn, understand policy, engage with evidence and develop the technical skills required to solve problems. Good intentions cannot compensate for a lack of preparation, particularly when you are responsible for decisions that affect many people.

I would also emphasise empathy. Effective public servants must understand the realities of the people they serve. It is easy to discuss policy in abstract terms, but leadership requires an appreciation of how decisions affect individuals, families and communities.

Another important quality is humility. No one enters public service knowing everything. You must be willing to listen, learn from others, accept constructive criticism and acknowledge when you are wrong.

Finally, young people must develop resilience and patience. Public service can be complex, and meaningful change is not always immediate. There will be constraints, competing priorities and moments when progress is slower than expected. What matters is the ability to stay principled, learn from setbacks, and keep working toward the desired outcomes. Ultimately, I believe young people should enter public service with a clear understanding that leadership is not about what they stand to gain from a position, but what they are prepared to contribute through it.

From your experience what would you say is the role of mentorship in leadership?

Leadership is about creating the conditions in which others can grow and succeed. Sometimes, we place so much emphasis on individual leaders that we overlook the systems and opportunities that help people become effective leaders. We celebrate the person who has reached a particular position without always asking who mentored them, what experiences prepared them or what structures supported their development.

'Competence must be accompanied by character; ambition must be guided by purpose and leadership requires willingness to learn continuously'



Agbaje

'I would tell young women to stay anchored in their values and not let external expectations define the limits of what they believe they can achieve. Be prepared, be willing to learn, do the work, and understand that your voice and perspective matter'

At the Academy, I see the importance of those investments every day. Exposure can change how a young person understands a problem. Mentorship can help them navigate a difficult decision. Practical experience can reveal the complexity of a responsibility they may previously have viewed in simple terms.

That understanding also influences how I approach my own role. I see my responsibility not just as leading the Academy, but as a mentor, contributing to an environment where future leaders can emerge, develop, and eventually take on responsibilities of their own.

Tell us about memorable experiences in the academy?

One of the most rewarding aspects of this work is seeing our Fellows move from having a general interest in leadership to developing a more grounded understanding of what it actually requires. Through their engagements with public institutions, interactions with experienced leaders and exposure to the realities of governance, they begin to think more critically about the problems they want to solve.

I find the community-impact projects particularly meaningful because they challenge Fellows to move beyond discussing problems and begin thinking about practical responses. When young people are encouraged to identify a challenge, understand the people affected by it, and work towards a solution, they begin to appreciate the relationship between leadership, responsibility, and impact. Sometimes, the most meaningful progress is reflected in a Fellow's changing perspective, their willingness to take responsibility or the way they begin to approach a challenge differently.

How does it feel to be a huge part of the academy's growth and what lessons have you learnt across cohorts?

Being part of the academy's growth has taught me a great deal about institution-building, patience and the importance of remaining committed to a vision while continually improving how it is delivered.

When you are building an institution, you are not simply organising programmes or managing activities. You are developing systems, building relationships, shaping culture, and creating structures that can continue to deliver value beyond the individuals currently involved.

The Academy's journey across its cohorts has reinforced the importance of listening, learning and adapting. Every cohort brings different perspectives, needs and experiences. We must therefore reflect on what is working, identify areas for improvement, and ensure our approach remains relevant to the young people we are preparing.

It has also taught me the value of collaboration. No single institution can develop future leaders in isolation. It requires the involvement of experienced public servants, private-sector leaders, academics, mentors, development partners, and other stakeholders willing to share their knowledge and create opportunities for young people.

Another important lesson is that institutional growth must be matched by institutional depth. Expanding the number of people we reach is not enough. We must also pay attention to the quality of the experience, the strength of the systems supporting it and the long-term outcomes we hope to achieve.

I am proud of the progress the Academy has made, but I also recognise that institution-building is an ongoing process. The work requires continuous reflection, commitment and a willingness to think beyond immediate results.

For me, the real measure of our progress will be the strength of the leadership pipeline we help build and the contributions our Fellows make to society over time.

What did you wish you knew earlier in your career as a woman about workplace polity?

I wish I had understood earlier that I did not have to have everything figured out before I could step into an opportunity.

At the beginning of one's career, it is easy to feel that you must know everything, prove yourself constantly or wait until you meet every requirement before putting yourself forward. Over time, I have learnt that growth often happens when you take on responsibility, ask questions, learn from others, and stay open to experiences that stretch you.

I would also tell my younger self not to underestimate the importance of relationships and mentorship. The people you learn from, the conversations you have and the professional relationships you build can shape your perspective in ways you may not immediately appreciate. Seek out people who challenge you, support your growth, and are willing to share what they've learned.

Another lesson is that you don't need to diminish yourself to make others comfortable. You can be respectful and collaborative while still expressing your ideas, asking difficult questions and taking ownership of your work.

I have also learnt that success does not have to follow a perfectly linear path. Different experiences can equip you with different skills, and sometimes the value of a particular opportunity becomes clearer only when you look back.

Above all, I would tell young women to stay anchored in their values and not let external expectations define the limits of what they believe they can achieve. Be prepared, be willing to learn, do the work, and understand that your voice and perspective matter. You do not have to become someone else to be an effective leader. Keep developing into the most capable and purposeful version of yourself.

Looking back at the woman you were in the outset of your career and who you have become, what are you most proud of?

I am most proud of becoming a woman who is increasingly clear about her purpose and the responsibility that comes with the opportunities she has been given. Looking back, I see a journey that has taken me through different countries, institutions, professional experiences, and seasons of growth. Each stage has taught me something about people, leadership, resilience and the importance of understanding the wider impact of the work we do. I am grateful for the opportunity to build a career that allows me to contribute to public service and the development of young Nigerians. Through my work at the Lateef Jakande Leadership Academy, I have the opportunity to contribute to something I believe is vital to our country's future: deliberately preparing people to lead with competence, integrity, and a genuine commitment to service.

I am also proud of the work I have done through the AA Initiative, particularly supporting vulnerable children and underserved communities. That work reflects another part of my conviction that leadership must remain connected to humanity and that our responsibility to others should not be limited to our professional positions.

On a personal level, I am proud to be more grounded in who I am, my heritage, my values, and my faith. My journey has reinforced my belief that success is not simply about how far you go or the positions you attain. It is also about whether your journey remains connected to something meaningful and whether you use your opportunities to make a positive difference. I am still learning, and I do not consider the journey complete. There is much more to contribute and much more to understand. But if one thing continues to define the woman I am becoming, it is my willingness to serve, develop others, and help build institutions and opportunities that will outlive my individual role.

SIDF: Creating Ambience Where Welfare Of Every Child Is Guaranteed

By Suliyat Tella

COMMITTED to providing care, education and opportunities for vulnerable children, the Sisters In Deen Foundation (SIDF), a group of women who initially came together to support children through donations to orphanages is driving a new level of care narrative with the establishment of their flagship initiative, 'Baytu Sakeenah Orphanage'.

The SDIF women began with a series of Ramadan visits to orphanage homes in Lagos and on the realisation that their contributions could go beyond occasional visits and food supplies, they created the Baytu Sakeenah Orphanage which provides residential care for orphans and vulnerable children.

Prior to the establishment of Baytu Sakeenah Orphanage, their visits to orphanage homes exposed them to some of the needs of children in institutional care. During one of the visits, they asked the management about the items the children needed most. While food donations were common, they learnt that protein-rich meals were often lacking.

The women subsequently made it a commitment to provide protein every month, donating beans, eggs, chicken and other food items. But as their involvement continued, they began to consider a more permanent way of supporting children without parental care. "This is what birthed Baytu Sakeenah Orphanage, instead of going to other homes to donate we decided to create a home where we could directly oversee the welfare and development of children," Hajia Fatima Mongonu, the secretary of SIDF, said.

Beyond providing shelter

The foundation's activities are built around the belief that children should not be defined by the circumstances of their birth or the challenges they face.

Its vision is to create an environment where every child, regardless of background, can thrive in a safe, supportive and faith-driven setting. Its mission includes providing shelter, education, healthcare and moral guidance while developing children into confident, compassionate and capable individuals.

Through Baytu Sakeenah, the foundation provides residential care, nutrition and protection, alongside educational and learning support. It also undertakes health-related activities, including medical outreaches, screenings, referrals and healthcare support.

Its other areas of intervention include psychosocial support, mentorship, life-skills development, youth empowerment and advocacy for the rights and inclusion of vulnerable children.

The foundation also provides monthly food relief to vulnerable families, with additional distributions during festive periods, including Eid celebrations.

Remarking, President, SIDF, Dr Nura Akinlabi-Babalola, at the fourth edition of the foundation's Capacity Building Development Programme and official unveiling of the new Baytu Sakeenah home in Ogba, Lagos, said the foundation's responsibility to vulnerable children must extend beyond meeting their immediate needs.

Addressing participants under the theme 'Vulnerability: A Stepping Stone to Success', Akinlabi-Babalola said children need education, character development, emotional support, spiritual nourishment, life skills, mentorship and opportunities for economic independence.

She said the objective was to raise children who were not merely surviving but thriving, with the ability to think critically, make informed decisions, discover their abilities and contribute meaningfully to society.

"This is the philosophy behind our work at Sisters in Deen Foundation, offering a warm, strong transformation centre for orphans and vulnerable youths," she said.

'Children need education, character development, emotional support, spiritual nourishment, life skills, ment]orship and opportunities for economic independence'



VIce President, Sisters in The Deen Foundation (SIDF)-Baytu Sakeenah, Hajia Binta Adisa (left); Public Relations Officer, SIDF, Olori Fatima Saliu Adenekan; Chairman, Board of Trustees, SIDF, Hajia Rafat Sanusi, Member of Trustees, Hajia Olayinka Kareem; Welfare Secretary, Hajia Olususu Basirat Omolara; President, (SIDF), Dr Nurat Akinlabi-Babalola; Director SIDF NEXTGEN, Pharm. Munirat Amolegbe and Secretary of the Foundation, Hajia Fatima Abubakar Monguno, during the twin-event of capacity building seminar and unveiling of Baytu-Sakeenah Orphanage Home in Lagos.



Guest Speaker/Chief Executive Officer, Egret Media, Hajia Mutiat Olagoke (left); Chairman, Board of Trustees, SIDF-Baytu Sakeenah, Hajia Rafat Sanusi; Guest Speaker, Dr Fatai Olajobi; and President, SIDF, Dr. Nurat Akinlabi-Babalola at the event.



Guest Speaker/Judge of the High Court of Lagos State, Justice Yetunde Rukayat Pinheiro (left); Dr. Nurat Akinlabi-Babalola; Hajia Rafat Sanusi; Secretary of the foundation, Hajia Fatima Abubakar Monguno; and Vice-President, Hajia Binta Adisa at the event.



The newly multi-million-Naira Sisters in Deen Foundation Orphanage (Baytu-Sakeenah Home) commissioned during the event.

Akinlabi-Babalola said capacity development remained central to the foundation's mission because children needed to develop the confidence and abilities to participate meaningfully in the society. She also encouraged the young participants not to allow their backgrounds to limit their aspirations. "Do not allow what you lack today to make you doubt what you can become tomorrow," she emphasised.

She urged them to embrace learning, discipline and good character, while making the most of opportunities available to them.

The president also acknowledged the contributions of the foundation's patrons, trustees, advisory board, executive members, staff, caregivers and volunteers. She said the organisation depended on the collective efforts of people who contributed their time, knowledge, resources and professional experience to sustain its work.

She particularly recognised the importance of caregivers, whose daily responsibilities include attending to the children's needs, providing guidance and maintaining a safe environment.

Akinlabi-Babalola also called on corporate organisations, development agencies, professionals and individuals to support the foundation through scholarships, mentorship, skills training, internships, employment opportunities and financial contributions.

She noted that support did not always have to come in the form of large financial donations, as professional connections, encouragement and access to opportunities could also change a child's life.

The president acknowledged Muslim Hands International for its scholarship support and assistance with the children's tutorial programmes, music and schooling.

Guest speaker, Hon. Justice Yetunde Rukayat Pinheiro, Judge of the High Court of Lagos State said, helping children overcome vulnerability also requires ensuring that they understand their rights and responsibilities.

Directly addressing the children, Pinheiro asked whether they had ever felt afraid, nervous, intimidated or overwhelmed by their circumstances. She used her personal experience to demonstrate how fear and uncertainty could sometimes prevent people from pursuing opportunities.

She recalled when she was preparing to attend university, her father, who was a lawyer, asked whether she wanted to study law. At the time, she had doubts about her ability to succeed in the profession. However, about 40 years later, she said she was grateful to have become a judge of the Lagos State High Court.

Her experience, she explained, taught her that uncertainty should not prevent people from taking opportunities that could change their lives. She encouraged the children to trust in Allah, remain committed to learning and approach challenges with courage.

Pinheiro also reminded them that every child, regardless of age or background, had rights, including the right to safety and education. "Your voice is very important," she said.

Drawing from her work as a judge, she explained the importance of communicating clearly and calmly when seeking help or resolving disagreements.

The judge also spoke about the relationship between rights and responsibilities, describing the two as working together like two feet.

While it is important for children to understand and exercise their rights, she said, they must also learn to be honest, disciplined, respectful and obedient to the law.

Pinheiro illustrated the importance of individual responsibility with an example of a street where every resident takes care of the space in front of their house. If everyone performs that responsibility, the entire street will remain clean.

The same principle, she said, applies to everyday life. Children should respect their teachers, complete their assignments, avoid unnecessary noise and treat others kindly.

She also encouraged them to develop good habits gradually rather than become overwhelmed by the expectation of getting everything right at once.

Using daily prayers as an example, she encouraged the children to work towards observing all five prayers at their appointed times while remaining committed to improving their religious practices. She said consistency in small actions could eventually produce significant changes.

She urged the children to see themselves as seeds with the potential to become successful adults, regardless of their backgrounds.

"You are a small seed today. Tomorrow, Insha Allah, who knows, you might be the president. Who knows, you will be a judge or a doctor. Nothing is impossible," she said.

For the second guest speaker Dr Abdul Fattah Olajobi, the initiative is important because it gives the foundation an opportunity to build something that can continue across generations.

Olajobi, who said he grew up in Oshodi and attended public schools, shared his belief that a person's background should not determine how far they can go in life.

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

Foundation Revives 1940s Lagos Culture Soiree

By Daniel Anazia

THE Macaulay Heritage Foundation, in collaboration with the Lagos State Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture and powered by Studio 18 Hub, staged a cultural evening at Freedom Park, Lagos, to celebrate Herbert Macaulay's legacy through music, dance, food and masquerade display.

The event, tagged, *Kirsten Hall Soiree: An Evening Reminiscing of 1940 Lagos — Faaji Night with Herbert Macaulay*, sought to highlight the nationalist's lesser-known identity as a cultural enthusiast and Lagos socialite, according to Gladstone Olufemi Macaulay, Chairman Macaulay Heritage Foundation.

He stated that the initiative was designed to draw attention to Herbert Macaulay's interest in music, traditional practices and community gatherings beyond his contributions to Nigeria's nationalist movement.

"Everyone remembers him as the Doyen of Nigeria Nationalism, the founder of Nigeria's first political party — the NNDP, the man who



went to the Privy Council to fight for Oluwa land. But few remember him as a cultural man, the socialite, the man who loved Lagos music, who opened his library called 'The Temple of Peace' to young Lagosians. Faaji was his weapon of unity, and tonight, we brought it back," he said.

"Although he's our progenitor, our patriarch, we respect him and give him importance. There's more to come from this foundation than just Herbert Macaulay. For example, his father is the first person to set up the first secondary school in Nigeria, CMS Grammar School.

"His mother trained him from home to pass the GCE examination in London for him to get access. So, there are people, there's a reason why we chose not to limit the foundation to Herbert Macaulay, but to the Macaulay Heritage Foundation.

The soiree recreated aspects of the social life associated with Macaulay's residence at Kirsten Hall, 8, Balbina Street, Yaba, where he was remembered for hosting concerts and film screenings, alongside his political and journalistic activities.

According to Macaulay, the choice of 1940 was deliberate, reflecting a period when Herbert Macaulay's political influence and cultural interests remained significant.

"It was the twilight of Macaulay's life, yet his most influential period. By then, he had mentored a young Nnamdi Azikiwe, and together they would form the NCNC in 1944.

Tubaba Jabs NoGamesVal In New Song *Balling*

By Debo Oladimeji

FAST-rising UK-based Nigerian Afropop artiste, NoGamesVal, has found humour in what appears to be a lyrical contrast between his 2026 single, *Economy*, and veteran singer Tubaba's new song, *Balling*.

The fun began when Tubaba, in *Balling*, sings, "We don't care about economy 'cause big boys go do charity," a line that caught the attention of NoGamesVal, who had earlier made the economy the subject of his own song.

Meanwhile, NoGamesVal in *Economy* sang: "If me and you do business, better give me my own percent, for this kind of economy, don't play with my currency."

The contrasting lines have created a musical coincidence. While NoGamesVal's *Economy* addresses financial responsibility, honesty and transparency in street business, Tubaba's *Balling* takes a more carefree approach, encouraging listeners to enjoy life despite the pressures around them.

NoGamesVal found the irony funny, particularly as he had been stressing the realities of a harsh economy, but Tubaba declared that "we don't care about economy" because the big boys would take care of things.

There is no indication that Tubaba specifically intended the line as a response to NoGamesVal, but the lyrical coincidence has nevertheless provided fans with an entertaining comparison between two artistes approaching the subject from completely different perspectives.

The contrasting moment comes as NoGamesVal continues to build momentum within the emerging Afropop scene. The UK-based artiste recently featured alongside Darkoo and other performers at the Nigeria at 66 Independence Party in the UK, expanding his visibility among Nigerian music audiences.

He has also released the music video for his latest track, *Going Hard and Crazy*, as he continues to refine his sound and strengthen his presence in the new generation of Afropop artistes.

With his distinctive approach and growing catalogue, NoGamesVal is steadily carving out his own space in the genre. With *Economy* still delivering its money-conscious punchlines and Going Hard and Crazy showcasing another side of his musical personality, NoGamesVal seems determined to keep pushing his craft.

Thanks to Tubaba's *Balling*, his earlier "don't play with my currency" line has found an unlikely musical counterpart. NoGamesVal says protect the currency. Tubaba says go ball. The economy, apparently, can wait.



Tubaba

Shuga Band Marks Anniversary Of Founder's death

By Eniola Daniel

PREMIUM live music ensemble, Shuga Band is marking the first anniversary of its late founder, Akinloye Tofowomo, popularly known as Akiin Shuga by reinventing its brand identity with the launch of a new logo asset to immortalise his glorious memory.

Akiin Shuga, as he is fondly called, led Shuga Band to entertain the high society at exclusive functions. His prestige audience included three serving Presidents as well as the top five Nigerian billionaires among others.

The band dedicated the entire month of October to celebrate its late founder with the unveiling of the new brand identity across all owned media platforms. It also reinforced her new look identity at all her engagements in the month of October.

Signifying professionalism and excellence in music, the new identity carries the face of the widely-regarded founder holding a mic and doing what he knew how to do best for the larger part of his life. Further deepening the legacy, the band released Best of Akiin Shuga on digital platforms, a compilation of his life per-



formances.

These deep values have kept the band going for over two and a half decade making it a reference point in the pantheon of live music. The latest effort is another layer to deepen a strong structure around the band in its post-founder phase. While unveiling a Valentine medley for lovers earlier in the year, the band also announced the constitution of a high-calibre advisory board to provide oversight and direction.

Still maintaining her founder, Akiin Shuga's signature music repertoire and flawlessly delivered, the band continues to wow guests. Shuga Band is known for her eclectic sound switching seamlessly among genres such as classics, traditional, gospel and contemporary.

COO, Shuga Band, Maria Tofowomo, said: "Our founder, Akiin Shuga, taught us that music is service to people, to God and joy itself. He advocated for a structured industry built on integrity, trust and professionalism, and our ability to sustain his legacy is a testament to those values."

Also speaking, Business Manager, Jerry Odeh, revealed that activities of the Shuga Limb Foundation, a passion project of the late founder and anti-polio champion has not stopped making impact.

Arite Thrills With Jazz, Wine, Whiskey

By Eniola Daniel

FOR a night expected to deliver classical and undiluted jazz music, Arite Monday Akosubo showed that she was made for the moment, as she took music lovers to long hours journey of rhythm and electric performances.



Arite

The show tagged, Jazz, Wine and Whiskey, connected lovers of the soulful music to the night's soiree.

Through the night, Arite channelled her personal feelings into spontaneous solos, making every performance raw and energetic.

Speaking with *The Guardian*, she said: "Jazz, Wine and Whiskey is my brainchild; I love jazz music. I think one of the best companions of jazz music is either wine or Whiskey. Most ladies say they love wine while the men pick whiskey."

The Berklee College of Music-trained virtuoso added: "Jazz speaks to my soul; there is something about the genre that I can't let go of. It reminds me of my root, it has a nostalgic feeling that I love and that's why I'm sticking to it despite the popularity of other genres.

"People underrate jazz, they tag it an old people's music but jazz in its element has a way of elevating one's mood and broadening the mind. Jazz is a beautiful nonsense that makes you ask for more as many instruments come together."

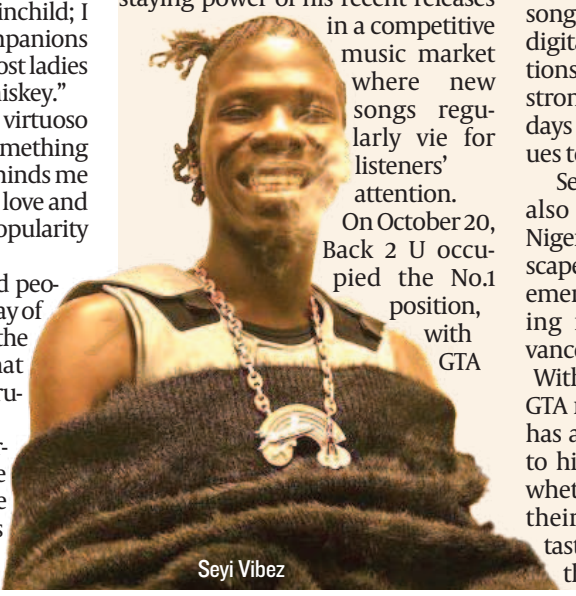
"Tonight, I can say I gave my best to entertain the people that came out to show me love. The love for the career has been the fuel. Even when I'm tired, the love keeps me up and going.

Seyi Vibez's Back 2 U Tops Apple Music Nigeria Chart as 'GTA' Holds Strong

By Daniel Anazia

SINGER and songwriter, Seyi Vibez, continues to command attention on Nigeria's streaming scene with his song Back 2 U topping the Apple Music Nigeria songs chart on October 20 and 21, while GTA also maintained a strong position among the platform's most-streamed tracks.

The chart performance underscores his continuing popularity and the staying power of his recent releases in a competitive music market where new songs regularly vie for listeners' attention.



Seyi Vibez

On October 20, Back 2 U occupied the No.1 position, with GTA also ranking among the leading songs. By October 21, Back 2 U had retained the top spot, while GTA climbed to No.2 on the Apple Music Nigeria chart. The result gave the Ketu-born street pop act the top two positions, highlighting the sustained performance of both releases.

The showing reflects more than the success of a single hit. Having two songs near the summit of the chart demonstrates his ability to keep multiple releases in circulation at the same time, drawing listeners beyond the initial excitement surrounding a song's release.

For Nigerian artistes, streaming charts have become an important measure of audience engagement, offering a daily snapshot of the songs listeners are choosing across digital platforms. While chart positions can fluctuate, maintaining a strong presence over consecutive days signals that a release continues to attract attention.

Seyi Vibez's latest performance also reinforces his position in Nigeria's fast-moving music landscape, where established stars and emerging acts compete for streaming numbers and cultural relevance.

With Back 2 U holding the lead and GTA rising close behind, the singer has another strong chart moment to his credit. The next test will be whether both tracks can sustain their momentum as listeners' tastes shift and new releases enter the race.

WTM London 2026 Reinforces Stakeholders On Global Travel Next Era

By **Maria Diamond**

EXCEL London again hosted the flagship World Travel Market (WTM) this year, bringing together global travel industry leaders, international destinations, business leaders, travel tech innovators and tourism boards under one space to provide insight and solution to common challenges around international travel.

For five decades, WTM has served as the world most influential travel and tourism event and the just concluded 2026 edition built on this legacy with the introduction of standout experiences for the hundreds of countries in attendance.

Experience is an integral part of tourism and WTM provides the hub through the three-day event which took place from November 3-5, revolving around the thematic preoccupation of "Resilience, Rebound and Reinvention: The Next Era of Global Travel"

WTM 2026 emphasised on emerging technologies, AI, and cultural tourism trends while featuring flagship sessions which includes the annual WTM Ministers Summit and the release of the WTM Global Travel Report.

'Erosion of consumer spending power has become an issue in international travels. Travellers are reallocating resources and looking to save where they can.'

The event also featured thousands of exhibitors from across the globe.

Nigeria on WTM 2026 Stage Showcase

NIGERIA did not miss out in showcasing its rich tourism endowments, attractions, and investment opportunities at the 2026 WTM, as everyone key travel, tourism and hospitality stakeholder who should be there was there to sell destination Nigeria including the Nigerian Tourism Development Authority (NTDA) who spearheaded the participation of the country in partnership with the Federation of Tourism Associations of Nigeria (FTAN). NANTA was also fully represented at the event, proudly showcasing its presence at Nigeria's beautifully decorated stand.

The NTDA Director-General, Mr Olayiwola Awakan GrPr, said the global platform provides an opportunity to showcase Nigeria's rich cultural heritage, natural attractions and emerging tourism products while positioning the country for greater international visibility and investment.

Through strategic engagements with international tour operators, airlines, investors and destination management companies, NTDA is advancing partnerships, expanding market access and creating new opportunities for Nigeria's tourism industry.

With private-sector participation through FTAN, Nigeria's presence at WTM 2026 reinforces the drive to attract investment, increase visitor arrivals, create jobs and strengthen tourism's contribution to economic diversification under the Renewed Hope Agenda.

Global Travel Issues

The Managing Director, EMEA, Tourism Economics Dave Goodger who revealed that erosion of consumer spending power has become an issue in international travels noted that travellers are reallocating resources and looking to save where they can.

For Head of Travel Research at Tourism Economics, Sean Morgan, 60% of travellers surveyed for the report wanted "luxury" holidays, where experiences are priorities.

Travel researcher, Chase Gray from Skift Advisory said luxury is one of the values that its research identified as being relevant for the traveller of the future, specifically, 2036.

From Gray's analysis, luxury will be about access not excess. He highlighted three categories of travellers as Prestige Travellers; Enrichment Travellers and Connection Travellers.

Experiential Tourism

DURING the Passion Tourism – 'cultural events, sports and music' debate session which explored experiential tourism and how it drives business and revenues long after the experience is over, one of the panelists, Luiza Fortuna from Superstruct Entertainment shared insight about an annual techno festival in the Netherlands through data. "The audience was a 50-50 split of Dutch and international visitors. From the international audience, 80% of them said that they wouldn't go to the Netherlands if it was not for the festival".

The Global Trends Report found that 58% of international travellers have undertaken a trip abroad specifically to attend an event in the past two years.

'Luxury is one of the values that will be relevant for the travellers of the future, specifically, 2036. Luxury will be about access not excess.'

Cruise lines are also seeing an uptick in experience-led tourism which explains why China-based luxury river cruise brand 'Century Cruises' outline its plans for expansion in Europe and North Africa at the event. It introduced a Rhine-Danube ship this year, with another due in 2027 and Nile cruises will be added in 2028. Its plans include enhanced culinary experiences, frequent onboard cultural celebration evenings and exclusive onshore events, such as private opera recitals in Vienna.

Explaining the dynamics, President and CEO for the Americas for Century Cruises, David Fredericks said: "If we were a hotel brand, we would fashion ourselves after Mandarin Oriental or Shangri La. Century Cruises, which typically hosts Asian, European and American travellers.

Tech-Dedicated Future Stage

On the tech-dedicated Future Stage, Ani Attamian, reinforced that having "correct, connected and clear data" is essential for companies looking to use AI in both internal operations and external customer experiences.

According to her, there has been a 3,500% year-on-year increase in gen-AI traffic to US travel sites (July 2025), confirming its rapid adoption by mainstream travelers.

She described how Ikea retrained and shifted 8,500 customer service workers into new remote interior design and high-value advisory roles, rather than laying them off after introducing its AI chatbot Billie.

Christmas Travel 1: Exploring Switzerland's Breathtaking Yuletide Ambience

By **Maria Diamond**

TRAVEL preparations for the Yuletide season officially kicks off in November and with it comes diverse travel-experiential needs for different folks.

For those looking to leave the shores of Nigeria to experience fairy Christmas, Switzerland stands out as one of the most breathtaking and iconic countries for a snowy, storybook Christmas.

Switzerland is a quintessential European winter wonderland with high-altitude alpine peaks, wooden chalets, and glowing holiday lights.

Experiencing Christmas ambience in Switzerland would be a step into a living storybook, a blend of crisp alpine air, glowing lights, rich aromas of melted cheese and sweet spices, and deep-rooted holiday traditions.



Scenic Views in Switzerland

. **The Swiss Alps and Villages**: High-altitude alpine towns like Zermatt, St. Moritz, and Grindelwald–Wengen offer virtually guaranteed snow during December.

. **Zermatt**: A car-free village overlooked by the Matterhorn, where electric taxis and horse-drawn carriages glide through silent, snow-covered streets.

St. Moritz: A historic luxury resort town offering crisp alpine air and festive charm.

The Experiences

. **Snow reliability**: High elevations in destinations like Zermatt and Saas-Fee virtually guarantee a white Christmas

. **The Vibe**: Across towns like Montreux, Lausanne, Geneva, and Lugano, wooden chalet stalls pop up filled with handcrafted gifts, local crafts, and festive decorations.

. **The Scents & Flavors**: The cold air is thick with the sweet smell of cinnamon, roasted nuts, waffles, hot mulled wine (Glühwein), and bubbling cheese.

. **The Skies**: In places like Montreux on Lake Geneva, you can even look up in the evening to watch Santa and his reindeer fly across the sky.

. **The Mountains**: In alpine regions like Murren or Engadin, Christmas means snow-dusted peaks, cozy mountain lodges with hot brandies, ice paths, and skiers carving down the slopes.

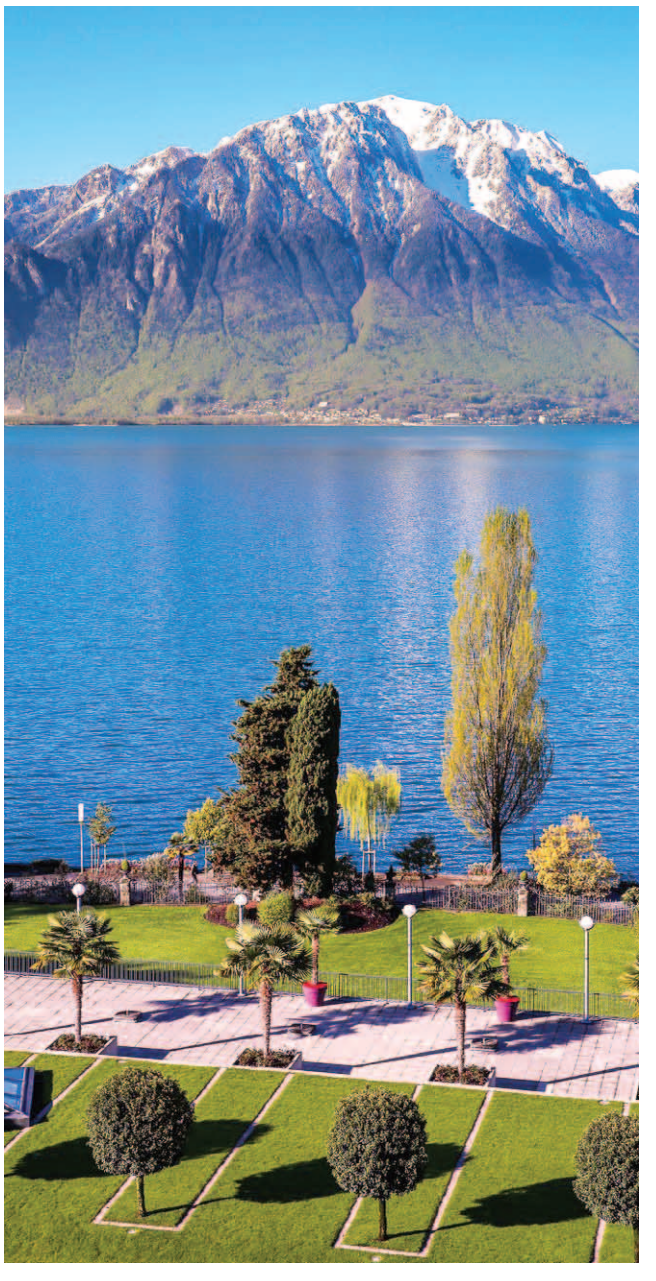
. **Fairytale Atmosphere**: Car-free villages filled with wooden chalets, horse-drawn carriages, glowing street lamps, and the shadow of the snow-dusted Matterhorn create an unmatched holiday setting.

. **The Sunny South**: In Ticino, places like Locarno or Ascona, the mood has a slightly Mediterranean twist, featuring palm trees decorated with lights, ice rinks in the grand piazzas called Locarno on Ice, open-air art cribs, and long communal outdoor tables like the 150-meter

. **Festive Traditions**: Classic European Christmas markets, local advent window reveals, and scenic red alpine trains winding through snow-blanketed valleys complete the experience.

. **The Singing Christmas Tree**: A tiered stage shaped like a giant pine tree where a choir sings in red robes and Santa hats filling the atmosphere with music.

. **The Magic Tram:** Children and adults watch the red Märlitram (fairy tale tram) cruise through the streets, driven by Santa Claus waving to the crowds.



www.guardian.ng

IbruCentre

From The Rector

Ibru International Ecumenical Centre, Agbarha-Otor Delta State. www.ibrucentre.org

Ecumenism In Action: Leadership That Unites The Church And Transforms Society (1)

By Ifeanyi Nsofor

"That they all may be one… that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." —John 17:21 (KJV)

When the Church Unites, Society Takes Notice

THE greatest challenge confronting Christian leadership today is not necessarily the absence of churches, gifted preachers, or influential Christian institutions. It is the urgent need to translate our collective spiritual strength into a united force for peace, justice, reconciliation, and social transformation.

We have built magnificent sanctuaries, established institutions, trained leaders, and mobilised millions of worshippers. Yet a critical question remains: How effectively are we in addressing the challenges confronting the Church and society?

This is where ecumenism becomes indispensable. Ecumenism is more than the gathering of Christian leaders at conferences or the exchange of goodwill messages during celebrations. It is the intentional pursuit of Christian unity through dialogue, mutual respect, collaboration, and a shared commitment to the mission of Christ.

It recognises that while Christian denominations may differ in doctrine, liturgy, administration, and tradition, they can still work together where their convictions and responsibilities converge.

Our differences need not become our divisions, and our diversity need not weaken our collective witness.

Leadership: The Missing Link in Christian Unity

Unity does not happen automatically. It requires deliberate leadership, sustained commitment, and the willingness to place the common good above personal and institutional interests.

This is why ecumenical leadership must be built on humility, integrity, emotional intelligence, courage, and a genuine spirit of service.

An effective ecumenical leader does not seek to impose uniformity but encourages cooperation. Such a leader understands that bringing people together is only the beginning; helping them discover a common purpose and work towards shared goals is the real task.

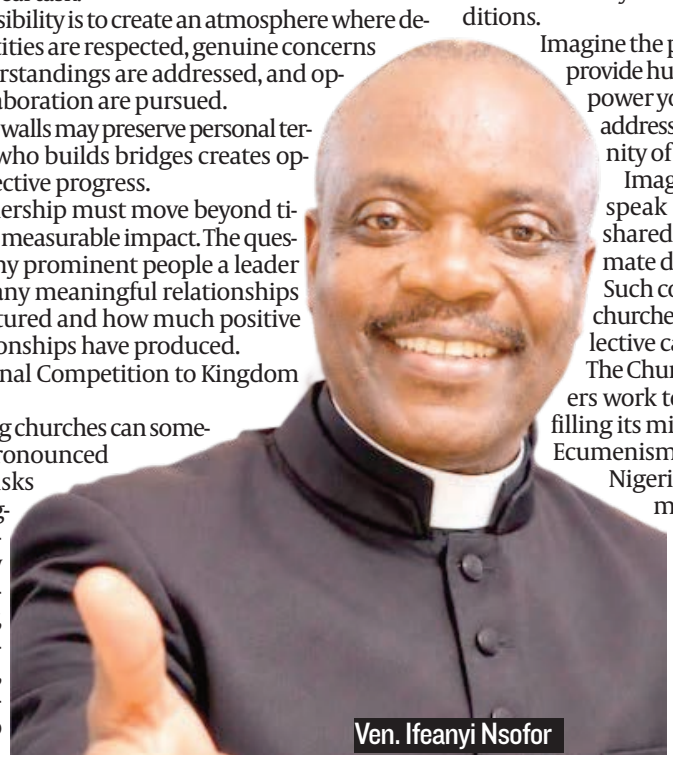
The leader's responsibility is to create an atmosphere where denominational identities are respected, genuine concerns are heard, misunderstandings are addressed, and opportunities for collaboration are pursued.

A leader who builds walls may preserve personal territory, but a leader who builds bridges creates opportunities for collective progress.

In this regard, leadership must move beyond titles and positions to measurable impact. The question is not how many prominent people a leader knows, but how many meaningful relationships that leader has nurtured and how much positive change those relationships have produced.

From Denominational Competition to Kingdom Collaboration

Competition among churches can sometimes become so pronounced that the Church risks losing sight of its larger mission. When denominational rivalry overshadows Christian responsibility, opportunities for collaboration are lost, and the wider society may struggle to see the unity we proclaim in Christ.



Ven. Ifeanyi Nsofor

Ecumenism offers a better way

It calls Christian leaders to recognise that the growth of one denomination does not have to depend on the failure of another. It encourages us to celebrate the good happening across the Christian community while remaining faithful to our respective traditions.

Imagine the possibilities when churches collaborate to provide humanitarian assistance, promote peace, empower young people, support vulnerable families, address gender-based violence, and defend the dignity of every human being.

Imagine the impact when Christian leaders speak with a coordinated voice on issues of shared concern, while allowing room for legitimate differences of opinion.

Such collaboration does not diminish individual churches. Properly pursued, it strengthens their collective capacity to serve.

The Church does not become weaker when its leaders work together; it becomes more effective in fulfilling its mission.

Ecumenism and the Nigerian Challenge

Nigeria's social and religious realities make ecumenical leadership particularly important.

• Ven. IfeanyiNsofor is the Director of Ecumenism and Interfaith, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), South East Zone ifeanyinsofor71@gmail.comCommunities continue to face challenges involving insecurity, poverty, unemployment, social distrust, and tensions that can deepen religious and ethnic divisions.

When A Spouse Commits Adultery

By Charles Ighele

IT was after the long holidays in September 1975 and I was going back to resume studies at the Federal School of Art and Science, Sokoto, where I was doing my higher school.

It happened that one of my father's friends was traveling from Delta State to Lagos and I had to follow him on a free ride. We left Delta State late and my father's wealthy friend had to check me, himself and his wife into a hotel in Benin because we arrived there at about 6:00p.m.

This wealthy professional barked and shouted at the wife from time to time in the course of the journey. Each time the man shouted, she would obey him like a frightened rain beaten cat. Himself and the wife never gisted or exchange pleasantries throughout the long journey to Lagos.

It was a long time later I found out that his wife was caught in adultery in Lagos where they lived. The man had to take the matter to his family in the village. As expected, the woman was summoned to the village where she owned up.

It was on their way back from the family meeting in the village that my father told me to join them to Lagos. It was after I had this knowledge that the shouting and their not talking to each other throughout such a long journey made sense to me.

I am telling this story because all those involved are dead. And there is no way any other person would have an idea of what I am writing about.

During some Christmas seasons, my mind would go to what that man did and what Joseph the husband of Mary (the earthly mother of Jesus) did to her.

Matthew 1:18-19 tells us, "Mary was engaged to Joseph but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit." Verse 19b says, "because Joseph, her husband to be, was a righteous man and was not willing to bring shame on her publicly, he planned to privately break the engagement."

From what we can see, Joseph did not want to make any noise that would bring further shame to the shameful thing, which he thought Mary had done.

Right from when I became a preacher, I have had cause to tell people to take example from Joseph by not bringing further disgrace on their sons, daughters, husbands or wives.

• Bishop Charles Ighele is the General Superintendent of Holy Spirit Mission, Lagos.



Ighele

Awosika, Musa, Akabueze, Others Task Christians On Kingdom Lifestyle

By Chris Irekamba

SPEAKERS at the one-day conference have admonished Christians to live the kingdom lifestyle everywhere they find themselves whether in the church or outside the church.

They submitted that kingdom lifestyle is the expectation of God for every Christian who has professed faith in Jesus Christ.

Speaking at the event organised in Lagos by the Jesus World Changers Apostolic Mission (JWCAM) (a.k.a The Marketimpact Church), themed: "Overcoming The Conflicts Of Worldly Systems: Living and Entrenching Kingdom Lifestyle In Our Places Of Assignment," series four.

The convener, Pastor OlubayodeAwosika, in his welcome address took his text from Daniel 1:8. He said Daniel demonstrated a godly character while in Babylon and took a firm decision not to defile himself.

Calling on Christians to emulate Daniel, Awosika, who is also a medical doctor, said Christians are the salt and light of the world and as such they should use their positions responsibly.

He said:"Our goal is not simply to live right, as we also have lived in our own little ways, but to establish values that endure in our families. Values that endure in our workplaces.Values that endure in our businesses.Values that endure in our institutions.Values that endure in our communities. May righteousness remain our standard. May Integrity remain our foundation and may excellence remain our expression."



Convener, Pastor OlubayodeAwosika (left); former member, House of Representatives, Pharm. Albert Atiwurcha; Keynote Speaker and Minister of Defence, General Christopher Musa (rtd), his wife, Lilian and Chairman, Conference Planning Committee, DrDereAwosika, during the Kingdom Lifestyle Conference Series IV held recently in Lagos.

He urged Christians to examine their lives and renew their commitment to God's kingdom principles.

The Minister of Defence, General Christopher Musa (rtd), in his keynote address, commended the organisers for sustaining the initiative over the years and for choosing a wonderful theme. He said the theme addressed one of the key challenges confronting believers and leaders in the contemporary world.

He quoted Matthew 22:39 and called on Christians to sincerely love the Lord with their hearts and also love their neigbhours as themselves.

The keynote speaker, however, lamented that many Christians pretend a lot, especially outside the church, but when they are in the church they maintain holiness.

Why Have You Done This?



*Opening **Text: Judges 2:1–2 (KJV)** "And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?"*

THERE are questions in life that demand serious reflection, and there are questions that cannot be answered without examining the condition of our hearts. One of such questions is the question God asked the children of Israel in Judges 2:2: "Why have ye done this?" This was not a question asked because God lacked knowledge of what they had done. God knew their actions, their decisions and their disobedience. Rather, it was a question intended to awaken their conscience and bring them to the realisation of how far they had departed from His instructions.

God had delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt, brought them through the wilderness, protected them from their enemies and given them the land He had promised their fathers. He had been faithful to His covenant, yet Israel failed to remain faithful to Him. God commanded them not to make any league with the inhabitants of the land and to destroy their altars, but they disobeyed His instructions. Consequently, God confronted them with a searching question: "Why have ye done this?"

Today, this same question deserves the attention of every man and woman. God has been good to us. He has preserved our lives, provided for our needs, shown us mercy and given us opportunities to serve Him. Yet, how have we responded to His goodness? Are we living in obedience to His Word, or have we become comfortable with disobedience? Have we followed His instructions, or have we chosen our own way? The question remains: **Why have you done this?**

God has done so much for humanity that no man has any reasonable excuse for living in rebellion against Him. He created us, sustained us and provided salvation through the death of His only begotten Son. The Bible says in Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." What greater demonstration of love could anyone demand? Yet, many who have received the message of this love continue to live as though God has done nothing for them.

The children of Israel did not completely reject the presence of God in one day. Their disobedience began with their failure to carry out God's instructions. They tolerated what God commanded them to remove. They made compromises where God demanded obedience. This is how spiritual decline begins. A little compromise today can become a serious spiritual problem tomorrow.

Beloved, what are you tolerating in your life that God has commanded you to remove? Is it bitterness, unforgiveness, dishonesty, immorality, pride, covetousness or an ungodly relationship? Have you allowed something to remain in your life simply because you have become comfortable with it? Remember that whatever God commands you to forsake should not be protected by your personal feelings.

The Bible says in 1 Samuel 15:22, "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

God is not impressed by religious activities when the heart is unwilling to obey Him. You may give offerings, support church programmes, occupy important positions and even preach to others, but if you deliberately refuse to obey God's Word, your religious activities cannot replace genuine obedience.

Why have you done this? Why have you neglected your spiritual responsibility? Why have you stopped praying as you used to pray? Why have you abandoned the study of God's Word? Why have you allowed the fire of your devotion to become cold? Why have you become careless about the salvation of your soul?

The Bible warns us in Hebrews 2:3, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?"

Salvation is too precious to be neglected. Jesus Christ paid the ultimate price for our redemption. He shed His blood to deliver us from the power of sin and eternal destruction. Yet, some people treat salvation as though it were an ordinary matter. They postpone repentance, delay surrendering their lives to Christ and continue making excuses for their spiritual condition.

My beloved, tomorrow is not guaranteed. Nobody knows the exact hour of his departure from this world. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 6:2, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Do not wait until it is too late before you realise the value of your soul. Do not allow the pleasures of this passing world to rob you of eternity with God. Whatever you have gained in this world cannot compensate for the loss of your soul. Jesus asks in Mark 8:36, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

When the children of Israel heard the words of the angel of the LORD, they lifted up their voices and wept. Judges 2:4 says, "And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept."

Their response teaches us that God's rebuke should not be treated lightly. When the Word of God exposes our sins, we should not harden our hearts. We should humble ourselves, acknowledge our failures and seek His mercy. God does not expose our sins merely to condemn us; He calls us to repentance so that we may be restored to fellowship with Him.

The Bible says in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

There is forgiveness for the repentant sinner. There is mercy for the person who genuinely turns away from sin. There is restoration for the backslider who returns to the Lord with a sincere heart. But you must not continue to resist the voice of God.

The question is still sounding: Why Have You Done This?

If you have wandered away from God, return today. If you have compromised your faith, repent today. If you have been living in sin, surrender your life to Jesus Christ today. Do not defend what God condemns. Do not justify what the Word of God has exposed. Do not postpone the decision that concerns your eternal destiny.

May we never become people who enjoy the blessings of God but refuse to obey His voice. May we never become so comfortable with the world that we forget the God who redeemed us. Let our lives bring pleasure to Him, and let our conduct demonstrate that we truly belong to Christ.

Today, God is calling you to examine your ways. The question is no longer what others have done, but what you have done with the life, mercy, grace and opportunities God has given you. What is your answer?

May the Lord grant us the grace to repent, return to Him and remain faithful unto the end, in Jesus' mighty name. Amen.

Testimony Of The Lord's Doing

'From Quit Notice To Landlady, Only God Can Do This'

MY name is Sister Comfort Michael. I reside at Kilometre 22, Abuja Expressway Dutse.

I'mhere to thank God and appreciate Him for His mercy. Last year, my landlord gave me quit notice, but God turned the quit notice to a blessing. Today, I am a landlady in Kaduna. Praise the Lord!

Besides that, my sister was pregnant and she took ill. She called me and I told her to continue to pray whileI am also standing in the gapand praying for her.Later, she called again and said the doctor said the only option for her was cesarean section. As a Chosen, I rejected it and told her that my God would not allow that to happen. She went to another hospital, still it was the same news.

God helped me I intensified my prayer to God of Chosen and to the glory of God, on August 1, 2026, she delivered-without any operation. Today, she and the baby are safe and sound. Praise the Lord!

Another testimony was how I was healed of terrible ulcer through the prayer of my G.O. It so happened that the previous day, G.O was praying and he mentioned that all those who are having dangerous ulcer that he cursed it. Brethren, that was how terrible ulcer left me after the G.O's prayer.When I went home I was able to eat all those things I was forbidden not to eat.

Before this healing, I have done everything humanly possible, taken uncountable medications to cure this ulcer but to no avail.

Today, God of Chosen has given me freedom, may His name be glorified in Jesus' name. Amen.

I pray for the G.O, his family and all the Chosen members Worldwide, that God will grant us the grace to spend eternity with Him in heaven in Jesus' name. ***Amen.***



National choir in their colourful attire ministering during the women programme, themed: "Woman: Thou Has Found Favour With God," held recentlyat The Lord's Chosen Charismatic Revival Ministries in Ijesha, Lagos

The Wonders Of Christ (2)

"BUT as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." The word "believe" is central and predominant in every chapter of the book of John. This shows the importance of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Believing the Liberator sets us free from sin, sickness, Satan, evil spirit and adverse circumstances. Peter believed and confessed that "Christ, [is] the Son of the living God." Those who are bound, helpless and hopeless should simply believe and the chains binding them will be broken. Believing the Lord makes Him do the impossible in our lives.

John the beloved attested to what John the Baptist had said many years earlier about Christ as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He is still in the business of taking sins away because "he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin." Thus, believing the Liberator makes us to experience a new life and gives us the power to overcome sin. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

To enjoy complete freedom, which comes through Christ's sacrifice on the cross, the sinner must repent of all sins thoroughly and thoughtfully (Ezekiel 18:30-32); remove all obstacles to his freedom (Acts 19:18,19); pray with sincere, determined heart (Jeremiah 29:12,13); and believe the Lord Jesus Christ as his Liberator and Sanctifier (Isaiah 6:5-8).

Christ is the "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Those who come to Him must have true conviction and believe that He is "the Son of the living God." Also, they must be thorough and single-minded; burn the bridge behind them and completely detach themselves from past sinful lifestyle. Despite the allurement of the world to pull them down or draw them back from following the Lord, they must be determined to follow Him until the end.

All we need in life, is found in Jesus. He gives victory, power, authority, courage, dominion and an overcoming life. He is the Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer, Redeemer and Deliverer. His name grants us healing, health, holiness and heavenly inheritance. If we hold on to Him and never let go, we will conquer sin, sickness, evil spirit and everything that comes from the realm of darkness.

Springs Of Wisdom

By Pastor W. F. Kumuyi



• *Further Reading (KJV): 1 Timothy 4:12; John 1:35,36,29;John 1:29; Isaiah 53:7; 1 Peter 1:18,19; Revelation 5:1-14; Acts 8:32-35;John 1:12; 2:11; 3:18,36; 4:42; 5:24; 6:69; 7:38; 8:24,31; 14:12; 1:29; 1 John 3:5-8; John 5:14; 8:11; Romans 6:6,18,22; John 1:29; 6:60,66*-69.

Stop Talking And Listen (10)

The Holy Spirit speaks to uscont)

JN 16:13 *"The Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth."* The convicting work of the Holy Spirit is not only directed toward the unsaved (vv.7-8), but alsooperates in believers and the church in order toteach, correct and guide them into truth (Mat18:15; **1Tim 5:20; Rev 3:19).** (1) The Holy Spirit will speak to believers concerning sin, the righteousness of Christ and thejudgment of evil in order to (a) conform themto Christ and His standard of righteousness (cf.2Cor 3:18), (b) guide them into all truth, and (c)glorify Christ (v. 14). Thus, the Holy Spirit workswithin believers to reproduce Christ's holy life intheir lives.(2) If Spirit-filled believers reject the Spirit'sguidance and convicting work, and if they do not *"through the Spirit, mortify the deeds of thebody"* (Rom 8:13), then they will enter into condemnation. Only those who receive the truth andare "led by the Spirit of God " *are "* sons of God"(Rom 8:14) and are therefore able to continue inthe Spirit's fullness (see Eph 5:18). Sin destroys both the life and fullness of the Holy Spiritwithin the believer **(Rom 6:23; 8:13; Gal 5:17; cf.Eph 5:18; 1Thes 5:19).**

16:13 *"He [The Holy Spirit] will not speak on His own authority."* The Holy Spirit receives His message and instructions from Christ; believers ought to talk about and rejoice in the work of the Holy Spirit.

Biblical Womanhood

By Emeritus Prof. Mercy Olumide



Read 1Cor 2:9-14

"These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1Cor 2:13)

"words ... which the Holy Spirit teaches." Though Paul is writing about the divine origin of his preaching, vv. 9-13 suggest the steps by which the Holy Spirit also inspired the writing of **Scripture.**

Step l: God desired to communicate His wisdom to humanity (w.7-9). This wisdom concerned our salvation, centering in Christ as the wisdom of God (cf. 1:30; 2:2, 5).

Step 2: It is only through the Holy Spirit that God's truth and wisdom were revealed to humanity (v. 10). The Spirit knows fully the thoughts of God (v.11).

Step 3: God's revelation was given to chosen believers through the indwelling presence of the Spirit (v.12; cf. Rom 8:11, 15).

Step 4: The writers of Scripture wrote with words taught by the Holy Spirit (v.13); the Spirit directed the writers in the choice of the words they used **(cf.Ex 24:4; Is 51:16; Jer 1:9; 36:28,32; Ezek 2:7; Mat 4:4).** At the same time, the Spirit's guidance in the expression of divine truth was not mechanical; rather, the Spirit used each writer's vocabulary and personal style.

Step 5: Believers understand divinely inspired Scripture as they examine its content through the illumination of the Holy Spirit (v.14-16).

• *Email:ymolumide@gmail.com, Facebook: Yetunde Mercy Olumide*

You're Not Different From Favoured Women In Bible, Sonayon-James Tells Chosen Women At Crusade

By **Chris Irekamba**

THE international women programme of the Lord's Chosen Charismatic Revival Ministries,titled: "Woman: Thou Has Found Favour With God," held at the church's headquarters in Ijesha, Lagos from October 24 to 25, bought together Chosen women from far and near including the Lagos State Deputy Governorship aspirant of the All Progressives Congress (APC) for 2027, Damilola Sonayon-James, who was represented at the event by Florence Nkoli Nnakife, the Supervisor for Humanitarian Service in Oriade LCDA.

Nnakife was accompanied by her Special Assistants Mary Jane Okafor and Mrs Angela Akiogu.

Deliveringher goodwill message, Damilola Sonayon-Jamescommended the leadership of the church and the good work the church is doing to save souls and make women to recognise their place in the kingdom of God.

She also applauded the choice of the theme, and described the Chosen women as highly favoured, stressing that the Bible is full of favoured women who at one time or the other did exploits for the Lord.

She cited Mary the mother of Jesus Christ, Deborah, a mother and prophetess who gave Israel victory and Hannah as women in the Bible who changed history.

Sonayon-James noted that Chosen women were not different.

"And in the course of this theme, you are going to change history and by reason of your being here today your story will change to greatness," Sonayon-James said.

She said that Mary was the mother of the Saviour of the world and was highly favoured. She commended her for accepting God's prophecy, which changed her life.

In the case of Hannah, Sonayon-James said her shame was turned to joy and prayed that everyone woman's shame must be turned to joy.

The deputy governorship candidate promised that come 2027, the women would economically be empowered under the administration of her principal, Dr Obafemi Hamzat.

According to her, "women, I understand your pains and aspirations in Lagos State and therefore, the government under the leadership of Dr Obafemi Hamzat will ensure that women are economically empowered come 2027, through soft loans and grants to market women, support for women and equally ensure that children in Lagos State enjoyequality education.

Assuring Lagosians of security of lives and property, Sonayon-James said women would be given a voice if the duo are voted into power.

She urged Chosen women to pray for her and her principal so that God will give them victory in 2027. The church actually prayed and handed the two APC aspirants and their representatives to God, saying that God will grant them their requests.

Also in her sermon, wife the General Overseer, Mummy G.O. Pastor (Mrs) Mary Muoka, who spoke on the theme: "Women Of Favour" took her text from Luke 1:26; Prov. 31:10; 22:6; Matt 16:18, said Chosen women are favoured to be holy and to be the mother of all the living.

She explained that God placed a great value on the women and enjoined them to work hard to actualise the blessings of God in their lives.

She urged the Christian mothers to use their positions to glorify and honour God by being a blessing to their homes.

"Bringing joy, favour and spiritual upliftment to him. Women are highly favoured and as a result they should be a blessing to our husbands, children, families and the nation at large in our life time."

Underscoring their role, Mummy G.O. admonished them to be careful in their families and ensure that their children are subject to them and obey them in everything.

She added that they should train their children in the way of the Lord and ensure that their homes and families are Godly.

She stated further that as virtuous women, they are expected to be God-fearing and most importantly live as Chosen women, stressing that leadership by example is very important.

She said if they do what God asked them to do their homes would be peaceful and enjoy the presence of God.

"Every household is to be built and deeply moulded by God's word and His commandment and that is what God expects from us, as woman of favour. A man is the man of the household while the woman is the backbone of the man. We must be humble, holy, peaceful and Godly," Mary Muoka said.

She urged the women to be prayerful, care for the communities around them, seek God's word, teach them and do them, assuring them that they will be a blessing to the church, the nation and the society at large.

She added that as they structure their households to be deeply rooted in God, God will give them what it takes to be a woman of favour.

In the same vein, General Overseer, Pastor Lazarus Muoka in his message, titled: "Woman: Thou Has Found Favour With God" lamented that many women lacked God's favour simply because they lacked the knowledge of God and His word. He said it would be difficult for such women to claim what belonged to them.

He, however, said they should rejoice for attending the event, assuring them that God would open their eyes to see what they had been missing.

Muoka used Mary the mother of Jesus Christ as an example of a favoured woman. He said Mary was favoured because all her lifestyle was holy and pure. He assured every attendee that God would favour them if they emulate Mary's lifestyle, live holy and righteous.

He described women asspecial creatures in God's sight, adding that they were created to assist the men.

"No matter what a man has without a woman he is incomplete like Adam before God brought Eve to be his wife. No matter the position of the man in life, without a woman such as a person is incomplete. When Adam was alone he was incomplete until God gave him the bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. Adam said now is my fulfillment. Now, I am a complete man," Muoka said.

He confessed that at a time he was not complete without a woman.

Muoka said: "At a point in time, I was nobody without a woman and I felt the vacuum. That was the case of Adam in the Garden of Eden. A woman supplements what is lacking in men."

He said every man that is celebrated in the world today is born of a woman including the Lord Jesus Christ. He said women had unimaginable favour with God and should expect God's favour and other blessings, especially as they become true children of God like Mary.

ABUAD's Recognition: New Feather To Cavista's Olajide's Cap

By **Dauda Lawal**



HONOUR at its best follows impact. The recent recognition of Niyi John Olajide, Chairman, Cavista Holdings, by Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD) makes that point clearly. It affirms a simple but often overlooked truth: the real value of enterprise is measured by what it makes possible for others.

Across health technology, education, agriculture, tourism and job creation, Olajide has built businesses that go beyond returns to create opportunities, strengthen communities and drive inclusive growth in Ekiti and beyond.

The story behind an honour often matters as much as the honour itself. For Olajide, the recognition by ABUAD carries special significance because it comes from an institution in his home state. Beyond the prestige of an honorary degree, it acknowledges a business journey whose influence extends into communities, industries and the wider economy.

As founder and chairman of Cavista Holdings, Olajide has built a diversified portfolio spanning technology, healthcare, agriculture, hospitality and food processing. His approach reflects an understanding that business can pursue commercial success while responding to pressing social and economic needs.

It is this meeting point between investment and human development that gives his achievements wider significance. His journey has been shaped by an appreciation of technology and its capacity to solve everyday problems. Through Axxess, the healthcare technology company he founded, Olajide has been associated with solutions that support home-based care and improve the coordination and delivery of healthcare services. In practical terms, technology can bring essential support closer to patients. The importance of this model is becoming increasingly clear as healthcare systems seek more efficient ways to serve ageing populations and people living with long-term conditions.

Care beyond conventional hospital settings can improve access, continuity and coordination. Olajide's involvement in this sector shows how entrepreneurial thinking can produce solutions with relevance far beyond Nigeria. The same thinking runs through the wider interests of Cavista Holdings, which include Cavista Technologies, Agbeyewa Farms, Glocient Hospitality, PayZeep and Matna Foods.

Although these businesses operate in different sectors, they reflect an investment philosophy that identifies opportunities capable of generating commercial returns while contributing to wider economic development. Nowhere is this more visible than in Ekiti State, where Cavista's investments in agriculture and tourism have attracted considerable attention.

The state has substantial agricultural resources and distinctive natural attractions, but converting these advantages into lasting prosperity requires capital, infrastructure, technology, market access and investors prepared to make long-term commitments. Agriculture is a good place to start. Through Agbeyewa Farms, Olajide is helping to unlock the potential of cassava, a crop central to Nigeria's agricultural economy. Beyond its traditional use as food, cassava offers opportunities in industrial processing and manufacturing.

Organised production can strengthen the value chain, create markets for farmers and stimulate rural economic activity. Matna Foods, with its focus on food-grade cassava starch, takes this opportunity further. It demonstrates how an agricultural commodity can move up the value chain and become an industrial input with wider applications. Investments of this kind can support local manufacturing, deepen processing capacity and reduce dependence on imported alternatives, while creating additional markets for farmers.

For Ekiti, the benefits extend beyond the companies' immediate operations. Agricultural investment creates demand for local produce, encourages improved farming practices and supports the transporters, processors and distributors who keep the value chain moving. When farmers have access to dependable markets, production becomes more commercially viable and rural communities can participate more fully in economic growth.

Tourism is another important part of Olajide's investment in his home state. Through Glocient Hospitality, Cavista has been involved in the development and management of Ikogosi Warm Springs, one of Ekiti's most distinctive natural attractions, where warm and cold springs meet. The site has considerable potential, but turning an attraction into a sustainable destination requires investment in facilities and visitor experience. A destination succeeds on more than its natural appeal. Accommodation, transport, food services, skilled personnel, effective promotion and reliable infrastructure all determine its competitiveness. Each also creates opportunities for local suppliers, traders and service providers, allowing the economic benefits of tourism to extend beyond the facility itself and into surrounding communities.

Governor Biodun Oyebanji has acknowledged Cavista's investments in Ekiti, describing them as worth millions of dollars and responsible for creating thousands of direct and indirect jobs. Their significance lies in more than financial scale. Such investments stimulate local economic activity, support livelihoods and strengthen confidence in the state's development prospects. Employment is one of the most direct ways investment improves living conditions.

Beyond those engaged by the companies themselves, major projects generate demand for contractors, suppliers, transport operators and artisans. This multiplier effect widens economic participation, particularly in communities where formal employment is limited and the benefits of large-scale investment can make a meaningful difference. Yet the value of investment does not end with the jobs it creates. Its lasting contribution also lies in the skills, knowledge and productive capacity it leaves behind. Businesses that invest in people help build a workforce capable of sustaining growth beyond individual projects. This is where enterprise and education meet, linking learning with practical experience and the changing demands of the economy.

ABUAD's recognition of Olajide also draws attention to the importance of stronger relationships between universities and the private sector. Universities produce knowledge and talent, while businesses provide environments in which ideas can be tested, skills applied and solutions developed. When both engage meaningfully, education connects more closely with economic opportunity, while enterprise gains the capabilities needed to innovate.

Olajide's experience offers a wider Nigerian lesson about the role of private enterprise in national development. The country needs businesses that can mobilise capital, introduce innovation, build productive assets and compete internationally. His work across healthcare technology, agriculture and hospitality illustrates how Nigerian entrepreneurs can pursue commercial ambition while investing in sectors essential to economic progress.

As Chairman of the Corporate Council on Africa, he also participates in conversations about trade, investment and economic relations between Africa and the United States, helping to highlight the continent's commercial opportunities.

For ABUAD, honouring Olajide recognises a contribution that connects business achievement with human development. For him, receiving the distinction from an institution in his home state adds a personal dimension to the recognition. Ultimately, however, its lasting measure will be found beyond the ceremony, in the businesses sustained, opportunities created, communities strengthened and lives improved. His journey offers a reminder that enterprise reaches its fullest value when success makes progress possible for others.

An honorary degree celebrates achievement, but a meaningful legacy is measured by what endures after the applause. In Olajide's case, it will be shaped not only by the companies he builds, but by the people they empower, the industries they strengthen and the possibilities they open. That is the larger significance of ABUAD's recognition: an honour from home for an entrepreneur whose work reaches far beyond it.

Lawal is the Director of Community Engagement @ Agbeyewa Farms Limited.

Tribute

Edoreh Agbah (1952-2026): Quintessential Oil & Gas PR Man Bows Out

By **Victor Eromosele**

WHAT a very gloomy day Sunday November 1, 2026, proved to be, as an energetic and colourful personality bowed out. By the next day, when the news filtered out to his friends, including this writer and former colleagues, they were in an absolute shock. It is difficult to come to terms with the fact that the affable Olorogun Edoreh Ejenavi Agbah, KSC, JP, the Ugbugba R'Ovie of Ughelli, had indeed passed away in his hometown, Eruemukohwarien, near Ughelli in Delta State. Shakespeare was right when he described life as a "walking shadow."

When those we know well pass away, it is time for sober reflection. One is reminded of a quote by the famous scientist, Albert Eistein: "*Strive not to be a success, but rather of value.*"

In the case of Edoreh, he was both. Not only was he an unqualified success in life, however evaluated, he turned out an unqualified value to his community, his industry and the wider society.

He had a 34-year career with the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and rose to the position of General Manager, External Relations at Brass LNG Limited, an NNPC affiliate, to which he was seconded and retired in 2012.

Of special mention, is the fact that in the late 1980's and early 1990's, he was a member of the team under the charismatic Public Relations Doyen, late Ogbuefi Alex Nwokedi when he held sway over, in what arguably, was the "golden age" of NNPC's Group Public Affairs Division. Imbued with rare creativity, resourcefulness and unparalleled zeal, Edoreh was the media relations chap who managed special projects at the Division during critical times in the Corporation's chequered history. He subsequently became an anchorman for Nwokedi's successor, the towering ex-broadcaster, Edem Duke.



Agbah

When in 2003, Funsho Kupolokun became helmsman at the NNPC, he looked no further than Edoreh Agbah to help him champion the nationwide fuel subsidy campaign and the need for downstream deregulation at the time.

Producer of the epic oil industry television documentary, *Petroleum Perspective* – that ran for nearly a decade – Edoreh was an outstanding thought leader. This writer served as one of the resource persons when the TV documentary ran.

Not surprising when in 1994, in this writer's capacity as editor of a major industry reference work, he co-opted Edoreh as a member of the Advisory Board that midwifed the publication. The authoritative 560-page compendium was published late 1997, *Nigerian Petroleum Business: A Handbook.* Edoreh was one of the 30 contributors to the work and had two articles that still make interesting reading nearly three decades on. He contributed Article 5: "Future of the Oil and Gas industry" and Article 14: "Petroleum Subsidy – Illusion or Realities?"

In Article 5, Edoreh proved an optimist. He wrote: "Nigeria has on ground and on the drawing board enough projects, activities, policies and proposals to guarantee the petroleum industry a bright future."

Unfortunately, today's realities may have betrayed his optimism three decades ago.

Equally instructive are his views on a still relevant subject in Article 14. He pointed to an 18-fold increase in gasoline prices between 1991 and 1994, when PMS was a mere N11.00/litre.

He wrote: "Prior to 1987, the (subsidy) phenomenon was not prominent. Massive depreciation and devaluation of the naira . . . central to issue of subsidy." The ideas are spot on and relevant even after three decades.

Beyond being socially active, Edoreh was a consummate community leader. In addition to holding many chieftaincy titles in recognition of his massive community contributions, he frequently spent time at his native Eruemukohwarien. He regularly commuted between Lagos and the Delta, not discouraged by twice being a victim of hostage-taking.

Asked why despite the risks, he is so committed to his frequent home visits, he said: "Nothing gives me more happiness than being with my people." He displayed rare courage in confronting all situations he needed to contend with.

Yet he created quality time for his family and visited them frequently wherever in the world they lived.

The quintessential PR man evolved with time and he loved 21st century social media – almost with a teenager's passion – and lived his digital life like an open book. His zest for life was truly infectious.

Imagine two septuagenarians and former colleagues not only enjoying lunch together and reliving their past, in a Knightsbridge, London restaurant; they soon for pleasant hours walked through two Kensington Museums. That happened Summer 2025. But who could see the future? Edoreh was so thrilled by that experience. This writer still pictures the incredible excitement in his face. How timely that reunion was.

At this sad moment, our hearts and prayers go out to his dear wife, Joy, and his adult children. Unforgettable Edoreh will remain a huge loss to his community, his country and the world at large. Truly, he would be sorely missed.

Eromosele lives in Lagos.

M3

Myriam Leventis-Blok

17/02/51 - 21/10/26



Tribute To
Myriam Leventis-Blok

...A life of love, grace and enduring influence

by Anita Athena Ibru

Dearest Aunty Myriam, I address this message directly to you in heaven because I know you are up there, my newest Guardian Angel.
In life, you actually were my guardian, from the tender age of eight, when I started boarding school in the UK. And for many others, you were also a real-life angel.

A woman of true integrity, honest and traditional, you kept a beautiful, warm, yet orderly home, where I always felt loved, safe and welcome.

You taught me things, motivated me and cheered me on when I shared my interests, such as classical music. You passed on the same values and discipline you gave your own children to me.

I also witnessed your playful, adventurous side and your open-mindedness. Your aptitude for learning so many languages said it all. You certainly gave me the impression that you loved engaging with people of many nationalities.

You recounted stories about your life and travels in Nigeria before your family relocated to London, and I remember how kind you were to your household staff.

You mentioned how you appreciated the friendship of my mother, Maiden, and shared stories akin to domestic bliss in Lagos during a nostalgic era, including how you used to lend each other the newest kitchen appliances. I also treasure the photographs of my parents, yourself, and Uncle Tasso as two holidaying couples.

I was, of course, heartbroken to learn that I would never see you again, but I am comforted by the fact that you were laid to rest at the Leventis family plot, remaining ever close to the heart of the love of your life, my dear 'Uncle Tasso'.

The fact that your amazing, loving family managed very swift funeral arrangements, including travel to Cyprus from various parts of the world for your beautiful send-off exactly a week later, is a testament to your organised nature, coupled with a go-getter attitude.

You simply got on with it and got things done. Your family wouldn't have had it any other way as they prepared for their final goodbyes, adopting the same approach you took in life.

No doubt, this also inspired me and helped shape me throughout childhood and into early adulthood.

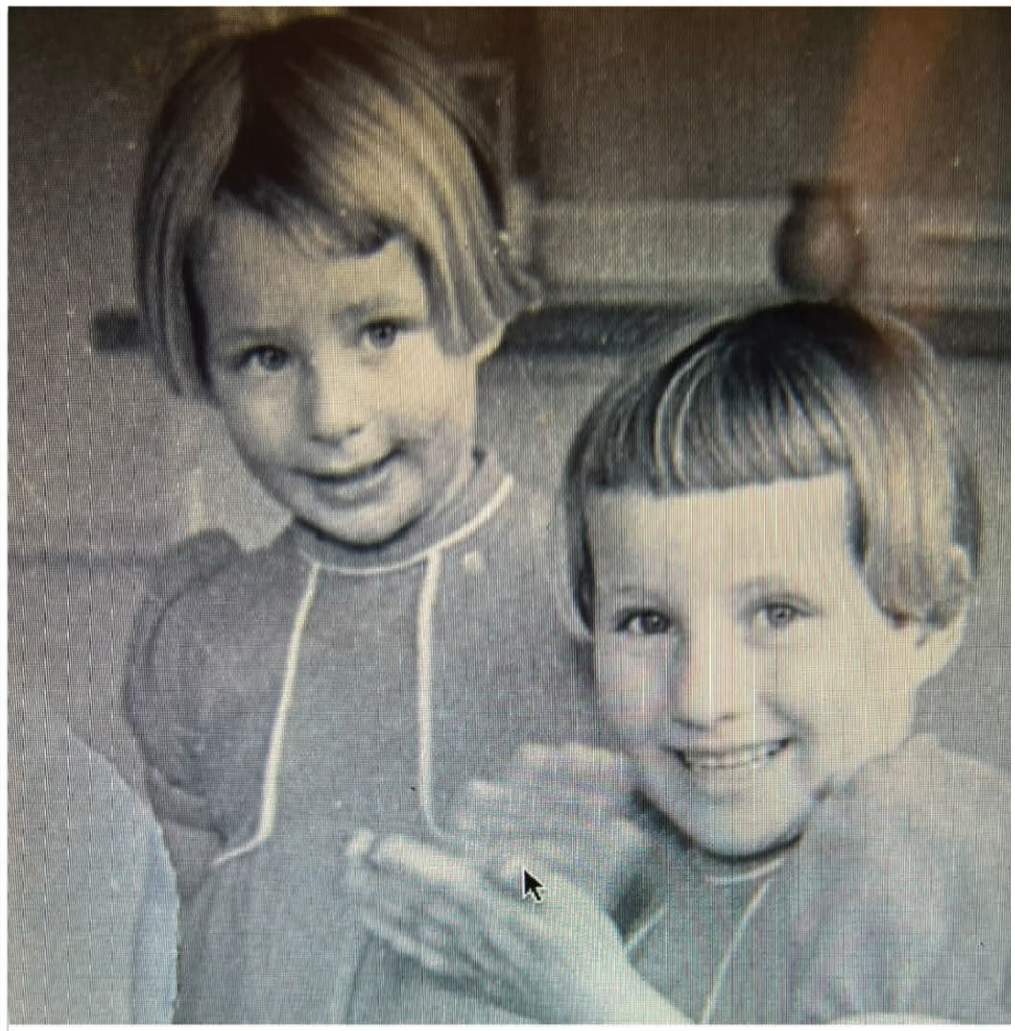
The last thing I want to mention, where inspiration is concerned, is your beautiful love story with your beloved husband. I have witnessed very few husbands who love and care for their wives with such loyalty and dedication. Even though he is a very busy businessman, philanthropist, and conservationist, whose international travel is inevitable, he did not like to leave you for very long and made his trips as short as possible to return to you.

You truly deserved it because you blessed him with the same measure of love in return.

I will miss you dearly. On behalf of my entire family, I want to thank you for taking care of me, for asking me the sort of intimate questions and teaching me things a real mother would have, and for your advice and guidance over the years.

Rest peacefully, dearest Aunty Myriam, my Guardian Angel.

Myriam Leventis-Blok, of Dutch origin, one of eleven siblings, is survived by her husband, Cypriot-Greek Anastasios Paul Leventis; their three children, Salome, Avye and Henry; and eight grandchildren.





















ADVERTORIAL

LAFIA INCIDENT: LABARAN MAGAJI'S RECKLESS ACCUSATIONS MUST BE RETRACTED

By Mohammed Mohamed

The truth must not be sacrificed on the altar of political desperation

WHATEVER we do in life, whether in politics, business, public service or our everyday interactions, telling the truth is not only sacred but also a moral obligation. Truth remains the foundation of justice, integrity and responsible leadership.

The unfortunate incident that occurred in Lafia, Nasarawa State, during the visit of His Excellency, Vice President Kashim Shettima, GCON, on Wednesday, November 4, 2026, deserves unequivocal condemnation. Any act of hooliganism, disrespect for constituted authorities or disruption of an official engagement is unacceptable and must be condemned by all well-meaning citizens.

However, condemning an unfortunate incident is one thing; exploiting it to malign innocent individuals, settle political scores and damage the reputations of respected statesmen is another matter entirely.

It is therefore deeply disturbing that the Secretary to the Government of Nasarawa State, Barrister Labaran Magaji, SAN, would issue an official press release attempting to associate two distinguished personalities, Senator Umaru Tanko Al-Makura, former Governor of Nasarawa State, and Mohammed Abubakar Adamu, former Inspector-General of Police, with the alleged misconduct of some youths without presenting credible evidence to substantiate such serious accusations.

Categorically, any attempt to associate Senator Al-Makura, former IGP Adamu or their supporters with the unfortunate incident or acts of lawlessness without credible evidence, is rejected and condemned

AL-MAKURA'S LOYALTY TO PRESIDENT TINUBU IS BEYOND QUESTION

In Nasarawa State, and indeed across the North-Central geopolitical zone, few political leaders can match the longstanding commitment, loyalty and contributions of Senator Umaru Tanko Al-Makura to the political aspirations and success of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

For decades, Senator Al-Makura has remained a steadfast political ally of President Tinubu, supporting his political journey long before some of today's political actors found it convenient to identify with his leadership.

President Tinubu has, on several occasions, publicly acknowledged and appreciated Senator Al-Makura's loyalty and political contributions.

Al-Makura's commitment to the success of the Tinubu administration and the President's re-election in 2027 remains firm and unwavering.

The pertinent question, therefore, is: Where were those who are today desperately attempting to discredit Al-Makura when he was standing firmly with President Tinubu through the years?

Political loyalty is demonstrated through consistency, sacrifice and commitment, not through opportunistic declarations or attempts to destroy the reputations of longstanding political allies.

Both Senator Al-Makura and former IGP Adamu are respected statesmen who understand the responsibilities of leadership, the beauty of democracy and the importance of respecting constituted authorities.

It is therefore irresponsible to casually associate them or their supporters with acts of misconduct merely because of political disagreements.

POPULARITY CANNOT BE IMPOSED BY GOVERNMENT PROCLAMATION

There is another fundamental political reality that those in positions of authority must understand: political popularity cannot be manufactured through government directives, intimidation or the imposition of candidates.

When a candidate is perceived by sections of the electorate as having been imposed on them, the people cannot be compelled to embrace that candidate.

Democracy guarantees citizens the right to support candidates of their choice, express political preferences and withhold support from those they consider unsuitable.

A popular candidate is popular because the people willingly identify with that candidate. An unpopular candidate cannot become popular simply because powerful individuals demand public acceptance.

However, legitimate political disagreement must always be expressed peacefully and within the law.

Rather than blaming respected political figures for every manifestation of public dissatisfaction, political leaders should examine the underlying causes of discontent and address them through consultation, fairness and democratic engagement.

LABARAN MAGAJI MUST RETRACT HIS ACCUSATIONS

The allegations contained in the press release issued by Barrister Labaran Magaji, SAN, is senseless, reckless, irresponsible and unbecoming of the high office of Secretary to the Government of Nasarawa State.

An official government statement should be guided by facts, restraint and institutional responsibility, not political suspicion or personal prejudice.

If the Secretary to the Government possesses credible evidence linking supporters of Senator Al-Makura or former IGP Adamu to the incident, he should present such evidence to the appropriate investigative authorities.

Otherwise, he has no justification for using the authority of his office to publicly associate these distinguished personalities with alleged criminal conduct.

An immediate and unequivocal retraction of the allegations against Senator Umaru Tanko Al-Makura and former IGP Mohammed Abubakar Adamu, is demanded, together with a public clarification correcting the damaging impression created by the statement.

Failure to retract these unsubstantiated allegations may leave the affected individuals with no option but to consider appropriate legal action to protect their reputations and seek redress under the law.

The office of the Secretary to the Government must never become an instrument for political vendetta or the persecution of perceived opponents.

THE TRUTH MUST PREVAIL

The unfortunate events in Lafia must be condemned in strong terms, and we support a thorough, impartial and credible investigation to identify those genuinely responsible.

Those found culpable should face the consequences of their actions in accordance with the law, regardless of their political affiliations.

However, investigation must not be replaced by speculation, and political differences must not become grounds for criminal accusations.

The people of Nasarawa State, and indeed Nigerians, are capable of distinguishing genuine political loyalty from political opportunism, just as they can distinguish popular political leadership from imposed political arrangements.

Senator Umaru Tanko Al-Makura and former IGP Mohammed Abubakar Adamu should not be made scapegoats for political disagreements or the actions of individuals whose identities and motivations have yet to be established.

Political differences must never justify false accusations. Political ambition must never override fairness. Above all, the truth must never be sacrificed on the altar of political desperation.

The truth remains sacred, and ultimately, the truth will prevail.

Senator Umaru Tanko Al-Makura and former IGP Mohammed Abubakar Adamu must be unequivocally dissociated from the allegations contained in Barrister Labaran Magaji's reckless and unsubstantiated press release. Neither political rivalry nor personal ambition should be allowed to undermine their reputations without credible evidence.

Mohammed writes from Lafia, Nasarawa state mmoha@oal.com

Lagos Life
www.guardian.ng
THE GUARDIAN WEEKEND, November 7 - 8, 2026
Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

Coalition Urges Immediate Arrest, Prosecution Of Perpetrators Of Killings In Sogunro Community

By **Gbenga Salau**

• Residents Flee Homes Amid Fears Of Further Attacks

AT least five people have been killed and eight others injured following a violent attack on Sogunro community in Lagos State by suspected armed youths.

The attack, which reportedly occurred around midnight on Sunday, November 1, into the early hours of Monday, November 2, 2026, involved armed youths allegedly wielding guns, axes and other dangerous weapons.

According to the Coalition Against Demolition, Forced Eviction, Landgrabbing and Displacement in Lagos State, the attackers invaded Sogunro after residents reportedly refused demands for money to fund a party.

The group said: "We call for the immediate arrest and prosecution of those responsible, and swift action to protect the Sogunro community against further such attacks. "On Sunday night around midnight, some youths allegedly from the neighbouring Iwaya community invaded Sogunro community after demands for money for a party had been refused. They came with guns, axes, and other dangerous weapons. At least five people were brutally murdered, with one executed with an axe to the neck, others shot or axed in the back, and at least one body dumped in a canal. At least eight others were injured and hospitalized, and numerous valuable properties were destroyed and looted. Yet the police are yet to arrest the perpetrators, who remain at large."



The incident has reportedly left residents of Sogunro living in fear, with some afraid to sleep in their homes at night over concerns of another invasion.

According to the coalition, some residents living close to the boundary between Sogunro and Iwaya have fled their homes and are now seeking refuge in boats or staying with neighbours around the waterside.

The group expressed solidarity with the families of those killed and other affected residents, calling on the police to immediately arrest and prosecute everyone responsible for the attack.

It also urged security authorities to take urgent measures to protect the community and prevent further violence.

The coalition recalled that Sogunro, alongside neighbouring Makoko and Oko Agbon communities, experienced large-scale forced evictions by the Lagos State Government between December 2025 and mid-January 2026.

The demolitions reportedly displaced an estimated 30,000 residents before widespread protests and public outcry halted the exercise.

Following the suspension of the demolitions, residents remained in the affected communities and began rebuilding their homes and livelihoods while awaiting further information about a proposed United Nations-supported Makoko Water Cities project.

The proposed initiative was expected to be implemented in partnership with residents of Makoko, Sogunro and Oko Agbon for the benefit of the three waterfront communities.

The coalition also referenced a meeting held last month by the Oba of Iwaya, involving representatives of the Lagos State government and some Baales from Makoko, to discuss a proposed new project for the community.

However, some of the traditional community leaders reportedly insisted that their legal representatives must be present and that they needed full details of the proposed project before proceeding with discussions. Against this backdrop, the coalition called for the protection of residents' rights, safety and livelihoods.

It reiterated its demand for the immediate arrest and prosecution of those responsible for the Sogunro killings, as well as urgent security intervention to guarantee the safety of residents. The group stressed that residents should be able to live in their homes without fear of violence, intimidation or further displacement.

The statement by the coalition were signed by Jude Ojo representative of Ilaje Otumara community; Kunnu Paul representative of Otodo Gbame community; Bisola Akinmuyiwa and Imole Dezyno, leaders of Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Federation; Israel Idowu and Sylvanus Moses, Student leaders of Makoko Waterfront community; Zikora Ibeh, Assistant Executive Director, Corporate Accountability and Public Participation Africa (CAPPA); Opeyemi Adamolekun for Active Citizen; Comrade Hassan Taiwo, alias Soweto, member of the Organizing Committee, #EndBadGovernance Movement, and Megan Chapman, Co-Executive Director, Justice & Empowerment Initiatives (JEI).

Lagos To Drive Energy Sufficiency, Renewable Energy Agenda At Summit

By **David Emokpae**

LAGOS State Commissioner for Energy and Mineral Resources, Mr. Biodun Ogunleye, has said the state government is committed to being energy sufficient, disclosing that its upcoming 2026 Lagos Energy Summit is one of the moves to address questions on how Lagos can achieve energy sufficiency and make renewable energy widely available.

He added that issues around metering and mobility would also be discussed at the summit, noting that the state's energy value chain is undergoing major transformations

Stating that challenges in the energy sector require collective action, the commissioner revealed that the summit is set to hold between the 10th and 12th of November.

He said that the first two days of the summit would be dedicated to conversations, adding that conversations from previous editions of the summit had a great impact of implementation.

Ogunleye revealed that the summit will also be a platform for secondary school students who have undertaken various projects within their homes and schools to exhibit them.

"Let me assure you that what we look forward to is a session that will empower us further to build a secure and efficient energy systems that will not only be scalable, but will make citizens of the state to be able to say farewell to the culture of darkness. And we look forward to conversations that will enable the framework that we desire," he said.

LASEPA Records Over 30,000 Noise Pollution Cases

By **Gbenga Salau**

• As PS Implores Agency To Enforce With Human Face

LAGOS State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA) has revealed that it has in the last 30 years of its existence carried out at least 30,000 environmental enforcement around noise pollution which are aimed at protecting residents from environmental hazards.

The General Manager of the agency, Dr Babatunde Ajayi, disclosed this while speaking at an event to mark the 30th anniversary of LASEPA in Lagos.

Ajayi stated that the agency has consistently undertaken more than 1,000 noise-related enforcement actions annually since its establishment, covering businesses, industrial facilities, religious institutions and residential premises where necessary.

He made the disclosure while reflecting on LASEPA's three decades of environmental regulation and enforcement, describing the anniversary as an opportunity to assess the agency's achievements and chart a course for the future.

He said the milestone provided an opportunity to evaluate how effectively the agency had fulfilled its mandate and contributed to improving the quality of life and protecting property across Lagos State.

"Thirty years is an important stage in the life of any institution. It is a time to evaluate how much has been accomplished, how faithfully the agency has fulfilled its mandate and, more importantly, how effectively it has protected Lagos and improved the quality of life and property of Lagosians," he said.

Ajayi identified noise pollution monitoring, digitalisation of operations and expansion of enforcement activities as some of the areas where LASEPA had recorded progress.

He said the agency had digitised its operations, enabling residents to submit and track environmental complaints through its online portal, irrespective of their location within the state.

"We have strengthened noise pollution regulations and monitoring, digitised our operations and introduced a system that allows residents to submit and track complaints through our online portal, regardless of their location within Lagos State," he said.

He, however, acknowledged that the agency still had considerable work to do, particularly as Lagos continues to experience rapid population growth and expansion of its built environment.

Ajayi identified population growth as the biggest challenge to environmental protection in the state, explaining that increasing human, industrial and commercial activities had intensified environmental pressures.

Ministry Hosts 2026 Gele Festival With ₦2M Prize For Best Headtie

By **Gbenga Salau**

IN a vibrant display of heritage, craft, and economic empowerment, the Lagos State Government has concluded plans for the 2026 Gele Festival, featuring an impressive 2 million prize for the participant with the best Gele at the event.

Aside from that, the festival has provided an avenue for an intensive skill-building initiative designed empower hundreds of young Gele artists, elevate their skills as well as redefine traditional African fashion.

The landmark event highlights the iconic Nigerian headwrap—the Gele—not just as an everyday fashion staple, but as a cultural treasure and a viable driver of economic self-sufficiency.

Speaking ahead of the event scheduled for Sunday, November 8, the Special Adviser to the Lagos State Governor on Tourism, Arts, and Culture, Idris Aregbe, emphasized that the festival was strategically conceived to preserve Yoruba culture while empowering women with practical skills to thrive in the state's booming creative and event economy.





Spot Light

www.guardian.ng

How Transport Network Deepens Illegal Migration,

Behind the daily movement of passengers between Nigeria and Ghana lies a disturbing reality: trafficking of young women and girls for 'sexploitation'. While traffickers recruit and control victims, transporters allegedly help them navigate border checkpoints, bypass document checks and reach their destinations writes ***GBENGA SALAU.***

EVERYDAY, buses and other vehicles move Nigerians across the Nigeria-Ghana corridor in a flow largely associated with legitimate trade, work, and family ties. However, beneath this movement is buried a darker shade of crime: people recruited, transported, and ultimately exploited for forced labour, sexual exploitation, cybercrime and other forms of illegal activities

The scale of this crime is becoming increasingly hard to ignore. In fact, the Ghanaian authorities identified 794 trafficking victims in 2024, including 493 foreign nationals. Nigerians accounted for 358 of those foreign victims, about 73 per cent. The figure was the number of victims identified by authorities, not the total number of Nigerians trafficked into Ghana.

Nigeria's own data provided another disturbing snapshot. Between July and November 2024, 163 Nigerians were rescued from trafficking in Ghana, while another 200 were rescued between April and May 2025, the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) said.

The commission said it rescued and repatriated more than 360 people during that period, many of them young women and teenagers. For instance, in July 2024, Nigerian immigration received 66 trafficked Nigerians who were returned from Ghana through the Seme border, mostly women and children.

About the same period, NiDCOM announced that 58 additional Nigerian women and children were rescued in Ghana, while another operation rescued eight Nigerian girls between the ages of 15 and 22 from sexual exploitation.

In 2025, Nigerian authorities said 288 Nigerian trafficking victims were rescued in Ghana during anti-trafficking operations. Additionally, in February 2026, 13 suspected commercial sex workers, 12 Nigerians and one Ghanaian, were rescued during a special operation targeting prostitution and human trafficking.

Similarly, in April 2026, 42 Nigerian teenage girls were rescued from forced prostitution in the Western North Region of Ghana.

Behind these figures lie a question that has received considerably less attention: who transports these victims from Nigeria to Ghana? What checks do transport operators make when young people travel under suspicious circumstances or with recruiters? And how many transporters recognise the warning signs but look the other way?

To answer these questions and more, this reporter travelled from Nigeria to Ghana and back to understand how these traffickers operate. The objective was to see, firsthand, the incidence of cross-border human trafficking between two nations facilitated by faceless groups with support from private transport officers across the two nations.

The journey between Nigeria and Ghana is completed mostly by road. The journey is no walk in the park. It is about 450 to 500 kilometres long and takes between 9 and 14 hours, depending on the route taken, traffic, and border checks. The corridor also has three official border posts meant to control migration.

The journey usually involves a combination of bus rides, motorcycles or short walks, mostly around the border post corridors.

Transporters play a key role in completing the trip successfully, whether for legal or illegal migrants and trafficked persons.

This is more so because traffickers, unlike in the past, no longer travel with their victims, preferring a transporter to help facilitate their movement.

It was also gathered that many of those who completed the trip illegally, some of whom are trafficked persons, were aided by transporters who executed the job for an extra fee on the transport fare or paid a separate fee altogether.

Travel documents and the 'Fake ID'

According to travel experts, the requirements for a trip between Nigeria and Ghana include a valid international passport or ECOWAS passport, a Yellow fever card, and evidence of accommodation.

The Nigeria Immigration Service website states that landing and exit cards are mandatory travel documents for all passengers entering or departing Nigeria.



Segbe Border corridor for entry into Ghana

"These cards must be completed upon arrival at or departure from Nigerian borders and serve as a critical instrument for immigration control and border management,"it said.

But what happens at the different parks is completely different from what the law and convention provide.

Checks at almost five parks across Lagos where passengers usually travel to Ghana by bus pointed to a startling development.

At each point, the transporters or their representatives are ready to help complete the trip without the required documents. However, they tell you it will require an extra fee, especially compared to those with international passport.

They also pledged to make the trip smooth, without any hiccups at the border posts or immigration checkpoints, once the extra payment is made.

At two of the parks, they insisted an identification card was required to board the bus and they were willing to assist with the procurement for N10,000 through a third party, some others added with the extra fare paid, the reporter could travel on the trip with no international passport or any identity card.

The reporter later learnt that the ID card that is being produced is usually a fake National Identification Number (NIN) slip.

Whether by plot or by accident, many young women who set off on account of illegality with a 'fake ID' usually end up in hubs known for Accra's dirtiest sex trade.

In Accra, this reporter interacted with one of the ladies who had travelled to Ghana without any travel documents. Lizzy [full name withheld] was around Kwame Nkrumah Circle, popularly called Circle, a major transport and commercial centre in Accra.

She provided some insight into how transporters could be unknowingly aiding human trafficking. Lizzy, who is one of the sex workers in Circle, where many of the commercial sex worhers (CSW) live in makeshift structures and kiosks built with planks, revealed that her journey to Ghana had no hiccups because of the roles transporters played.

She said her friend brought her to Ghana, so, she did not serve any madam. She added that if a madam engaged her, she would have had to work for her before securing her freedom, which would require settling the madam with N1m and N1.5 million, money made from the sex trade.

Narrating her journey, she said her friend asked her to meet a man called Ob in Badagry, who put her in a car that took her to the Seme-Krake border. She further said the driver handed her over to a bike man who ferried her through the border post into the Republic of Benin, then handed her over to a driver who drove her and other passengers through Togo to the Aflao border corridor in Ghana.

She said, however, it was not the border post. According to her, they walked past a barricade, though she observed the driver give an officer money as they navigated the place.

Lizzy added that after passing the barricade, the driver handed her over to a bike man, who took her to a park, where he handed her over to a commercial bus driver.

She said the bus, when fully loaded and set out, ended the journey in a place she later knew as Circle, where her friend came to pick her up.

Similarly, another lady, who identified herself as Juliet, who was one of the sex workers at Madina, disclosed that she was brought to Ghana over a year ago by a madam, though she had finished serving the woman, which was why she relocated to Madina.

According to her, she remitted, on average, about 5000 Ghana cedis monthly for about a year. She added that sometimes it was more, especially when she was made to serve a high clientele while doing home service.

Juliet further said her madam arranged her trip to Ghana, including paying the transport fare. According to her, she came to Ghana without any documents, and the bus driver ensured no immigration officer disturbed her during the trip.

She recalled vividly how she was made to sit at the back of the bus and was told not to get off except when she was told to.

She said the only place she got off the bus was probably the Aflao border post, where the driver held her hand to cross the border post.

Juliet also said that the driver told her to say she was heading to Cote d' Ivoire at the Aflao border post and the last checkpoint they encountered on the journey.

She said it was her first time travelling outside Nigeria, so, she was not only naïve but also afraid.

In digging deep into how transporters deliberately or unknowingly aid human trafficking, the reporter was connected to a madam in Ghana, who was ready to ferry a lady to Ghana for prostitution.

I got the permission of a young lady whose picture I shared with the madam. After reviewing the picture, the madam,

Spot Light

Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

Human Trafficking Across West Africa

who seemed satisfied with the lady's appearance, asked her driver, who moves passengers to Ghana daily from Lagos, to supervise the journey. She, therefore, shared the driver's contact and asked that the driver be contacted.

Afraid there might be hiccups on the road, the lady asked whether she would face any challenges during the journey.

"*Hope nobody go disturb me for road as I no get passport and ID card o*," the lady asked in faltering English.

The madam, however, assured her that the journey to Ghana would be smooth.

When the driver was contacted, he denied knowing about the arrangement and asked the madam to contact him.

After a series of back-and-forth, the driver was contacted again; he asked the lady to call him a day before the scheduled trip and meet him at Mile 2, the exit port.

In a recent trip to Ghana from Lagos, the reporter confirmed some of the revelations by Juliet and Lizzy about the role of transporters in facilitating illegal migrants and trafficked persons to Ghana.

On the day of the trip, the reporter paid the transport fare for a passenger with no international passport or ID card. The transport company's representative said the driver would be informed of the case to ensure there were no issues along the way.

Of the 13 passengers on the trip, only four travelled with international passports; five had NIN slips as identity cards; two had Ghana cards as identity cards; and two, including this reporter, had no form of identity card or international passport.

The driver had a passenger manifest listing those on the trip. However, no one thoroughly checked whether the information provided, especially by those without international passport, was true.

The pictures on the NIN slips were blurred, so they could not be easily verified as belonging to the owners. However, it was not confirmed whether they were fake.

As the bus was about to leave the park, the driver collected the international passports and Identity cards from the passengers. The first immigration check was at Agbara.

The driver parked off the road and went to the immigration post. He carried only his manifest. He came back about five minutes later, and the journey continued without any checks by the immigration officers.

One National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) officer, who shared the post with the immigration officers, opened the vehicle for scrutiny. After looking around the bus, they closed the door, and the movement continued.

Between the Agbara and Seme border, there were only two posts for checks and scrutiny. Interestingly, the scrutiny was not to verify the details of the passengers; it was not done in a way any serious security officer interested in fighting human trafficking would.

The immigration officer only questioned the passengers at random. In one instance, the immigration officer wanted to understand why a 22-year-old lady was travelling with her younger brother. But the driver quickly intervened, and the probing stopped.

At one spot between Badagry Bridge and Seme, the driver told the immigration officer, without alighting from the bus, that he had run out of photocopies of the bus manifest containing the passengers' list and details. He only handed the officer a gift, and the journey continued.

At the Seme border post, there were points for different security agencies. The driver asked all passengers to alight, while those with international passports were directed to the immigration point, even though they did not have their passports.

The driver handed the passports to an officer and marched those with ID cards to one office and those without ID cards to another, where there was little interrogation and verification of the particulars submitted.

Thereafter, the driver moved from one point to another, and exchanged pleasantries with officers of different security agencies at the border post. As he did so, he asked all the passengers to get into the bus.

Thereafter, the bus moved to the Benin Republic immigration point. The driver handed the bus manifest and the four passports to someone who helped complete the verification process, but none of the passengers got off the bus.

Between the Seme border post and the Benin-Togo Republic joint border (Hilacondji), there were two major checks, but nothing serious was done to verify the passengers' documents, especially matching passengers to their documents.

However, just metres from the Hilacondji border post, the driver went off the road into a street into an office to give the manifest and passports to a man. They both came out later, and the man rode ahead of the bus on a motorcycle to the border post.

There was no single check, just a little wait to probably get the passports stamped, as all the passengers sat in the bus. The bus drove past the Republic's immigration points into Togo, and the journey continued.

The driver, however, did not enter Ghana using the Aflao Border Post. He used the Segbe. He said it was less busy, which made things a lot easier for him.

Upon arriving at the Segbe Border Post, he parked the vehicle near the iron barrier on the entry road. He asked all passengers to alight from the bus and told those with passports to follow him to immigration. He marched them to where their passports would be stamped. He handed over the passports to an immigration officer.

Afterwards, he returned to introduce those without international passports to a female immigration officer, who casually did the checks.

She interacted with only two of the passengers, without looking closely or matching their names to the copy of the bus manifest she had.

That is why one passenger, without an international passport and Identity card, crossed the border post on foot without her knowledge.

The second passenger, who also had no international passport and Identity card, crossed after the driver collected 100 cedis from him, saying the officer demanded it. He was told to wait until the driver, who was moving around different offices such as Customs and health, got clearance.

After crossing into Ghana through the Segbe Border corridor, the next checkpoint was at Dabala. Although all passengers were asked to alight from the bus and walk through the checkpoint corridor, no one verified the passengers' documents. However, I later learnt that it was a Customs checkpoint, not for immigration services.

The last checkpoint we encountered was at Sogakope. There, the officer (it was unclear whether he was a policeman or an immigration officer) questioned passengers at random; he did not interrogate everyone.

One passenger with neither an ID card nor an international passport was among those he interrogated.

After the officer left, the driver informed the two passengers without ID cards and international passports that the officer was demanding compensation.

The driver asked each passenger for 50 Ghanaian cedis, which we paid, and the journey continued into Ghana's inner town. After passing the Sogaokpe checkpoint, the driver handed over the international passports and other documents collected from the passengers to the owners.

The return trip had similar patterns moving through the different border posts. However, instead of the Segbe border post, the driver rode through Aflao in the Ghana-Togo border corridor. Although the Aflao border post was much busier than the Segbe Border post, the crossing process was not cumbersome.

Unlike the entry bus, the exit bus driver had an intermediary who facilitated the passengers' movement. The intermediary collected the passports from the driver and did all the documentation. He led the passengers to cross the border post, including those without international passports and ID cards.

At the Ghana immigration post, many people were crossing the border, walking through a passage. This included some locals.

At one point, the officer mounting the gate blocked the path, and as a result the whole place became rowdy, but immediately the driver's consultant signalled to the officer; he was asked to point out his human cargo, and we were all allowed to pass, though one or two other persons forced their way through to cross the border with us.

None of the passengers faced scrutiny; those with international passports were not made to appear one after the other to get their passports stamped.

At the immigration stand, the consultant presented the passports to the immigration officer and, after pointing to the owners, who were meters away, the officer stamped them.

Also, at the Benin-Nigeria border post, the driver engaged an intermediary, unlike at the entry bus, where the driver moved around the different points to facilitate the process.



Visa processing room at the Aflao border post

However, a driver working with one of the transport companies told the reporter that for each trip of their minibuses entering Ghana from Lagos, the consultant at the Nigeria border post is paid between N80,000 and N100,000; 4500 and 5000 CFA each at the Benin and Togo points and 400 to 500 Cedis at the Ghana point.

Speaking with the Head, Press and Public Relations Unit (PPRU) for the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Vincent Adekoye, he said transporters play a role in facilitating human trafficking along the corridor, though some of them do it unknowingly.

"They helped to traffic these victims from one point to the other. Don't forget, part of the offence of trafficking is transportation. If there is no transportation, it is not trafficking."

Adekoye disclosed that in the past, traffickers travelled with the victims, but now, they courier victims.

"They have a point where they will put the victims, and they know the drivers that will bribe their way across the borders without being caught. It is the same driver that will conceal the identity of the victim inside the vehicle."

He insisted, however, that not all drivers commit these acts.

"There are some of them that are good; when they see things like that, they report to us. This is because we have had the opportunity to train some of them; we had engagement with the transporters. We went to their park in Mile 2. We have been there to sensitise them.

"So because of that, some of them have been giving us information. And we have intercepted a whole lot of victims of trafficking through the help of road transport operators, while some of them are working with the traffickers, helping to move these victims from one point to the other, from one country to the other, around the West African corridor, even the entire African corridor. We have a whole lot of them that are working with the traffickers."

Adekoye also said some transporters have been arrested in the past, though they are often used as prosecution witnesses.

Attempts to get the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to comment on transporters' role in facilitating illegal migration and human trafficking and what steps could be taken to curb it were unsuccessful.


Aflao Border corridor

How To Translate Reform Gains Into Improved Living Conditions

By **Isaac Olusina Monehin**

NIGERIA appears to be making some progress in macroeconomic stabilisation following the difficult but necessary economic reforms introduced by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration. The removal of petrol subsidies, exchange-rate reforms, improved revenue mobilisation and efforts to restore fiscal and monetary stability represent significant attempts to correct longstanding structural distortions in the economy.

There are encouraging indications that these interventions are beginning to yield results. Economic growth, government revenues and aspects of the investment environment have shown signs of improvement.

However, beneath these macroeconomic developments lies a troubling reality: millions of Nigerians are yet to experience meaningful improvements in their daily lives.

For the ordinary Nigerian, economic progress is not measured by GDP growth, foreign-exchange reserves or improved government revenue. It is measured by the ability to afford food, pay school fees, access healthcare, meet transportation costs, pay electricity bills and retain enough disposable income to maintain a reasonable standard of living.

This is the fundamental challenge confronting President Tinubu's administration: how to translate macroeconomic gains into tangible household economic recovery.

The next phase of the reforms must therefore move decisively from macroeconomic stabilisation to poverty reduction, employment generation and improved household purchasing power.

The results of the November 3, 2026, midterm elections in the United States offer an important lesson for governments everywhere.

The Democrats' sweeping electoral victories, including their capture of both chambers of Congress, demonstrate the political consequences of widespread dissatisfaction with the cost of living and economic conditions under an incumbent administration.

The lesson for Nigeria is particularly relevant as the country approaches the 2027 general elections.

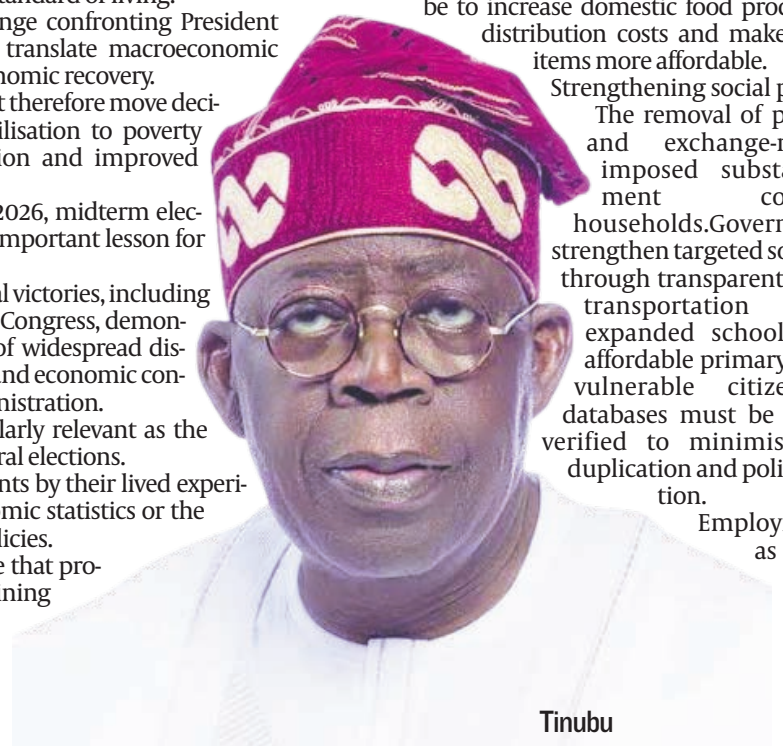
Voters ultimately judge governments by their lived experiences, not simply by official economic statistics or the intentions behind government policies.

President Tinubu must recognise that prolonged economic hardship, declining purchasing power and rising poverty could translate into public disillusionment and an electoral backlash against the ruling party.

The greatest danger is the widening disconnect between what government considers economic progress and what ordinary Nigerians experience in their homes, markets and workplaces.

This danger is not inevitable. But it requires urgent attention. Rather than abandoning the ongoing reforms or returning indiscriminately to the old subsidy regime, government should introduce a second phase of economic interventions specifically designed to ensure that macroeconomic improvements cascade down to households and productive enterprises.

A coordinated National Household Economic Recovery Programme (NHERP), built around six priority areas is hereby proposed:



Tinubu

Food affordability as national priority

FOOD inflation remains one of the most direct expressions of economic hardship. Government must intensify support for smallholder farmers through subsidisedfertiliser, improved seedlings, mechanisation, affordable agricultural credit and extension services.

Investment in irrigation, dry-season farming, secure agricultural production zones, storage facilities, rural roads and cold-chain infrastructure should be accelerated.The objective must be to increase domestic food production, reduce distribution costs and make essential food items more affordable.

Strengthening social protection

The removal of petrol subsidies and exchange-rate reforms imposed substantial adjustment costs on households.Government must strengthen targeted social protection through transparent cash transfers, transportation assistance, expanded school feeding and affordable primary healthcare for vulnerable citizens.Beneficiary databases must be independently verified to minimise corruption, duplication and political manipulation.

Employment creation as a central measure of economic performance

GDP growth without correspondingemploymentgrowth will not substantially reduce poverty.Priority should be given to labour-intensive sectors such as agriculture, agro-processing, manufacturing, construction, solid minerals, renewable energy and digital services.Government incentives and financing should increasingly be linked to measurable employment creation.Small and medium-sized enterprises, which have enormous potential to absorb labour, deserve particular attention through affordable credit, credit guarantees and technical support.

Accelerate electricity investment

UNRELIABLE electricity remains a major constraint on productivity and competitiveness.

Businesses are compelled to rely on expensive alternative energy sources, increasing production costs and the prices of locally manufactured goods.Investment in generation, transmission and distribution must therefore be accelerated, alongside embedded generation, renewable energy and mini-grids.The measure of success should not simply be installed generating capacity but reliable electricity actually delivered to households and businesses.

Reduce the cost of domestic production

IT is economically unhealthy that many Nigerian products cost more than comparable imported alternatives.High energy costs, inadequate infrastructure, expensive transportation, limited access to finance and regulatory bottlenecks undermine local competitiveness.Government must address these structural constraints rather than rely excessively on import restrictions and protectionist policies.Making Nigerian products competitive will encourage investment, expand production, create employment and reduce dependence on imports.

Expand affordable credit

SMALL businesses cannot expand without access to reasonably priced working capital.Development-finance institutions, credit-guarantee schemes and other financing mechanisms should be strengthened to improve access to affordable credit for viable enterprises.Responsible consumer credit should also be encouraged to enable households to acquire essential productive assets without falling into unsustainable debt.

These interventions will require substantial financial resources. An indicative annual funding envelope of N7–10 trillion could be considered, subject to detailed costing and available fiscal resources.

•Monehin, an economist, is a former Executive Director of Energy Bank, Ghana and a former Senior Special Assistant on PPP to ex-Governor SegunMimiko of Ondo State. He can be reached through monehinisaac@gmail.com

Building Stronger, Self-sustaining CommunitiesThrough Corporate Philanthropy

By **Sam Ogbemi Daibo**

FOR decades, the relationship between companies and their host communities in Nigeria has largely been defined by projects.

A company builds a classroom, renovates a health centre, provides boreholes, awards scholarships or rehabilitates a road. These interventions can be valuable. They meet real needs and often improve lives. But after decades of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), we must ask a harder question: have these projects created communities that are economically stronger, institutionally capable and increasingly able to sustain their own development? Too often, the answer is no.

Nigeria's next development challenge is therefore not simply to do more CSR. It is to move beyond CSR—from delivering community projects to investing in community systems. The distinction matters. A project asks: What can we build for this community?

Community investment asks: What can we build with this community that strengthens its institutions, expands economic opportunity and continues creating value long after the intervention ends? That shift changes everything.

From Beneficiaries to Development Partners

THE Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) presents an important opportunity to rethink this relationship in Nigeria's oil- and gas-producing communities. Through Host Community Development Trusts (HCDTs), the PIA provides a framework for communities to participate more systematically in identifying and advancing their development priorities. But establishing HCDTs is only the beginning. Their long-term value will depend on whether they become credible, accountable and capable institutions for community development. That requires more than funding projects. It requires strong governance, participatory planning, accountability, evidence-based decision-making and sustained collaboration among communities, operators, regulators and other stakeholders.

This lesson has been reinforced through PIND's work with HCDTs under the Bridges Project. The experience points to a simple but important conclusion: the real value of an HCDT should not be measured only by the projects it funds, but by its ability to govern resources responsibly, engage its stakeholders, track results and make increasingly strategic development investments. As the Bridges Project concludes, one question has become particularly important: what happens after the project ends? It is a question that should be asked of every corporate-community intervention in Nigeria.

Build Economies, Not Just Infrastructure

COMMUNITY investment also requires us to rethink what successful development looks like. A vocational training centre is useful. But its value multiplies when training responds to market demand, employers participate, graduates can access finance and businesses have customers. A solar mini-grid provides electricity. But when that electricity powers enterprises, increases productivity and creates opportunities for local service providers, it becomes part of a local economic system. Agricultural support becomes more sustainable when farmers are connected to processors, finance, technology and reliable markets rather than receiving inputs year after year.

The objective should not be for communities to permanently wait for the next corporate intervention. It should be communities with stronger institutions and local economies capable of attracting investment, creating livelihoods and sustaining development. That requires a fundamental change in mindset: from companies as providers and communities as beneficiaries, to companies and communities as development partners.

A New Compact for Corporate-Community Relations

THIS principle extends far beyond oil and gas. As investment expands across mining, agriculture, renewable energy, manufacturing and infrastructure, Nigeria needs a new compact between businesses and the communities in which they operate.

For companies, this is not philanthropy dressed in new language. Strong local economies, trusted institutions and constructive community relationships can contribute to more stable and sustainable operating environments. For communities, it means moving beyond one-off benefits towards institutions, capabilities and economic opportunities that endure.



Sam Ogbemi

For government and regulators, it means encouraging long-term community value rather than measuring success simply by the number of projects completed. And for development organisations, it requires recognising that our greatest legacy may not be the projects we leave behind, but the systems, capabilities and relationships that continue to function after we leave.

At the Bridges Project Impact Summit, stakeholders are being challenged to answer three questions: What changed? What was learned? What happens next? That final question is perhaps the most important because sustainability begins when ownership outlives intervention.

From Projects to Prosperity

NIGERIA will continue to need schools, roads, health facilities, water systems and other community infrastructure. The argument is not that companies should stop building projects.

It is that projects should become building blocks of stronger community systems—not the final measure of development.

So perhaps the question companies should ask is no longer: What project can we give this community? But: What can we invest in together that will make this community stronger long after we are gone?

That is the shift from CSR to community investment. And it may be one of the most important shifts Nigeria can make in moving communities from being recipients of development to owners of their prosperity.

•Sam Daibo is the executive director of the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND).

How Growing Sahel Insecurity Is Shaping Nigeria's Reopened Trade Routes

As Abuja deepens diplomatic engagement with Sahelian governments and ECOWAS advances plans for a regional counterterrorism force, ***OLUDARE RICHARDS*** *examines the uneasy relationship between trade, security and cooperation in a fractured West Africa.*





THE attack on a construction site along the Sokoto-Badagry Superhighway in Kebbi State on October 8, which left two security personnel and a Chinese national dead, has brought renewed attention to the risks confronting workers and infrastructure in Nigeria's north-western borderlands.

Two civilians were also reported injured in the incident at Gubba village, Maiyama Local Government Area, where police said suspected Lakurawa fighters had attacked the site. The assault followed an attack on a military base in the same local government area on October 7, when troops reportedly repelled armed fighters and recovered weapons, ammunition and 17 motorcycles.

For communities whose livelihoods depend on agriculture, livestock and commerce across national boundaries, the incidents have revived a difficult question: how can Nigeria facilitate the movement of goods and people across its northern frontier while protecting the communities and infrastructure on which that commerce depends?

The question goes to the heart of a policy the Federal Government has pursued since February, when it reopened the Kamba and Tsamiya crossings in Kebbi State to restore commercial connections involving Nigeria, Benin Republic and Niger Republic.

The decision was intended to revive legitimate trade after prolonged restrictions disrupted transport and left thousands of trucks stranded.

But even as the government seeks to restore economic activity, its own customs authorities have acknowledged that reopened trade routes could be exploited by criminal networks if adequate safeguards are not maintained.

At a stakeholders' meeting in Kebbi State, earlier in the year, Comptroller-General of Customs, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, reassured traders and transport operators that the Federal Government was addressing the difficulties caused by the restrictions.

"We are not unconcerned about what is happening," he said, adding that officials had been "working round the clock to resolve these challenges."

The reassurance was accompanied by a warning about the security implications of reopening the corridor. "There are criminals and non-state actors who may want to take advantage of trade routes," Adeniyi said. "We must facilitate trade without compromising national security."

That statement captures the dilemma facing the government. Closing a border can disrupt legitimate economic activity without necessarily eliminating illicit movement.

Reopening it can restore commerce, but it also requires customs, immigration and security agencies to identify and intercept illegal movements without subjecting legitimate traders to unnecessary delays.

Adeniyi said the Customs Service would deploy information and communications technology systems to improve interconnectivity with the customs administrations of Benin and Niger, with the objective of strengthening declarations, monitoring and transparency.

He also warned that any truck found outside its approved transit corridor would be seized, underscoring the government's intention to regulate the movement of transit goods rather than allow cargo to circulate without oversight.

For Nigeria, the stakes extend beyond customs revenue. The crossings are part of a wider network connecting producers, traders, transporters and consumers across West Africa. Their importance is particularly evident in the trade in agricultural commodities, where delays can turn a profitable consignment into a financial loss.

President of the National Onion Producers, Processors and Marketers Association of Nigeria, Isa Aliyu, offered a particularly direct explanation of what prolonged border restrictions mean for businesses dealing in perishable goods.

"Onion is highly perishable. Every hour of delay translates to losses," he said, warning that "closure pushes trade to illegal routes, weakens regulation and reduces government revenue."

Aliyu's warning presents the border question from a commercial perspective often overlooked in security discussions.

Restrictions intended to control movement can make legitimate transactions more expensive and less predictable.

When businesses struggle to move goods through recognised channels, some may seek alternative routes, making the task of monitoring commercial activity more difficult.

His argument also highlights the relationship between border management and economic security. Farmers and traders need reliable access to markets, but the government needs legitimate transactions to pass through systems that allow goods to be documented, monitored and taxed.

The reopening of Tsamiya was therefore welcomed by agricultural stakeholders who saw the corridor as important to exports and regional commerce. Yet the long-term effect will depend on whether the initial movement of stranded goods translates into sustained activity, lower transaction costs and more predictable access to markets.

The immediate scale of the backlog was considerable. According to the News Agency of Nigeria, approximately 2,000 trucks that had been stranded around Nigeria's borders with Benin and Niger began moving following the reopening of Kamba and Tsamiya in February.

For Niger, a landlocked country that relies on neighbouring states for access to international shipping routes, the reopening offered an important transit opportunity.

For Nigeria, it promised to restore commercial activity in border communities and strengthen its position as a regional trade gateway.

The relief was evident in the response of Nigerien official Maigiro Yahaya-Tubil, who welcomed the resumption of movement.

"We are happy that our trucks, which were trapped for months, can now move freely through Nigeria to their destinations," he said.

The district head of Kamba, Muhammed Sarkin-Shikon-Kamba, also welcomed the decision, describing it as an opportunity to restore economic activity in communities affected by the restrictions.

"This decision will bring economic benefits to our people and restore livelihoods that were affected by the closure," he said.

These remarks give the policy a human dimension. For border communities, trade is not simply a matter of international agreements or customs procedures. It sustains transport operators, market traders, farmers, livestock dealers and small businesses whose earnings depend on the regular movement of goods and people.

President Bola Tinubu's administration similarly presented the reopening as a means of reconciling commerce with security.

In a statement issued in February, the Presidency described the decision as "a balanced and pragmatic approach to governance that recognises the link between economic inclusion, regional diplomacy, and national security."

The statement argued that "functional and regulated borders offer better oversight, intelligence coordination, and cooperation than prolonged closures that often push activities into informal channels."

The government's position is that regulated movement can give authorities greater visibility over commercial activity than prolonged restrictions that push some transactions away from recognised routes.

That argument is consistent with the Customs Service's stated intention to strengthen monitoring and interconnectivity with neighbouring administrations.

However, the reopening of a crossing does not by itself establish that trade has recovered sustainably or that border communities are safer.

The movement of 2,000 stranded trucks demonstrated the scale of pent-up demand, but it did not provide a measure of subsequent trade volumes, average transit times or the costs incurred by businesses operating along the route.

Those figures matter because the economic case for reopening rests on the promise of lasting benefits, not merely the release of cargo delayed by earlier restrictions.

The renewed insecurity in Sokoto and Kebbi makes the need for such an assessment more pressing. Although the October attacks do not establish that the reopened crossings have facilitated militant movements, they demonstrate the difficult security environment in which the trade policy is being implemented.

The attack on the construction site also raises concerns about the protection of infrastructure projects in vulnerable areas. Roads can connect agricultural communities to markets, improve access to services and reduce transport costs, but their economic benefits are diminished when workers cannot operate safely or construction is interrupted by violence.

The military's account of the October 7 assault on its Forward Operating Base in Maiyama illustrates the operational challenge.

According to the Theatre Command of Operation FANSAN YAMMA, a large group of suspected Lakurawa fighters arrived on more than 100 motorcycles and attacked the base with assorted weapons, including machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. Troops forced the attackers to retreat and recovered 17 motorcycles, a PKT machine gun, an AK-47 rifle, ammunition and a communication device.

The command said operations were continuing to track the fleeing attackers and prevent the group from establishing freedom of movement in the area.

The incidents point to a wider challenge confronting border communities: the economic activity that governments seek to restore depends on security arrangements capable of protecting both people and infrastructure.

For Nigeria, the implication is that securing the border requires more than preventing armed groups from crossing it.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Energy Crisis: Nigeria Needs 100,000MW To Power Economy – Ex-Minister Nnaji

By **Eno Bassey**

NIGERIA requires at least 100,000 megawatts of electricity to attain higher-middle-income economic status, former Minister of Power, Prof. Barth Nnaji, has said, warning that the country's current supply capacity is grossly inadequate to support industrial growth and business expansion. Nnaji, Chairman of Geometric Power Group, said although Nigeria had the capacity to generate about 13,000 megawatts, only between 4,000 and 5,000 megawatts was available on the national grid, largely due to transmission constraints.

He spoke at the Lagos Country Club Business Forum 3.0 in Lagos, themed "Energy Costs and Business Survival: Driving Profitability Amid Nigeria's Power Crisis". Nnaji blamed the sector's challenges partly on the 2013 privatisation of the defunct Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), arguing that the pursuit of immediate profits undermined long-term investment.

He said electricity investments required substantial capital and patience, with some taking between seven and 10 years to break even. Citing the Association of Power Generation Companies of Nigeria, he disclosed that sector loans and debts had exceeded N7 trillion.

PMI, TIME Studios Spotlight Businesses Scaling Climate Solutions

By **Sulaimon Salau**

PROJECT Management Institute (PMI) and TIME Studios have unveiled the second season of The Solutionaries, a documentary series highlighting businesses and innovators translating climate ambitions into scalable solutions across different industries.

The three-episode series, now available on TIME.com, examines how organisations move beyond innovative ideas to develop commercially and operationally viable solutions capable of delivering measurable environmental and economic impact.

Produced in partnership with Good is the New Cool and directed by Edward Buckles Jr., the new season features Adam Gardner and Lauren Sullivan of REVERB, Alisha Fredriksson of Seabound, and Kate Kallot of Amini.

Their projects span sustainable live music, maritime decarbonisation and artificial intelligence, demonstrating how strategic planning, investment, collaboration and project management can help scale climate-focused innovations.

Cabotage Fund Currency Controversy Gets Messier, As Shipowners, SEREC, Others Call For Audit

By **Sulaimon Salau**

THE last may not have been heard about the controversy trailing the real currency for the Cabotage Vessel Financing Fund (CVFF), despite it is about 23 years that shipowners have waited endlessly for disbursement.

The former Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), TemisanOmatseye, had revealed that the Cabotage Fund had been converted to naira, a statement that triggered reaction from NIMASA which claimed the fund was still domiciled in dollars.

Irked by the unending back and forth games, shipowners and industry stakeholders have called for a forensic audit of the account to be able to ascertain the real currency and how much has actually accumulated into the CVFF.

The CVFF was established to provide financial support to Nigerian indigenous shipowners for the acquisition of vessels and development of local shipping capacity.

Following the conflicting claims over the management and currency status of the fund, the development, the Sea Empowerment and Research Centre (SEREC) has called for an independent forensic audit of NIMASA.

SEREC, in its latest bulletin by its Head of Research, Eugene Nweke, explained that the controversy surrounding the fund had reinforced its earlier concerns about transparency, accountability and the possible erosion of contributions through currency conversion and administrative decisions.

The body maintained that the latest disclosures had validated its earlier demand for a thorough audit of NIMASA's financial records covering the period from 2004 to date.

SEREC argued that shipowners, as contributors to the fund, "deserved documentary evidence showing how much had accrued, where the money was domiciled, the interest generated and the amount currently available for disbursement."

It warned that converting dollar contributions into naira exposed the fund to significant foreign exchange losses, given the depreciation of the local currency over the years.

Similarly, Nigeria Shipowners Association (NISA) enjoined the Minister of Marine and Blue Economy to clarify the reported conversion of the fund from dollars to naira, insisting that it should remain denominated in dollars.

NISA President, Alhaji Sola Adewumi, said the ministry and NIMASA should tell operators the truth, as shipowners has continued to make payments to the relevant authorities in US dollars for shipping-related transactions and



Team Executive, Corporate Relations, HBM Nigeria Plc, Eseosa Otoighile (left); beneficiary, HBM Nigeria Plc Fashion Design Training Programme, Tosin Omirin; Director, Corporate Relations, HBM Nigeria Plc, Viola Graham-Douglas; Chief Executive Officer, Awesome Empowerment Foundation, Omotola Bamigbaiye; Country Corporate Citizenship & Sponsorship Manager, HBM Nigeria Plc, Brenda Apata; and another beneficiary, HBM Nigeria Plc Fashion Design Training Programme, Zainab Muhammed, during the graduation ceremony of beneficiaries of the training programme held in Lagos... on Friday.

Uphold Standard For Global Competitiveness, NAFDAC, NACCIMA Tell Manufacturers

By **Sulaimon Salau**

THE National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) have urged Nigerian manufacturers to strictly adhere to high product quality and safety standards to boost their competitiveness in the international market.

Speaking at a Roundtable Breakfast Meeting organised by NACCIMA in Lagos, the leadership of both organisationsemphasised that regulatory compliance is a vital strategic tool for expanding global trade, driving economic growth, and safeguarding public health.

The duo raised an alarm over the dangers in production of sub-standard goods, warning that poor quality products are actively eroding public health and shortening the average lifespan of Nigerians.

The Guest Speaker and Director-General of NAFDAC, Prof. MojisolaAdeyeye, urged Nigerian manufacturers to always ensure that their products meet the highest standards of quality.

Speaking on the theme: "Strengthening Regulatory Compliance For Competitive Nigerian Business," Adeyeye said poor products have reduced the lifespan of Nigerians from 60+ years to 56 years.

She said: "The medicines we take must be effective. The food that we eat must make us whole, and the products reaching consumers must meet the highest standards of quality. Safe food and quality medicines build healthy communities. It creates competitive businesses and a stronger nation. The lifespan in our country, unfortunately, is about 56 years. Growing up, it was like 60+ years. I repeat, the message is simple: Safe food and quality medicines, build healthy communities, competitive businesses, and a stronger nation, a wealthier nation."

She emphasised that quali-

OPSN Commends LCCI For Driving Industrial, Female Enterprise Growth

By **Sulaimon Salau**

KEY industry leaders under the auspices of the members of the Organised Private Sector of Nigeria (OPSN) have commended renowned industrialist, Princess 'LayoBakare-Okeowo for her strategic initiative aimed at empowering female entrepreneurs.

The commendations came during the official launch of the Princess LayoBakare-Okeowo Women Enterprise and Legacy Foundation (PLBO-WELF) in Lagos, an initiative designed to provide capital, mentorship, and structural support to women-led businesses across Nigeria.

The foundation marked its inaugural rollout by empowering 20 female entrepreneurs to transition their operations from casual "hustles" into sustainable, structured corporate entities.

Speaking at the event, held in celebration of her 65th birthday themed, "65 Years of Impact: Building Business, Empowering Women, Creating Legacy," Bakare-Okeowo, also Vice-President, LCCI, said empowering women goes far beyond short-term financial aid, asserting that true success is measured by creating access, building human capacity, and leaving behind a lasting legacy for future generations.

She said: "The Princess LayoBakare-Okeowo Women Enterprise and Legacy Foundation, PLBO-WLF, was established out of a deep conviction that women deserve more than encouragement. They deserve opportunities, access, mentorship, resources and the support systems required to turn their dreams into sustainable realities."

She therefore urged corporate organisations, development partners, business leaders, philanthropists, mentors and well-meaning individuals to invest in women.

The initiative builds on her previous philanthropic work, which included donating a well-furnished library to a school, constructing educational infrastructure in Ogun State, and organising several women empowerment schemes. Under the latest event involving 20 beneficiaries, the selected businesses received grant funding expected to directly improve their operations.

Pereira Seeks Stronger Savings Culture, Urges Nigerians To Start Small

By **Sulaimon Salau**

THE Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of Fina Trust Microfinance Bank, Bevan Pereira, has called on Nigerians to cultivate a consistent savings culture, highlighting the importance of financial discipline, starting small and building savings gradually, irrespective of income level.

Pereira made the call during an interview where he discussed the theme, "Building a Consistent Savings Culture in Nigeria," in commemoration of World Savings Day.

He noted that Nigeria already has a longstanding tradition of savings, rooted in cooperative societies, family practices and community-based contribution schemes, but stressed the need to strengthen this culture through deliberate and consistent financial habits.

According to him, savings should not be viewed merely as whatever remains after spending, but as a deliberate decision to set aside a portion of one's income before meeting other expenses. He explained that while saving can be challenging, particularly under difficult economic conditions.

Beta Glass Delivers Double-digit Revenue, Operating Profit Growth In Q3

By **Suliamon Salau**

BETA Glass Plc has announced its financial performance for the third quarter and nine months ended September 30, 2026, as presented in its unaudited interim financial statements.

Beta Glass delivered a strong Q3 in 2026, recording double-digit growth in revenue, gross profit, and operating profit, compared with Q3 in 2025. The results highlight improved gross profit margins and operating profitability. Year-to-Date Revenue, Gross Profit and Operating Profit also showed positive growth versus the previous year.

Commenting, the Chief Executive Officer of Beta Glass Plc, Alex Gendis, said: "Our 11.7% revenue growth in Q3 2026 reflects another quarter of strong commercial performance, backed by a double-digit increase in sales volume, driven by healthy demand from our key customers in the brewery, soft drinks, pharma, and cosmetics segments.

"A 21.3%increase in gross profit reflects the gains from our tight cost management and improved manufacturing efficiencies. These have resulted in an encouraging improvement in our gross margin from 34.6% to 37.6%.

BizAgro

Stakeholders Link Cassava Productivity Gap To Limited Improved Varieties, Others

By **Gbenga Akinfenwa**

STAKEHOLDERS in the cassava value chain have linked the tuber crop's productivity gap to limited availability of improved high-yield cassava varieties, poor agronomic practices, and inadequate extension support.

The stakeholders, at a roundtable by the Nigeria Cassava Investment Accelerator (NCIA), which convened processors, industrial buyers, regulators, and other stakeholders to examine this gap, said although research institutes have developed improved varieties, there is insufficient capacity to multiply and distribute their planting stems to farmers at scale.

The World Bank Group's 2025 Nigeria Country Private Sector Diagnostic identifies low yields as a constraint to industrial cassava investment, citing average Nigerian yields of 8.2 tonnes per hectare in 2020, compared with 12.8 tonnes globally and 24 tonnes in Southeast Asia.

The participants noted that even where farmers obtain improved stems, achieving the yield potential consistently depends on applying recommended practices such as correct crop spacing.

The forum noted that stronger extension support is therefore needed to help farmers use the varieties effectively; saying higher yields would increase the volume of roots available for both food and industrial processing without requiring one market to displace the other.

The participants raised concern whether the country's headline cassava production figures reflect the volume of roots actually harvested, adding that production estimates may be based partly on the area cultivated and assumed yields.

"Where mature roots are left unharvested due to high labour costs or other factors, estimated production may therefore exceed the actual harvest. One participant estimated that, in some production areas, up to 60 per cent of planted cassava may remain unharvested.

"Even where roots are available, weak aggregation and transportation systems can prevent them from reaching factories reliably and in good condition. Cassava deteriorates quickly after harvesting, so improved aggregation, transportation, and coordination between farmers and processors are needed to move roots to factories within the required processing period.

"Reported production is therefore not the same as reliable industrial supply. Factories need roots delivered at a commercially viable cost," the report read.

They identified harvesting, transportation, and conversion costs as important constraints on the competitiveness of cassava processing relative to grains.

"Harvesting remains largely manual and labour-intensive. It becomes particularly difficult and expensive during the dry season, when hardened soil makes roots harder to uproot. Then again, fresh cassava roots are approximately 70 per cent water. Processors therefore incur significant costs transporting bulky roots from farms over poor roads, even though much of their weight will not become finished product.

"Cassava's short post-harvest life also limits storage options, requiring frequent deliveries and close coordination between farmers and processors. This places cassava at a disadvantage to grains, which contain a higher proportion of usable dry matter and can be stored for longer periods.

"For starch production, which is also the starting point for sweeteners and bioethanol, cassava requires several preparation stages at the factory. These include washing, peeling, grinding, starch extraction, and drying. These stages require equipment and energy making cassava starch more expensive to produce where logistics and power costs are high," the report read.

The roundtable noted that improving harvesting efficiency, reducing transportation costs, and increasing conversion efficiency would strengthen the competitiveness of both existing and new processing facilities, just as these cost disadvantages also reinforce the need to focus on derivatives and applications where cassava can compete with alternative inputs.

The discussion indicates that cassava derivatives should not be promoted as general substitutes for competing industrial inputs, as adoption is more likely when a specific derivative is matched to an application in which it meets the buyer's technical, quality, and commercial requirements.

The participants identified industrial potential in cassava-derived bioethanol, cassava-derived sweeteners, and cassava-wheat composite flour. Biscuit production was highlighted as a potential application for composite flour, as biscuits depend less on gluten for structure than bread does.

The discussion also highlighted cassava starch. A participant reported that locally produced cassava starch had become price-competitive with imported starch. However, it was noted that cassava starch may perform differently from corn starch in particular uses, even when both meet similar laboratory specifications.

Quality and functionality are therefore related but distinct. Regulatory representatives described existing standards, laboratory services, and certification arrangements, while industrial buyers raised concerns about inconsistent test results and possible contamination across processing and supply activities.

They noted that neutral testing arrangements could help resolve differences between buyers' and suppliers' results and strengthen confidence in locally produced derivatives.

"Supplier development is also important. Buyers can help processors understand their technical requirements, improve production practices, and maintain consistent quality. Working with off-takers to establish specifications and validate product performance would help processors focus on applications with demonstrated commercial potential.

"The roundtable highlights a central lesson for investors. Commercially viable cassava projects must align reliable feedstock supply, competitive processing costs, and demonstrated industrial demand. Higher farm output will have limited industrial impact if roots cannot be delivered and processed economically, while additional processing capacity will struggle if derivatives do not meet buyers' requirements. These considerations apply to both improving the utilisation of existing facilities and developing new ones.

"These insights are shaping NCIA's work in four areas: improving farmer productivity and feedstock supply; strengthening market linkages among farmers, processors, and industrial buyers; supporting processor development and quality assurance; and advancing application-led product development in collaboration with buyers, regulators, and researchers."



Cocoa Processors Raise Alarm Over Operational Challenges At Lagos Ports

By **Gbenga Akinfenwa**

THE Cocoa Processors Associations of Nigeria (COPAN), has raised the alarm over what they termed operational challenges experienced by cocoa exporters, shippers and shipping agents in the course of obtaining approvals from the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), for the offloading of export containers at the various Lagos ports.

The Chairman of the association, Otunba Felix Oladunjoye, who raised the alarm at a press conference in Lagos, said the recent developments in the export clearance and port access processes have created serious delays, bottlenecks, manipulations and increasing extortions that are adversely affecting their operations and the competitiveness of the Nigerian exports.

Oladunjoye lamented that in the last six months, exporters have lost between N10b and N12b, in terms of transactional cost,

.Seek FG, Minister's Intervention

delay, high rent and other sundry expenses linked to the unprecedented delays in NPA approval for export container offloading.

He regretted that the development would automatically reduce exportation of agro produce, as the operational costs are weighing down the exporters, who are already overwhelmed by the development.

"In November 2022, the NPA announced the licensing of Export Processing Terminal (EPTs) –designated facilities approved to receive process, inspect, consolidate and prepare export cargo before the cargo is moved to Apapa or Tin Can Island Port for shipment.

"With the introduction of the Electronic Truck Call-UP System (ETO)–a digital platform to regulate and coordinate the movement of trucks in and out of designated seaports, export containers were properly prepared, all requisite payments made, and the necessary documentation completed. NPA approval to offload at the port was ordinarily obtained within approximately two hours.

"However, over the past six months, we have observed a significant deterioration in the turnaround time for obtaining these approvals. Trucks conveying duly documented export containers are reportedly kept waiting for a minimum of four working days in some instances before the necessary approval is granted," he said.

Oladunjoye lamented that the development has led to alleged extortion by some officials from operators, to expedite approval and facilitate timely access to the port for offloading.

He said the situation has created corruption perception that access to an essential port service may depend on additional payments outside officially approved charges, saying it undermines confidence in the port administration process, raising concerns about transparency, accountability, and the integrity of the country's export logistics chain.

Oladunjoye warned that the persistent delays and associated costs are capable of creating breach of international cocoa purchase and delivery contracts due to missing shipping schedules; additional truck detention, haulage, demurrage, storage, and related operational expenses, as applicable; disruption of truck rotation, export terminal scheduling, and container movement planning; reduced operational efficiency and increased transaction costs for exporters and shipping agents; and loss of Direct Foreign Exchange and Unemployment among others.

While noting that letters have been written to the Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, Adegboyega Oyetola, and other relevant authorities on the issue, he called on the minister to open an urgent investigation into the reported delays in NPA approvals for exports containers at the various ports and the alleged demand for unofficial payments.

Court Remands Two Mexicans, Four Nigerians Over Oyo Forest Meth Lab

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

THE Federal High Court in Ibadan, Oyo State, has remanded two Mexican nationals and four Nigerians at the correctional centre pending trial over their alleged involvement in the establishment and operation of a clandestine methamphetamine laboratory in Tapa village, Ibarapa North Local Council of Oyo State.

Justice Nkeonye Evelyn Maha ordered their remand after they pleaded not guilty to a four-count charge filed against them by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA).

The defendants are 56-year-old Jose Villa Ochoa and 40-year-old Carrera Loaiza Arturo, both Mexican nationals, alongside four Nigerians identified as Maxwell Uche Nevoh, 30; Olatunji Yusuf, 37; Bankole Akeem Owolabi, 45; and Ganiu Monsiu, 43.

According to the NDLEA, Villa Ochoa and the four Nigerians were arrested on Wednesday, June 17, 2026, by operatives of the agency in a forested area of Tapa village, while Arturo was arrested on August 19, 2026, as he allegedly attempted to flee the country through the Lagos airport.

Reps Query JAMB Over N3b Pension Payment, N710m Computer Spending

From **Owede Agbajileke, Abuja**

THE House of Representatives has queried the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) over alleged extra-budgetary spending, including N3 billion paid for staff pension benefits and N710 million spent on computer-related items against an approved provision of N220 million.

The lawmakers also demanded explanations for N874 million reportedly spent on meals and refreshments and N696 million on travel and transportation, raising concerns over the board's financial accountability and compliance with approved budgetary provisions.

The House Committee on Examination Bodies raised the concerns during an oversight engagement with the JAMB Registrar, Prof. Segun Aina, and his management team, insisting that the board account for expenditures that were not captured in its approved 2026 budget.

At the centre of the controversy was the N3 billion payment, which Aina explained was meant to settle accumulated obligations under an additional staff benefit scheme initially conceived as a housing programme.

Aircraft Crash: NAF Announces Recovery Of Cockpit Voice Recorder As Investigation Continues

THE Nigerian Air Force (NAF) has recorded further progress in the ongoing investigation into the ATR-42 aircraft crash in Igbokoda, Ondo State.

Air Commodore Ehimen Ejodame, Director of Public Relations and Information, Headquarters, Nigerian Air Force, in a statement on Friday, said the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR), has been recovered.

According to the statement, the recovered voice recorder was confirmed intact by technical teams from the NAF and Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB).

He added that parts of the Flight Data Recorder (FDR), commonly referred to as the black box, were also retrieved, while efforts to locate and recover its remaining portion continue.

The statement equally revealed that additional aircraft wreckage, engine components and human remains have also been recovered.

"Operations are ongoing in the challenging swamp terrain, with teams working to retrieve outstanding components and facilitate the necessary technical examinations. The investigation is being conducted with due diligence to ensure comprehensive, evidence-based findings," the statement read.

According to the NAF, the recovery process also involved careful attention to the proper handling of human remains, with the Directorate of Identification and Classification (DIC), undertaking the necessary procedures for proper identification.

It added that the NAF has sustained engagements with the families of the victims, recognising their need for information and support.

"Engagement with relevant authorities on environmental concerns raised by the host community also remains an important part of the broader response," the statement said.



Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), Dr. Tayo Aduloju (left); Managing Director/Chief Executive, Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Mrs. Olubunmi Onabanjo-Kuku; Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu; and President/Chairman of Council, Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Dr. Dele Alabi, during the CIBN investiture, as Mrs. Onabanjo-Kuku received her Honorary Fellowship in Lagos.

African Researchers Move To Curb Helicobacter Pylori Infections With Zambia Conference

By **Moyosore Salami**

MEDICAL experts from across the African continent will converge on Grand Palace Hotel Lusuka, Zambia, from November 27-28, 2026, for the Second African Helicobacter Pylori and Microbiota Conference, where they will brainstorm on opportunities and challenges in helicobacter pylori.

Renowned Emeritus Professor of Medicine at the Trinity College Dublin and Tallagent University Hospital Ireland, Colm O'Morain, will present the keynote address at the conference.

A press statement made available to *The Guardian*, signed by the President of the African Helicobacter and Microbiota Study Group (AHMSG), Prof. Mashiko Setshedi, said O' Morain will be speaking on 'The next 40 years of H.pylori – Opportunities and Challenges.

The statement added that another globally renowned physician, microbiologist and research specialist in Helicobacter/gastro cancer pathogens, Prof. Yoshio Yamaoka, is also billed to speak at the conference.

Setshedi stated Yamaoka will be speaking on 'Collaborative Research in Africa: Current Progress and Future Perspective."

He said the two-day scientific conference will also feature good will messages from Prof. Peter Malfertheiner, Richen Symposium, oral presentations, panel discussions, award/prize presentations for best oral presentation, AHMSG presidential handover and AHMSG Board Members meeting.

The AHMSG was launched in Lagos, Nigeria through a series of collective steps to tackle the specific challenges of Helicobacter Pylori infections and gastric health across the African continent.

It was inaugurated by Prof. Babatunde Lawal Salako, the Director General of the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research.

The body was formed as an international coalition, originally bringing together leading medical scholars, with its board members drawn from across African countries including Nigeria, South Africa, Cameroon, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Senegal and Tanzania.

World Bank, IMF Recognise Tinubu's Reforms, $1tr Economy Within Reach — Yilwatda

• As Tinubu Calls Akwa Ibom Home, Praises Gov Eno

From **Ayoyinka Jegede, Uyo**

THE National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Prof. Nentawe Goshwe Yilwatda, has said that the economic reforms introduced by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu are laying a solid foundation for a stronger, more productive and prosperous Nigeria, noting that their direction and potential have received recognition from major international economic institutions, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Yilwatda made this known in Uyo, the Akwa Ibom State capital, where the state hosted Tinubu and his entourage at a rally at the Senator Godswill Akpabio International Stadium.

Addressing the enthusiastic crowd at the rally, the APC National Chairman said the President's boldness in confronting longstanding structural challenges reflects the kind of courageous leadership required to reposition Nigeria for sustainable growth and economic prosperity.

In a statement by his Special Adviser on Media and Information Strategy, Abimbola Tooki, Yilwatda acknowledged that the reforms have demanded difficult adjustments but maintained that abandoning them would amount to reversing the country's progress and returning to the economic difficulties that necessitated the reforms in the first place.

The APC National Chairman described Tinubu's ambition of building a $1 trillion economy as more than a political aspiration, stressing that it represents a strategic national development target backed by deliberate policy choices and ongoing economic restructuring.

He identified major investments in infrastructure, transportation, education, maritime development and financial inclusion as critical pillars of the administration's economic transformation agenda.

Yilwatda particularly highlighted the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway as a landmark infrastructure project that would improve connectivity, stimulate commerce and unlock enormous economic opportunities for Akwa Ibom and other coastal communities.

He also said the President's determination to develop Nigeria's maritime economy would further strengthen the economic competitiveness of coastal states and expand their contribution to national development.

SWAN Raises Alarm Over Poor Financial Records Crippling Nigerian Businesses

By **Gbenga Salau**

THE National Chairperson of the Society of Women Accountants of Nigeria (SWAN), Mrs. Blessing Osakwe-Ogo, has said some businesses make sales daily but still struggle to pay their bills because of lack of proper financial records and the knowledge to interpret them.

Osakwe-Ogo, who stated this while delivering her speech at the Accounting for non-accountants workshop 2026 themed 'Business Made Easy: Practical Financial Skills' organised by SWAN, maintained that in today's business environment, entrepreneurs must understand not only how to manage their money but also their statutory obligations, tax responsibilities and opportunities available under relevant laws.

She said: "Have you ever wondered why a business can make sales everyday and still struggles to pay bills? Or why an entrepreneur can work tirelessly, yet find it difficult to explain whether the business is truly making a profit? The problem is not lack of customers or hard work.

NMA Rejects NASS Proposed Penalties For Health Workers In Emergency Cases

By **Opeyemi Babalola**

THE Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) has strongly criticised a legislative proposal by the National Assembly to impose fines and imprisonment on healthcare workers who reject emergency patients.

In a statement, President, Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Dr. (Prof.) Afekhide Ernest Omoti, stated that criminalising such actions is unjust while the government fails to provide the necessary resources, infrastructure and enabling environment required to deliver proper emergency care.

Omoti added that although the association acknowledge the fundamental right of patients to receive urgent medical attention regardless of financial status, it maintains that lawmakers must first address systemic healthcare deficiencies rather than penalising overburdened professionals.

"The National Health Act (NHA) already provides a legal framework for the protection of patients requiring emergency medical treatment, but stressed that the existing provisions prohibit the refusal of emergency medical care.

"The critical question, therefore, is not necessarily the absence of legislation but the failure to implement existing provisions and create the enabling environment for their effective execution.

The Guardian Classifieds
Change of Name · Property · Guardian Jobs · SME's/Business Page
Loss of document · Legal Notice · Education Page
Health · Automobile · Fashion · Agro
email: peter.iworh@guardian.ng

E-PAYMENT; E-BOOKING
GUARDIAN NEWSPAPERS LIMITED
UNION BANK: 0008530586
GT BANK: 0117546335
www.guardian.ng

ENQUIRIES:
LAGOS OFFICE: 08023459584, 08094441944
ABUJA OFFICE: 08036627804, 07039315660, 08035678231
P. HARCOURT: 08064693588, 08064283611
ENUGU: 08033958839, 07030180057
ONLINE: 08058717159, 08126307209

CHANGE OF NAME

www.guardian.ng Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria Guardiannigeria Guardian Nigeria - C00264288

ABIODUN : Formerly known as Gabriel A. Showemimo, now wishes to be addressed as Showemimo Abiodun Gabriel . All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

ADDITION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Florence Nkemjika Okoroegbe now wish to be addressed as Florence Nkemjika Okoroegbe Ćosić . All former documents remain valid. NIMC and NIS take note

ADDITION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Ikyor Janet now wish to be addressed as Ikyor Mfanyi Janet. All former documents remain valid . General public take note

ADDITION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Kadiri Jamiu now wish to be addressed as Kadiri Jamiu Olamilekan . All former documents remain valid .General public take note

ADDITION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Olanrewaju Esan Now wish to be addressed as Olanrewaju Olusola Esan . All former documents remain valid.Nigerian Immigration Service and general public take note

ADDITION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Oboh Godswill now wish to be addressed as Oboh Godswill Osilamah. All former documents remains valid . General public take note.

ADDITION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Oneh Chika, wish to be addressed as Oneh Chika Praisel. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

ADEBAYO: I, formerly known as Mathew David Yemi now wish to be addressed as Mathew David Olayemi. All former documents remain valid. General public, take note

ADEBAYO: I, formerly Mrs Dorcas Abosede Adebayo now wish to be addressed as Miss. Jeremiah Dorcas Abosede. All former documents remain valid . Public note.

ADEBAYO: I, formerly known as Ogunyinka kolawole BabaTunde Owolabi now wish to be addressed as Ogunyinka BabaTunde Owolabi. All former documents remain valid. General public, take note.

ADEBIMPE : I, formerly known as Animashaun Faoziat Adebimpe now wish to be addressed as Animashaun Adebimpe Fausat. All former documents remain valid. General public, take note.

ADEYEMI: I, formerly known as Adeyemi Adijat Omolara now wish to be addressed as Gbadamosi Adijat Omolara. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

ADEYEMO : I, formerly known as Adenike Abiodun Adeyemo, now wish to be addressed as Adenike Abiodun Asiyanbi. All former documents remain valid. General public, Redeemer's University note.

AGAJI : I formerly known as Agaji Bulus Yusuf, now wish to be addressed as Yusuf Bulus Agiji. All former documents remains valid . General public take note.

AJOSE: I, formerly known as Temilade Olabanji now wish to be addressed as Temilade Ajose All former documents remain valid. General public, take note

AKATUGBA ; I, formerly known as Akatugba Vera now wish to be addressed as Ogedegbe-Otugbowa Vera All former documents remain valid. General public take note

AKINLABI: I, formerly known as Mrs Mabel Akinlabi now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Mabel Mayaki. Former documents remain valid. General public take note.

AKUNYIBA:: I, formerly known as Linda Onyeka Akunyiba now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Linda Sonia Onyeka Akunyiba Enumah, . All former documents remain valid. General Public take note.

AMUZAT: I, formerly known as Owolabi-Dele Barakat Omosalewa now wish to be addressed as Amuzat Barakat Omosalewa . All former documents remain valid general public take note

ANIEKE: I, formerly known as Anieke Chioma Faustina , now wish to be addressed as Ude Chioma Faustina. My DOB is 23/7/1993 not 23/7/1992. Former documents remain Valid.. Public note.

ASHIRU: I, formerly known as Miss. Tijani Salamat Bolanle now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Ashiru Salamat Bolanle . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

AYOMIPOSI: I, formerly known as Mrs. Oluwanifemi Ayomiposi Tope-Oluwaseemi, now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Oluwanifemi Ayomiposi Oluwaseemi . All documents remain valid, .General public take note.

BALAMI : I, formerly known as Balami Stephanie Alex now wish to be addressed as Oyedele Stephanie Alex. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

CHUKWU: I, formerly known as Onyeso Judith Chikaodinaka now wish to be addressed as Chukwu Judith Chikaodinaka . All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: That Ichaba Winner Onortinamhe and Ichaba Winner is same person, now wish to be addressed as Ichaba Winner Onortinamhe. Former documents remains valid. Public note.

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: That I, Akinwunmi Henry Olajuwon is same person as Akinwunmi Akinbowale Felix . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: This This to confirm that Ojo Favour Eghosa and Ojo Favour is same person now wish to be addressed as Ojo Favour Eghosa. All former documents remains valid, note.

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: This to confirm that Aboiralor Sunday and Agbon Abuaria is one same person, now wish to be addressed as Aboiralor Sunday. Former documents remains valid. Public note.

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Sarah-Sade Grassick now wish to be addressed as Sade-Sarah Grassick . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Abdulrasaq Adesholami Suliat now wish to be addressed as Abdulrasaq Oluwadamilola Suliat . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Dawari Favour now wish to be addressed as Dawari Divine Favour . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Ehwarieme Morison now wish to be addressed as Abuwa Morrison . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Ezenwa Hope now wish to be addressed as Ezenwa Comfort Hope . All former documents remain valid . General public take

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Lilian Iroegbu now wish to be addressed as as Ucheoma Lilian Iroegbu . All former documents remain valid . Lagos State Internal Revenue Service take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Muideen Akanmu Idris now wish to be addressed as Idris Muideen Akanmu . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Uberu Otaesiri Godspraise now wish to be addressed as Ogagauberu Oghenevwotaesiri Godspraise . All former documents remain valid general public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME I, formerly known as Nwokeji Ebube Paul now wish to be addressed as Nwokeji Paul Ebubechukwu . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: My name was wrongly arranged on NIN as Mary Anthony instead of Daniel, Mary Anthony All former documents remain valid. General Public take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME: My name was wrongly captured as Robert Blessing Grace Robert Blessing . My DOB is 1/1o/1998 not 28/10/1999. All former documents remain valid. Public take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME: My name was wrongly arranged as Fadirepo Jide Godwin instead of Fadirepo Godwin Jide. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I,Formerly known as Deborah-Hyangmen Ayuba Pero-Ishaya, and Natsa Ayuba Deborah Hyangmen, and Deborah Matsa Ayuba, and Deborah Natsa Ayuba, and Deborah Hyangmen N. Ayuba, and Natsa Ayuba Deborah, and Natsa Deborah Ayuba, and Deborah Natsa Ayuba Now wish to be addressed as Deborah-Hyangmen Ayuba Pero-Ishaya . All former documents remain valid general public take note

EBHODAGHE: I, formerly known as, Ebhodaghe Margaret Iziegbe now wish to be addressed as Ohunyon Margaret Iziegbe. All former documents remains valid . General public take note.

EMMANUELLA : Formerly Kolade Iyinoluwa Emmanuella , now wish to be adressed as Abiona Iyinoluwa Emmanuella. Former documents remain valid. General public take note.

ETIM: I , formerly Miss Veronica Martins Etim now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Veronica Martins Babalola-Brown. All former document remain valid general public note.

FELIX: I, formerly known as Okechukwu Nwabueize Felix now wish to be addressed as Okechukwu Felix Ezinwanne . All former documents remain valid. General public take note

IBENNE: I, formerly known as Onyemaechi Emmanuel Ibenne now wish to be addressed as Onyemaechi Ibenne . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

IFEOLU: I, formerly known as Ifeolu Otugalu Raphael now wish to be addressed as Raphael Patrick Ifeoluwa . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

IMO: I ,formerly Sunday Holiness Ani now wish to be addressed as Ernest Holiness Imo . All former documents remain valid National institute of Science laboratory technician (NISLT) note.

ISAAC : I, formerly known as Ehidiameh Micheal Isaac now wish to be addressed as Ehidiameh Micheal Osewe. All former documents remains valid . General public take note.

ISIOLAOTAN: I, formerly Miss Isiolaotan Ademidun Sandra now wishes to be addressed as Mrs Adeusi Ademidun Sandra. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

MAUREEN: I, formerly known as Miss Ekpokpobe, Maureen Taire now wish to be known as Mrs. Bright, Maureen Taire. All former documents remain valid. Public notice.

MIKE-MBANEFO: I, formerly known as Mrs Uzoamaka Mike-Mbanefo now wish to be known As Mrs Uzoamaka Mbanefo. All former documents remain valid. NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION, public take note

NDON : I , formerly known as Miss. Ndon Glory Michael now wish to be addressed as Mrs.Akuru, Glory Michael.All former documents remain valid. Geanral public take note

NZEKWE: I, formerly known as Ferdinand Somtochukwu Nzefili now wish to be addressed as Nzekwe Chiemelie Ferdinand . All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OBIWALE: I formerly known as Miss Obiwale Adebukola Tosin now wish to be known as Mrs Adeboye Adebukola Tosin,All former documents remain valid Public note.

OFUAFUO: I, formerly known as Orugboh Ofuafuo now wish to be addressed as Atahine Ofuafuo . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

OGORI: I, formerly known as Ogori Grace Teiboere, now wish to be addressed as Okeh-Ogori Grace Teiboere. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OJO: I Formerly known as Wisdom Solomon now wish to be addressed as Ojo Solomon Oluwatimileyin all former documents remain valid general public take note.

OKI: I, formerly known as Oki Olamide Josephine Kikiope now wish to be addressed as Oki Olamide Josephine . All former documents remain valid .General public take note

OLABANJI: I, formerly known as Temilade Olabanji now wish to be addressed as Temilade Ajose. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OLADEMEJI: I, formerly Olademeji Emmanuel Oluwanifemi, now wish to be addressed as Oladimeji Emmanuel Oluwanifemi. Former documents remain valid. General public and authorities take note.

OLAITAN: I formerly known as Olanrewaju Nimota Olaitan now wish to be addressed as Kehinde Nimotalahi Olaitan all former documents remain valid general public take note

OLUTAYO: I , formerly Olutayo Prosper Timileyin now wish to be addressed as Olutayo Prosper Oluwatimileyin .My DOB is 20/9/2007 not 5/8/2005 .Former documents remain valid . Public note

OMAYOIDA : I, formerly known as Joel Blessing Omayoida now wish to be addressed as Joel Rukayat Omayoza,. My DOB is 04/05/1980 not 04/05/1981. Former documents remains valid. Public note.

OSEH: I, formerly known as Obasi Chidinma Oseh, now wish to be addressed as Obasi Chidinma, All former documents remain valid . General public take note

OSEIWE : I , formerly known as Audu Ezekiel Oseiwe now wish to be addressed as Audu Ezekiel Osemuahu. All former documents remains valid . General public take note.

OYEBOLA: I, formerly known as Ilori Adebisi Hannah now known as Oyebola Adebisi Hannah . All former documents remain valid. High Court of Lagos and public take note

REARRANGEMENT OF NAME My correct name is Aboim Chukwunedum Andrew instead of Aboim Andrew Chukwunedum as wrongly arranged in some documents. All former documents remain valid. Public note.

REARRANGEMENT OF NAME: I, formerly known as Ikhane Obozegie Albert now wish to be addressed as Ikhane Albert Obozegie. All former documents remain valid. General public, take note.

RUFUS : I , formerly known as Rufus Aimiator E., now wish to be addressed as Ehiwele Rufus Aimiator. All former documents remains valid. General public take note.

UDONSEK: I, formerly Udonsek-Awotesu Ann Okon, Udonsek Ann Okon now wish to be addressed as Awotesu Ann Okon. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

YUSUF: I, formerly known as Yusuf Olakunle Fatai now wish to be addressed as Ojo Abiodun Olakunle. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

News Extra

NaijAidUK Trains Nigerians In First Aid, Marks 10 Years Of Service

By **Suliyat Tella**

MORE than 8,000 healthcare professionals and members of the public have received first aid and emergency response training from NaijAidUK in the past decade. This is as the charity organisation seeks to improve Nigeria's capacity to respond to medical emergencies.

The organisation, which operates in Nigeria through HealthAid Charity, marked its 10th anniversary with a four-day training programme in Lagos, bringing together healthcare workers, students and members of the public.

The programme, held from October 27 to 30, featured clinical training, mental health awareness sessions and general emergency response training.It began with Immediate Life Support (ILS) training for doctors, nurses, midwives, community health workers and other healthcare professionals.

This was followed by a mental health awareness day for students and members of the public, before concluding with two days of general first aid and emergency response training.

The sessions focused on helping participants recognise medical emergencies, provide immediate assistance.

Alpha10 Group Contributes N6.29b To SEC-regulated Mutual Fund

From **Godfrey Gabriel, Port Harcourt**

ALPHA10 has announced that three mutual funds launched this year have contributed a combined N6.29 billion to Nigeria's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)-regulated mutual fund net asset value, as the financial services company opened its Port Harcourt office.

The Managing Director, Abigail Utomi, disclosed this during the official opening of the company's Port Harcourt branch, describing the development as a significant milestone in its expansion strategy.

Utomi said the funds, launched within nine months, were the Alpha10 Dollar Fund, Alpha10 Money Market Fund and Alpha10 Halal Fund, designed to provide investment opportunities for individuals, institutional investors and Nigerians in the diaspora.

She explained that the Dollar Fund was introduced to enable investors to diversify their portfolios beyond naira-denominated investments, while the Money Market Fund provides a flexible investment option for those seeking to invest in naira assets. The Halal Fund, she said, was designed to provide Sharia-compliant investment opportunities for investors seeking ethical and non-interest financial products.

Sports

Women In Nigerian Sports - Good Luck Flamingoes



Nigerians hope the Flamingos will give them reasons to celebrate today.

NIGERIA is on the verge of sports history, again. Today, Nigeria's U-17 girls will be taking on their Japanese counterparts in the final match of the FIFA U-17 World Cup in Casablanca, Morocco. It is a huge achievement for Nigeria considering the country's relatively 'poor treatment' of sports for girls in the country.

With a little bit of luck, the Flamingoes, as the Nigerian National team at this level is called, will win, create history yet again, and add to the achievements of Nigerian girls in international sports. My prayer is that they win. Winning will serve as essential motivation and incentive to challenge for the greater honours, higher trophies and to win at the highest levels.

Having followed the Flamingoes' progress through the earlier rounds in the ongoing championship, they can defeat the Japanese for the first time in the contests between them at U-17, become the first African champions of the world at that level, and reinforce the belief by several experts around the world that look beneath the surface of things, and for-see Nigeria as a global superpower in virtually all aspects of human endeavor starting with Sports.

So, thinking differently, positively, and from my own personal experiences working with Nigerian women in sports, today's victory will propel Nigeria and accelerate the journey to her emergence as one of the greatest forces in sports in the world.

The potentials are latent in our genes, only gradually and occasionally released and unleashed on the world during championships.

With the right administrative leadership piloting Nigerian sports, within a few years, the country shall become a global superpower in some sports including football at both male and female categories.

But, I believe the women will get to the top first.

I think so from my personal experiences working with female athletes since 1991. That was the year I met Chioma Ajunwa. Although a Track and Field



athlete at the time, she was drafted into the Nigerian women's football team heading to the World Cup for the first time. In the absence of any domestic development programme for women, Chioma's speed and power were seen and deployed as useful tools in Nigeria's national football team. Things were that poor.

Read the remaining story onlinewww.guardian.ng

FIFA U-17 World Cup: Go For History, Olopade Tells Flamingos

By Gowon Akpodonor

AS Nigeria's U-17 women's national team, the Flamingos, tackle Japan in today's final of FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Morocco, Director-General of the National Sports Commission (NSC), Bukola Olopade, has charged the girls to seize their historic opportunity and become the first African team to win the championship.

Olopade gave the charge following the team's remarkable qualification for the final, describing their achievement as a moment of immense pride for Nigeria and an opportunity to make history for African women's football.

The Flamingos booked their place in their first-ever final with an impressive 3-1 victory over Brazil in Wednesday's semi-final, further underlining their determination and resilience after a difficult start to the tournament.

Speaking ahead of the decisive encounter, the DG urged the players to remain focused, disciplined and determined, reminding them that they are now on the threshold of an achievement that would be remembered for generations.

"Keep your eyes on the prize. You are on the verge of writing your names in history as the first African team to win a women's World Cup at any level. We are all behind you, the National Sports Commission, the Federal Government, your families and millions of Nigerian. Keep your eyes on the ball till the very end," Olopade stated.

The NSC boss commended the team's fighting spirit, particularly their ability to recover from a 2-1 opening defeat to Poland and respond with five consecutive victories to reach the final.

Business

Enlistment Of DICON By TETFund Will Boost Nigeria's Defence Technology

THE enlistment of Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) Institute of Technology as a beneficiary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) represents an important opportunity to bridge the gap between technical education, research and Nigeria's defence manufacturing ambitions. Beyond the prospect of annual funding, the development offers a pathway to strengthen indigenous engineering capacity, improve technical training and reduce the country's dependence on foreign expertise.

With allocations expected to commence in 2027, the institute's inclusion expands TETFund's institutional reach and brings the total number of beneficiary institutions to 311, comprising 140 universities, 91 polytechnics and 80 Colleges of Education. The expansion underscores the growing recognition that tertiary education financing system must support institutions capable of translating specialised knowledge into practical solutions to national challenges.

The Executive Secretary, TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono, disclosed the approval during a visit by DICON's Director General, Maj. Gen. Babatunde Alaya and his delegation to the Fund in Abuja. He said the Board of Trustees approved DICON's enlistment at its meeting the previous week, paving the way for the institution to access the Fund's intervention programmes from 2027.

"Effectively, they are now members of the TETFund family, and from 2027, they will begin to receive annual allocations from TETFund," Echono said.

Under Echono's leadership, TETFund has continued to expand the scope of its interventions, recognising the importance of specialised institutions in developing the skills, technologies and innovations required to drive national development.

DICON's inclusion further demonstrates the Fund's commitment to supporting institutions whose mandates align with Nigeria's strategic priorities, particularly in technical education, engineering, manufacturing and national security.

Echono said DICON will benefit from various intervention programmes covering infrastructure, information and communication technology, staff development, research and innovation. These interventions are expected to support the institute's institutional development and enhance its capacity to deliver quality technical education.

He encouraged the management to appoint qualified desk officers to coordinate applications across the different intervention areas, prepare proposals and ensure effective implementation of projects in line with the Fund's guidelines.

The TETFund executive secretary also highlighted the importance of DICON's technical programmes, particularly Welding and Fabrication Technology and Mechatronics Engineering Technology, noting that developing indigenous technical expertise was essential to strengthening Nigeria's manufacturing capacity.

"Technology has become so advanced that you can programme your entire welding scheme, and the equipment can carry out the cutting and other processes, helping you accomplish a lot within a short time", he said.

His emphasis on modern production technologies aligns with TETFund's broader objective of promoting technical competence, research-driven development and the application of knowledge to address national needs.

Beyond its financial interventions, the Fund is also offering DICON opportunities to participate in its research and innovation programmes. Echono expressed readiness to collaborate with the institution, particularly in defence and security research, areas with significant implications for Nigeria's technological development.

He disclosed that DICON could nominate a qualified researcher to participate in TETFund's national research grant and monitoring committee, which covers several thematic areas, including military and defence.

The opportunity is expected to strengthen DICON's participation in the country's research ecosystem and encourage collaboration between specialised technical institutions and other stakeholders in tertiary education and national development.

Echono also encouraged the institution to participate in TETFair – TETFund's national exhibition of research, innovation and manufacturing scheduled for November. The exhibition provides a platform for showcasing research outcomes, technological breakthroughs and innovative products developed by beneficiary institutions.

DICON's participation, he noted, would offer an opportunity to display its technical capabilities, exchange ideas with researchers and innovators, and explore partnerships that could advance indigenous manufacturing.

Earlier, Alaya said the visit was intended to brief TETFund on the progress made by DICON and seek guidance on the institution's take-off and development following its enlistment.

He explained that DICON's institute was established to develop the engineering and technical manpower needed to support Nigeria's defence manufacturing industry and wider industrial growth.

"The institute was established to address Nigeria's critical need for skilled technical manpower in manufacturing, engineering, applied sciences and allied fields," he said.



DICON's Director General, Maj. Gen. Babatunde Alaya and Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono during the visit.

Read the remaining story onlinewww.guardian.ng

TheGuardianSports

www.guardian.ng

Morocco 2026 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup

Flamingos Chase History As Nigeria Battle Japan In Final Game

By Christian Okpara

NIGERIA'S U-17 women's team, the Flamingos, are at the cusp of history as they face Japan in the final of the ongoing FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Japan. The Coach Akeem Busari girls have already made history by getting into the final of the championship.

But a win against the Little Nadeshiko of Japan will make Nigeria the first African team to FIFA World Cups in both U-17 men and women categories.

Today's potentially-explosive 2026 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup Final at the Pitch 3 of the Complexe Mohammed VI in Rabat, Morocco's administrative capital, has all the trappings of a flaming war, with the girls avowing their determination to play the game of their lives, lift the trophy and present same to Nigerians in the coming days.

Having started slowly by losing 1-2 to Poland in their first match, and not very convincing in their defeat of whipping team Puerto Rico in their second match, the Flamingos removed all masks and flogged Cup-holders and two-time winners Korea DPR 3-1 in their last match of the group phase, to qualify as group runners-up.

Big and barnstorming Mexico fell 2-1 in an exhilarating Round of 16, before Venezuela, surprise winners against Germany, were upended in the quarter-finals.

If anyone harboured doubts about the quality and competence of the Flamingos, they were won over in a dominant performance that left an otherwise-brilliant Brazil begging for mercy in a 3-1 hiding. The Nigerian girls hit 30 shots on goal in that encounter, and could have been six goals up before the South Americans secured a consolation goal with one minute left of normal time.

The lightning semi-final outing reminded all of the prolificity of the Flamingos in this competition, in which they have scored a total of 115 goals since appearing in the inaugural edition in New Zealand 18 years ago. They have appeared in every tournament since then bar one – the 2018 finals in Uruguay, which they missed after losing to Cameroon on the away-goal rule in the final round of the African qualifying race.

Nigeria's opponents in today's final were not meant to be there, until the last seconds of their semi-final encounter when Korean defender Won Sol-gyong put the ball into her own net to tie the game 1-1, before the Japanese prevailed after penalty shootout.



Flamingos' top striker Oluebube Umejiaku.

1X Bet Cup: Ighalo Urges More Corporate Bodies To Embrace Sports Sponsorship

• Tonic FC Crowned 2026 Champions

By Christian Okpara

FORMER Super Eagles' striker, Odion Ighalo, has congratulated sports betting outfit, 1XBet for giving Nigerian youths opportunity to develop their football talents

Ighalo, who said that Nigerian sports will develop faster if more corporate organisations emulated 1XBet and sponsor sporting events, believes that the country would take its position among the top sporting countries of the world when youths find the avenue to hone their skills.

Speaking at the final of the 2026 1XBet Cup won by Tonic FC of Ikorodu last Saturday at Inspire Sports Arena, Cappa, Oshodi, Ighalo said that the competition has offered the country a platform to discover and nurture young football talents.

He said: "We need more sports facilities in our communities and local government areas to encourage young people to participate in sports.

"Football provides opportunities for young people to develop their talents, while competitions like this help discover the next generation of national players."

Also speaking at the event, former international midfielder, Waidi Akanni, who is the technical director of 1XBET Nigeria, said sustained corporate sponsorship and government support were necessary to strengthen grassroots football development.

He said that football academies required adequate funding, facilities and institutional support to nurture young players and provide opportunities for career progression.

" I'm urging corporate organisations and government agencies to sustain their collaboration in developing the country's football sector.

"With recent happenings within our national teams, its crucial to note that the place of grassroots development can no longer be undermined," he said.

FirstBank Restates Commitment To Sports Development As Players Set For Lagos Open Golf Championship

By Eniola Daniel

FIRSTBANK has restated its commitment to helping the country develop the sports sector, which it sees as critical to nation building.

The bank is a big player in the country's sports with its interventions in football, basketball and golf, among others.

On November 16, FirstBank will welcome some of the top golfers across the country at Ikoyi Club 1938, where it is hosting the 2026 Lagos Open Golf Championship, which has N65 million as total prize money.

According to the programme unveiled by the organisers on Tuesday, the competition, in its 65th year, will feature caddies, who will take to the course on November 16, followed by the Championship kitty the following day, while Corporate Challenge for Charity will hold on November 19.

The main event, open to 0-9 handicap players, will be played over 54 holes from November 20 to 22.

The tournament, which is already attracting lots of interest within and outside the country, will see the winner of the professional category earning N10 million of the N34.5m staked.

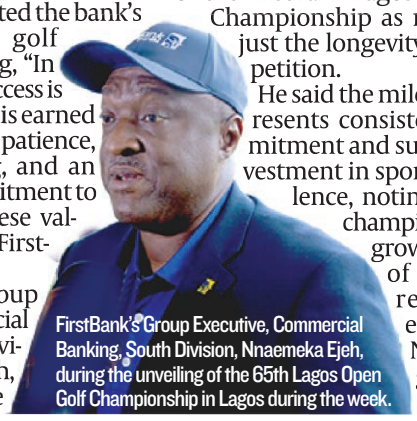
Speaking on the event in Lagos, the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of FirstBank, Olusegun Alebiosu, restated the bank's commitment to golf sponsorship, saying, "In the game of golf, success is never accidental; it is earned through discipline, patience, strategic thinking, and an unwavering commitment to excellence, and these values equally define FirstBank."

Represented by Group Executive, Commercial Banking, South Division, Nnaemeka Ejeh, Alebiosu said the game goes beyond scores but is a test of mental focus and consistency that demands improvement.

"While achievements on the golf course matter, equally important are focus, fair play, discipline and integrity.

Also speaking at the event, Chairman of Ikoyi Club 1938, Akinwumi Akintola, described the 65th edition of the FirstBank Lagos Open Golf Championship as more than just the longevity of a competition.

He said the milestone represents consistency, commitment and sustained investment in sporting excellence, noting that the championship has grown into one of the most recognised events on Nigeria's golf calendar.


FirstBank's Group Executive, Commercial Banking, South Division, Nnaemeka Ejeh, during the unveiling of the 65th Lagos Open Golf Championship in Lagos during the week.

Inspection Teams Gives Green Light As GCU Relays Countdown begins

By Gowon Akpodonor

SEQUEL to the inspection visit by the technical team, ahead of the eighth Government College Ughelli (GCU) Relays and the prompt response to the observations and recommendations adduced, the all-important Green Light has been given for a hitch-free hosting of the Intercollegiate athletics meet.

Once the Athletics Federation of Nigeria (AFN) former Technical Director, Commodore Omatseye Nesiama (rtd) and NAATO Delta State President, Prof. Jeff Okpako, made their instructive recommendations, the Main Organising Committee of the yearly GCU Relays went to work at a faster pace, propelled by the funding from the Mariners (Old Boys) and their corporates, which has ensured that the tartan tracks are now in perfect shape for the November 14 event.

"It is most pleasing and gratifying to note that since our last visit, a lot has been done to ensure that the GCU Relays hold as scheduled. It is a most commendable feat," Nesiama and Okpako chorused.

Still, the most assuring message was delivered by the President General Worldwide, GCUOBA, Albert Akpomudje, who not only commended the pace and quality of work at the arena, but the tremendous monetary support that has been given by the young and ancient Mariners.

This Weekend's Football Matches

EuroMatch NPFL
Saturday
Sporting Lagos v Rivers United
Abia Warriors v Doma United
Sunday
Enugu Rangers v Kwara Utd
Bendel Insurance v Niger Tornadoes
Warri Wolves v Katsina United
Barau FC v Shooting Stars
Nasarawa United v Plateau Utd
Ranchers Bees v Enyimba
Ikorodu City v Inter Lagos FC
English Premier League
Saturday
Leeds United v Tottenham Hotspur
Arsenal v Hull City
Fulham v Newcastle
Nottingham Forest v Man City

'Spain Should Quit 2030 World Cup Co-Hosting If Morocco Gets Final'

SPAIN should withdraw from its role as co-host of the 2030 World Cup if Morocco is chosen to stage the final, the European nation's primary opposition party leader has declared, reports independent.co.uk.

The centenary tournament is scheduled to be jointly hosted by Morocco, Spain and Portugal, with the opening three matches set to take place in South America as a tribute to Uruguay's hosting of the inaugural competition in 1930.

FIFA has not yet confirmed which of the three principal co-hosts will be given the final, stating only that an official decision will be made in due course.

Despite this, Alberto Nunez Feijoo, the leader of the opposition People's Party, maintains that Spain ought to pull out of organising the event if it is not selected to host the showpiece match.

"If Morocco ends up hosting the final, Spain should leave the organisation (of the tournament)," he told El Chiringuito TV.

Writing on X in a post referencing the El Chiringuito interview, he added: "Restoring our country's pride also means not letting anyone walk all over us.

'Resurgent' Man United Host Aston Villa As English Premier League Enters Week 10

THE Premier League returns with another weekend of top fixtures, headlined by Manchester United's meeting with Aston Villa at Old Trafford on Sunday, as both sides look to respond to contrasting midweek results.

The Red Devils will be looking to revive their league campaign after a difficult run of results. Their 3-2 Champions League comeback win over Roma offers some encouragement, while Villa will be eager to bounce back after a 3-0 defeat to Barcelona. The match kicks off at 5:30 pm on Sunday. It is available on SS Kickoff (DStv Ch. 207) to subscribers from the Select package upwards .

Saturday's action begins with Tottenham's fixture against Leeds United at 1:30 pm, as Spurs chase a fourth consecutive league win after turning around their difficult start. Leeds will be looking to respond after a 2-0 defeat to Bournemouth. The match, alongside all Premier League matches, will air on SS Premier League (DStv Ch. 203, GOtv Ch. 65), available on the new Sports package.

League leaders Arsenal host Hull City at 4 pm, looking to maintain their three-point advantage over Manchester City after narrow wins in the Premier League and Champions League. Hull arrive after a 2-2 draw with Ipswich Town.

CIS Agog As Dolphin Swimming League Season Eight Begins

By Daniel Akinola

FOLLOWING the successful kick-off of Season Eight of the Dolphin Swimming League with the elementary school category last month, attention now shifts to the secondary school teams as Children's International School (CIS), Lekki, prepares to host participating schools and clubs in the one-day swimming tournament.

The prestigious inter-school swimming competition is organised by Dynaspro Sports Promotion in collaboration with Advanta Interactive Limited and is endorsed by the Nigeria Aquatic Federation, the Nigeria Olympic Committee (NOC), the Nigeria School Sport Federation (NSSF), the Lagos State Sports Commission, and the Lagos State Swimming Association.

Competing in the secondary school category are teams from Grange School, Lagos Preparatory Secondary School (LPSS), Temple School, Greensprings School, James Hope College, Meadow Hall, British International School, Atlantic Hall, Rugby School Nigeria, Lagoon School, Whitesands School, Corona Schools, and hosts Children's International School (CIS).

The swimming clubs, including Damswimm, AQUA Sports World Academy, Boken Aquatics, C-Tribe, and Abuja-based Swimfinity, will also battle for honours across more than 30 events scheduled for the tournament.

TheGuardian
Conscience, Nurtured by Truth
Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria
November 7 - 8, 2026



Flamingos Chase History As Nigeria Battle Japan in Final Game PAGE 47

INSIDE STUFF WITH MARTINS OLOJA



(08052097817 SMS only) martins.oloja@guardian.ng Continue on X: @MartinsOloja

Who Will Protect Uni-Abuja From Untouchable Wike?

THE question no one in Abuja wants to ask: **Who will protect the University of Abuja?** Not a rhetorical question. A constitutional question. A moral question. A question of survival.

On June 30, 2025, the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike, stood at Giri, in Abuja, to commission an access road to the EFCC Academy, and announced to the nation that he had taken 7,000 hectares from the University of Abuja. From 11,000 hectares to 4,000 hectares. In one sentence. At a road commissioning. No court order. No National Assembly debate. No Federal Executive Council memo published. No consultation with the Visitor - the President of the Federal Republic. No consultation with the Minister of Education. No consultation with the National Universities Commission. He said, in his own words: "The University on their own grabbed 11,000 hectares. I said that will not happen. No document, nothing. You see them fencing everywhere, and before you know it, they would have gone to sell our land." He then directed the Director of Lands to "carve out 4,000 hectares and give to the University" while the rest would be reallocated for other developmental projects. That was 2025. In 2026, we now know what "reallocation" meant.

According to ASUU, University of Abuja branch, despite an interlocutory injunction granted on August 18 by Justice F.E. Mesiri of the Maitama High Court restraining the FCT Minister from entering or encroaching on University land, the Minister went ahead on September 26 to allocate the University land to companies and individuals. ASUU's chairman, Prof. Sylvanus Ugoh, said it plainly at a press conference in November 2026 titled "Ministerial Encroachment into University of Abuja Land: Some Points to Ponder": "The act of the FCT Minister is an outright breach and total disregard for the rule of law. And: ASUU UniAbuja will no longer guarantee industrial harmony if the FCT Minister fails to reverse the unlawful taking away of University of Abuja land and allocating it to his friends and cronies."

So we ask again: Who will protect the University of Abuja? Where is the Minister of Education? Where is the President who is by law the Governor of Abuja? Where is the National Assembly that is the parliament of Abuja? Where are the elected representatives for Abuja? Why is everyone silent on the bastardisation of the Abuja Master Plan? Why is no one holding Wike to account in Abuja? Why is even the mainstream media quiet?

This 'Inside-Stuff' reiteration is an attempt to answer, drawing copiously from the earlier commentary of the same columnist titled, **"Land Grab: Why Uni-Abuja Needs Presidential Protection" - July 12, 2025.**

'What I wrote in July, 2025 – And why it still matters'

I am not a student activist. I am a public policy journalist, former editor and newspaper executive who has covered Abuja since 1988. In the July 12, 2025 commentary, I made a distinction that most Nigerians have missed - and that is the heart of this crisis. I had once and then posited and tagged the University of Abuja as "the only federation university in the country." Not just a federal university. Yes, a 'federation university'. I argued then that the university, renamed Yakubu Gowon University, "shouldn't be regarded as just a federal university... should be similarly regarded as a federation university that should not be trifled with, in the capital of the federation, Abuja." Why does that distinction matter? It does because Abuja is not a state. Abuja is the Capital of the Federation comprising 36 states and the capital itself. The President and chief executive of the federation is, according to the organic law of the land, the Governor of the Capital, Abuja. The same constitution allows the President to delegate his gubernatorial powers over Abuja to the FCT Minister, if he so wishes.

'A Federation University Abandoned By Its Owners'

Therefore, I wrote that the President is the Visitor to the University of Abuja but that function isn't delegated to the FCT Minister except by express permission to hold the fort during ceremonies. In other words: Wike is not the Visitor. Wike is not the owner. Wike is not the proprietor. Wike is a delegate - a caretaker - administering a Territory that belongs to all Nigerians. I then warned that the university, "seems to have been abandoned by the stakeholders of the federation that own it." That abandonment is the story of 2025-2026. I also warned then that the Nigerian print media, "disrespected the Federation University with the way they unjustifiably amplified the description of the university as a 'land grabber' without contextual reporting."



Wike

Wike called university leaders "land grabbers". The media repeated it. No one asked: How can a university created by Federal Government Decree in 1988, allocated land by Federal Government, be a grabber of its own land?

My fact file was simple: The FCT Minister should come under scrutiny over reduction from 11,000 hectares to just 4,000 hectares. Abubakar Sidiq, a policy analyst, had cried out on social media: "Wike has reduced the land of the University of Abuja by 7,000 hectares, leaving the university with 4,000 hectares from the initial 11,000 hectares." My plea then was presidential protection. Not Wike's protection. Not FCTA's protection. 'Presidential protection' because only the President, as Visitor and as Governor of Abuja, can override his own delegate. One year later, that protection has not come even as "Sahara Reporters" had given a critical update on rule of a strong man, not the rule of law over the Federation University in Abuja.

'The Facts: 11,824 Hectares , Not 11,000 – And The Mountain Trick'

Let us establish the facts, because Wike's narrative depends on confusion. ASUU University of Abuja says the university was established on January 1, 1988, with an initial land allocation of 11,824 hectares to accommodate its long-term academic and infrastructural development. It says: "There is overwhelming documentary evidence showing that this parcel of land was allocated to the University of Abuja." The Acting Vice Chancellor at the time, Prof. Lar Patricia Manko, said there was no truth in the allegation that the institution was involved in land grabbing. She maintained that the expanse was legitimately given by the Federal Government and the Minister cannot make such unsubstantiated claims. She said the university had plans for agriculture, tourism, research centres, quarters for staff and student hostels.

The Pro-Chancellor, Senator Olanrewaju Tejuoso, went further on "Arise News Television" in July 2025 and was quoted as saying "Of the 4,000 hectares Wike left, 2,000 hectares are mountain. Currently, the University of Abuja has only 2,000 hectares, as the other 2,000 is a mountain," He added: "Even the 4,000 hectares - 2,000 of it is just mountain. When you fly out of the Abuja airport the mountain you see below is part of the university's land. Realistically, we now have only 2,000 hectares left for actual development. Maybe Minister Wike should come and take over the mountain and develop it himself."



Professor Hakeem Babatunde Fawehinmi

Think about it: From 11,824 hectares to 2,000 usable hectares. That is not "retrieval". That is amputation. That is an 83% cut. And compare to other federal universities: Obafemi Awolowo University has over 13,000 hectares. University of Ilorin has about 15,000 hectares. FUNAAB has about 10,000 hectares. No minister has gone to Ile-Ife or Ilorin to say "you grabbed land, give me 7,000 hectares." Why is University of Abuja different?

Because University of Abuja is in Abuja and Abuja land is now the most valuable real estate in West Africa. Land in Giri, in Airport Road corridor, is gold. A plot that was N5 million in 2020 is N80 million in 2026. To take 7,000 hectares - 70 million square metres - is to take a future city.

And who gets that future city? According to ASUU, companies and individuals allocated on September 26, in defiance of court order. According to Abuja residents, shopping malls will now litter the place. Malls, estates, private layouts - sprouting on what was meant to be a university town for the federation. This is the bastardisation of the Abuja Master Plan that others and I have warned about. The Master Plan, drawn by International Planning Associates in 1979, designed Abuja as a neutral, centrally-located capital for all Nigerians, with distinct districts, green belts, university zone, institutional zone. The University of Abuja was meant to be the intellectual heartbeat in that plan - not a land bank to be arbitrarily carved for private developers. When you carve a university for malls, you have bastardised the plan.

Where is the Minister of Education?

This is the most embarrassing silence. The University of Abuja is under the Federal Ministry of Education. The Minister of Education is the supervising minister for all federal universities. He appoints governing councils on the authority of the Vistor . He receives visitation panel reports. He defends university budgets at Federal Executive Council. Yet since June 30, 2025, when Wike announced the seizure, the Minister of Education has not led a delegation to Giri. He has not issued a statement defending his university. He has not gone to the President to say: "Sir, the University of Abuja is being dismantled by your delegate."

As I noted this in July 2025: "Even education ministers from 1999 till the present haven't been visiting the University of Abuja. That has been curious and that is why even the current FCT Minister didn't know that he needed to visit the University of Abuja as unarguably the most important institution in the Territory". I also noted then that, "since the university was created some 37 years ago, no FCT Minister has intentionally collaborated with Education Minister to build befitting infrastructure that the federation university deserves."

The silence of the Education Minister is not accidental. It is systemic. In Nigeria's power structure, the FCT Minister is more powerful than the Education Minister. Wike controls land, controls contracts, controls Abuja's budget. The Education Minister controls paper. Who will fight Wike for a university? But that is exactly why the Constitution made the President the Visitor. The Education Minister is supposed to be the President's eyes in the university. If he is blind to the land grab, the President will be blind.

The question must be asked: Is the Minister of Education afraid of Wike? Or has he been told to leave Wike alone?

Meanwhile, I quoted insiders in my later January 2026 piece, **"Wike: Portrait of an Untouchable Genius"**: 'Insiders at the Presidential Villa have confirmed that the President would not like to entertain any complaints about Wike. The President is said to be telling all petitioners: "Leave him alone. He is working. He is an achiever. Can't you see the roads in Abuja?" That is the blind spot. If that is true, then the Education Minister's silence is not cowardice. It is obedience to a presidential instruction to leave Wike alone.

Where is the President The Governor of Abuja?

This is the constitutional tragedy. Under Section 299 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended), the FCT is treated as a state, and the President exercises executive powers over it as Governor. The National Assembly exercises legislative powers over it as State Assembly. The President may delegate to a Minister. In other words, Wike is not Governor. Tinubu is Governor. Wike is Tinubu's delegate. Tinubu can revoke delegation tomorrow morning.Yet Tinubu has not. Why?

*** Let's continue with how to save the University of Abuja from artful land grabbers.

Published by The Guardian Group, Rutam House, Isolo, Lagos Tel: 01-4489600
Abuja Office: Plot 415 Olu Awotesu Street, Off Idris Ibrahim Crescent, Off Obafemi Awolowo Way, Jabi District, Abuja. Tel: 08065290744
Advert Hotlines: 01-4489619, 08023015115 08031930899, advert@guardian.ng; Circulation Hotline: 07038746449
All correspondence to Guardian Newspapers Limited, P.M.B. 1217, Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria.
E-mail:Letters@guardian.ng; www.guardian.ng
Editor: KABIR ALABI GARBA
ABC (ISSN NO 0189-5125)

What TheGuardian stands for
Conscience, Nurtured by Truth

- *The Guardian* is an independent newspaper, established for the purpose of presenting balanced coverage of events, and of promoting the best interests of Nigeria. It owes allegiance to no political party, ethnic, community, religious or other interest groups. Its primary commitment is to the integrity and sovereignty of the Federation of Nigeria, and beyond that, to the unity and sovereignty of Africa.
- *The Guardian* will at all times uphold the need for justice, probity in public life, equal access to the nation's resources and equal protection under the law of Nigeria for all citizens.
- *The Guardian* journalist must whole-heartedly subscribe to the 1979 Code of Conduct for Nigerian journalists as amended in 1998.
- *The Guardian* believes, therefore, that it is the moral duty of every journalist to have respect for the truth and to publish or prepare for publication only the truth and to the best of his knowledge.
- It is the duty of *The Guardian* journalist to resist and refrain from earning other than his just salary or allowances from his employers: not to demand, and to refuse any reward if offered in cash or kind for publishing news or comments.
- The motto of *The Guardian* is Conscience Nurtured by Truth.

Please report any of our erring journalists to these dedicated telephone numbers: 014489600, 07098147948, 07098147951 Or our e-mail: Complaints@guardian.ng