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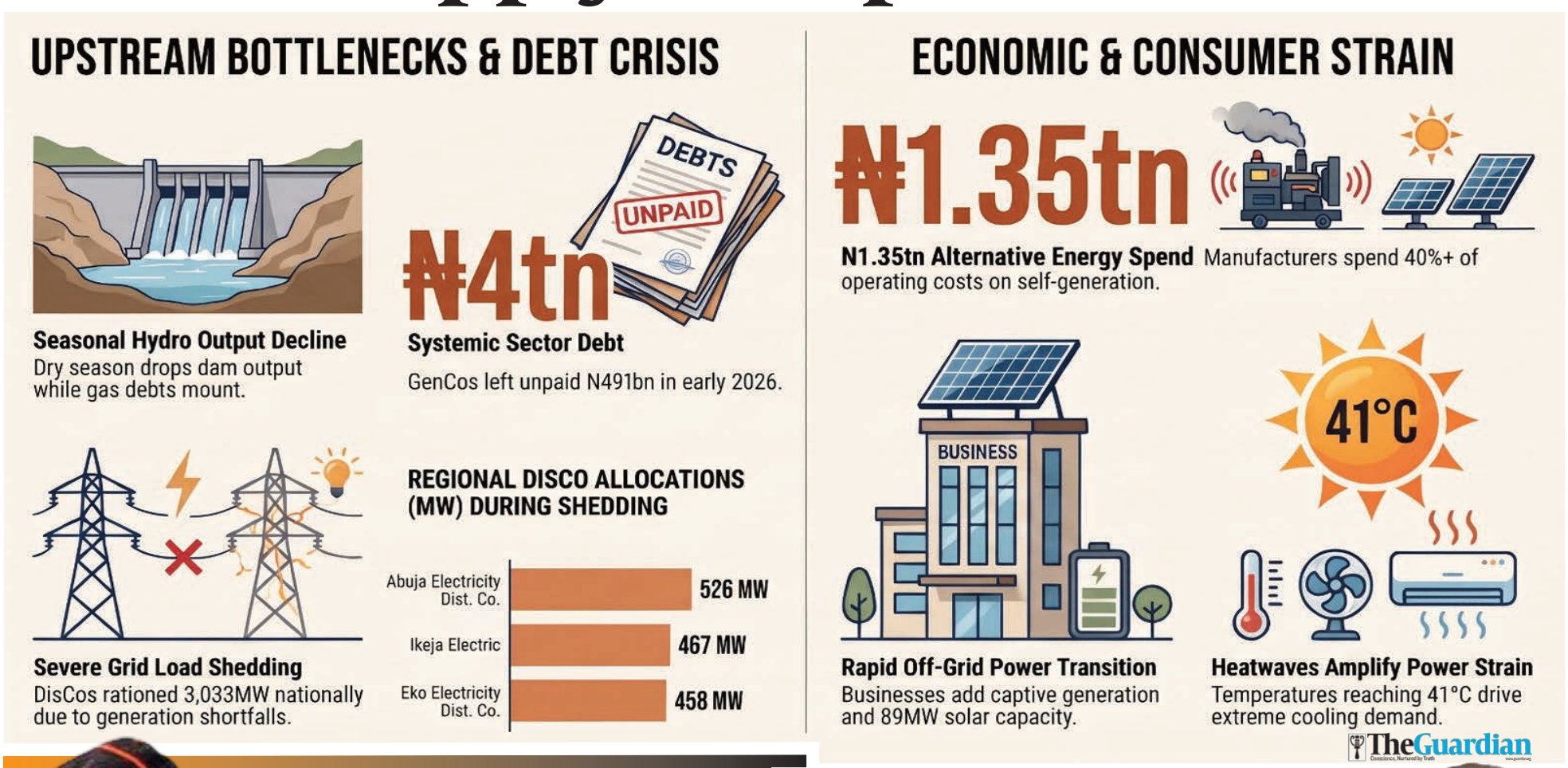
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Nigerians among most terrorised, poverty-stricken under Tinubu, says Obi

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Concerns as police confirm one dead, five injured in Asaba NDC rally violence

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FG secures W/Bank's $200m to boost fisheries, aquaculture in states

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Panorama

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SPOTLIGHT

WHO identifies six climate measures that could save 1.6m lives yearly

By Ijeoma Nwanosike

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) has identified six climate and health interventions that could prevent 1.6 million deaths annually, while generating $9.3 trillion in combined economic and fiscal benefits globally.

The measures, which include heat-health warning systems, climate-resilient drinking water, improved sanitation and hygiene services, cleaner household energy and efficient fossil fuel pricing policies, could also help avoid 16.7 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually.

According to a new WHO report, Global Benefits and Costs of Prioritised Actions on Climate Change and Health, scaling up the interventions worldwide could generate $3.9 trillion in annual economic welfare benefits and an additional $5.4 trillion in fiscal gains.

The report, released ahead of the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31), where governments are expected to present their climate commitments, provides the first comprehensive analysis of the economic and fiscal returns from implementing six WHO-recommended climate and health actions at scale.

'Dangote Refinery IPO misses 10 million investors target'

CHAIRMAN of Dangote Industries Limited (DIL), Aliko Dangote, has disclosed that the initial public offering (IPO) of the Dangote Petroleum Refinery failed to meet its target of attracting 10 million investors.

Speaking in Lagos at the 25th annual conference of the Women in Management, Business and Public Service (WIMBIZ) in Lagos, Dangote, however, said the public offer recorded significant participation, attracting millions of investors despite not reaching the projected figure.

According to him, the company is yet to establish the official number of investors who participated in the offer, as the necessary reports are still being compiled.

"We cannot tell the figure right away because we have not reported to this, but we've gotten an amazing demand from various people," Dangote said.

He compared the level of participation in the refinery's IPO with previous major public offers, including those of Nigerian and international companies, arguing that the number of subscribers was substantial.

"If you look at it, the largest participating shareholders, like here now, was I think GTBank. When they did their own, it was 200,000. Okay, we are talking about millions of people that participated," he said.



President, Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Alhassan Yahaya (left); recipient of the NUJ milestone Media Icon Award and former Editor-In-Chief, *The Guardian*, Martins Oloja; and ex-President, NUJ, Abdulwaheed Odusile during the 4th Edition of the Yearly Milestone Recognition of Media Icons Award in Abuja at the weekend.
PHOTO: LUCY LADIDI ATEKO

NEMA receives six Nigerian returnees from U.S.

THE National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has received six Nigerians who arrived in Lagos from the United States following the intervention of Nigeria's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In a statement yesterday, the agency said the returnees were received at the Cargo Terminal of the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja, Lagos State.

The agency said the reception was conducted in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including the United States Consulate, the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) and ExecuJet.

"The returnees arrived at approximately 10:13 p.m. on Saturday aboard a Beechcraft 1900 aircraft with registration number N62FF. The group comprised five males and one female, all adults," it said.

It said NIS officers conducted immigration documentation and profiling upon the returnees' arrival to ensure proper identification, record-keeping and a smooth reception process.

NEMA said it coordinated the reception alongside the relevant agencies and provided necessary reception and post-arrival support services to facilitate the returnees' transition.

It added that the exercise reflected the Federal Government's commitment to ensuring the safe, orderly and dignified return of Nigerian citizens through coordinated engagement with relevant agencies and partners.

Netanyahu faces exit as opposition leader tasked to form government

Israel President Isaac Herzog has officially tasked Gadi Eisenkot with forming a government.

Eisenkot, the head of the centrist Yashar party, will have 28 days to secure a coalition to replace current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's religious-nationalist government, with Herzog having the authority to prolong Eisenkot's mandate by 14 days.

"The conversations with the different parties were open and transparent, while also resurfacing the many voices in Israeli society. They reminded us the fact that all Israeli citizens have an equal voice, from all parts of society," Herzog said.

He stressed that Eisenkot received the clearest support from the majority of Knesset members when it comes to the question of forming the next government.

... DAY 4579

OUR GIRLS STILL MISSING

Tope Templer Olaiya,
News Editor
@TopeTempler

RANDOM FACTS

- China is the world's largest consumer of noodles, accounting for 43.8 billion servings annually.
- Nigeria is the first African country to win the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup (2026), FIFA U-17 Men's World Cup (1985) and Olympic Gold medal in Football (1996).
- Nigeria is Africa's largest importer of fake hair and the world's second largest importer, after USA.
- Kenya ranks first in the world in TikTok usage by proportion. 54% of Kenyan internet users visit the platform.
- Nigeria is Indomie's second largest market in the world, after Indonesia (its home country).

TODAY'S QUOTE

"The greatest tragedy in life is not death, but a life without a purpose.

When purpose is not known, abuse is inevitable.

MYLES MUNROE

Patriotism is when love of your own people comes first; nationalism, when hate for people other than your own comes first.

I am a man who belongs to nobody and who belongs to everybody.

CHARLES de GAULLE"

TODAY IN HISTORY

• 2023 - USA
U.S. surgeons at NYU Langone Health, New York announced the world's first whole eye transplant.

• 2021 - Nigeria
The Independent National Electoral Commission declared ex-Central Bank governor, Chukwuma Soludo of All Progressives Grand Alliance as winner of Anambra governorship election with 112,229 votes to defeat Valentine Ozigbo of the Peoples Democratic Party, who got 53,807 votes, Andy Uba of All Progressives Congress with 43,285 votes and Senator Ifeanyi Ubah of the Young Progressive Party who polled 21,261 votes.

• 2019 - India
A religious site disputed by Muslims and Hindus in Ayodhya, India, was given to Hindus by a court decision.

• 2018 - Ivory Coast
Ivorian football legend Didier Drogba announced his retirement from professional football.

• 2016 - USA
Donald Trump, of the Republican Party, was elected the 45th President of the United States, defeating Hillary Clinton, the first woman ever to receive a major party's nomination.

• 2014 - Bahamas
Myles Munroe, Bahamian pastor, author and leadership consultant died in a plane crash with his wife after their jet struck a crane at a ship yard in Grand Bahama International Airport

• 2012 - UK
Justin Welby was announced as the successor to Rowan Williams as Archbishop of Canterbury.

• 1989 - Germany
Cold War: Fall of the Berlin Wall: Communist-controlled East Germany opened checkpoints in the Berlin Wall, allowing its citizens to travel to West Berlin.

• 1970 - France
Charles de Gaulle, French general, politician and 18th President of France, who led the Free French Forces against Nazi Germany died.

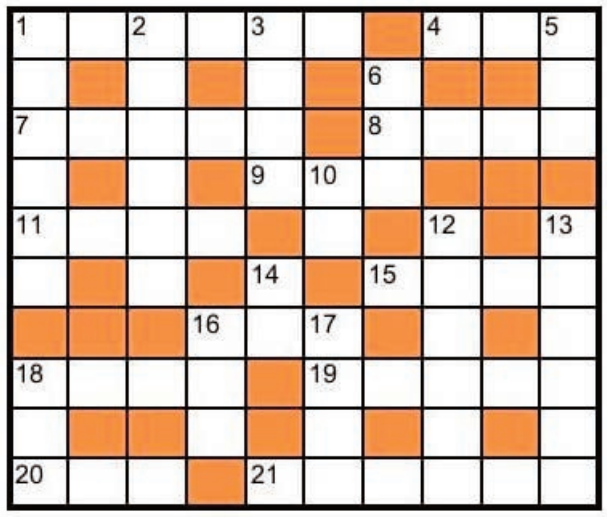
• 1953 - S'Arabia
Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, the first King of Saudi Arabia, died. As of 2013, he was the father of all the Saudi Kings that reigned since his death.

• 1952 - Israel
Chaim Weizmann, Belarusian-Israeli chemist, academic, and politician, 1st President of Israel .

• 1938 - Germany
Kristallnacht, Nazi Germany's first large-scale act of physical anti-Jewish violence, began.

• 1923 - Germany
In Munich, Germany, policeman and troops crushed the Beer Hall Putsch coup attempt by the Nazi Party.

CROSS WORD PUZZLE



• ACROSS

I. Town in Edo state, (6).
4. Showing unhappiness, (3).
7. Watchful, (5).
8. Town in Cross River state, (4).
9. Town in Osun state, (3).
11. Bent metal piece, (4).
15. 'One' in Hausa language, (4).
16. Woman underwear, (3).
18. Town in Oyo state, (4).
19. Tropical American fruit, (5).
20. Decompose, (3).
21. Late famous Ibadan politician, (6).

• DOWN

1. Late Nigerian Head of State, (6).
2. Southern African antelope, (6).
3. Large hawk, (4).
5. Plunge briefly into liquid, (3).
6. Start legal proceeding against, (3).
10. Be adequate, (2).
12. Town in Bauchi state, (6).
13. Senate Ex. President, (6).
14. Indicating alternative, (2).
16. Command, (3).
17. City in northern India, (4).
18. Knight's title, (3).

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Check page 31 for solution to the puzzle

SOLIDARITY AND UNWAVERING

SUPPORT FOR 2027



DR. KADRI OBAFEMI HAMZAT

DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF LAGOS STATE

The Board, Management, and entire Staff of **KENSHAD GROUP OF COMPANIES** hereby pledge our total loyalty, commitment, and unwavering support to His Excellency, DR. KADRI OBAFEMI HAMZAT, on his aspiration to govern Lagos State come 2027. We believe in his vision, capacity, and dedication to the continued progress of Lagos.

We also send a heartfelt message of felicitation to our great party, the ALL PROGRESSIVES CONGRESS (APC), for the excellent choice of DR. KADRI HAMZAT as the Party's flag bearer.

Forward ever! Lagos must move forward.

SIGNED: MANAGEMENT & STAFF

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News

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2027: CentreSGD records 70 attacks, 27 deaths as political violence escalates

From **Azimazi Momoh Jimoh** (Abuja)
Rauf Oyewole (Bauchi)

- PDP warns of democracy collapse, urges Tinubu to rein in political violence
- Makinde urges Nigerians to embrace APM's 'Reset Nigeria' agenda

AFRICAN Centre for Security, Governance and Development (CentreSGD) yesterday raised the alarm over escalating political violence across Nigeria, warning that attacks on candidates, supporters and campaign activities threaten the credibility of the 2027 general elections.

Consequently, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) warned that Nigeria is heading towards a dangerous political crisis that could undermine democratic governance. It urged President Bola Tinubu to condemn political violence and rein in culpable supporters of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC).

However, Oyo State Governor and presidential candidate of Allied People's Movement (APM), Seyi Makinde, urged Nigerians who are dissatisfied with the country's economic, security and governance challenges to embrace the proposed 'Reset Nigeria' agenda of his party.

The Executive Director of CentreSGD, Theresa Odinkalu-Okoro, disclosed that 70 physical election-related attacks were recorded across 19 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) between January 1 and October 27, 2026, with 20 of the incidents resulting in 27 deaths, according to CLEEN Foundation's Election Security Threat Assessment.

CentreSGD stated yesterday that the rising violence posed a systemic threat to the electoral process, with fewer than 70 days remaining before the January 16, 2027 presidential and National Assembly elections.

Citing Yiaga Africa's September 2026 National Voting Intentions Survey, the centre said 61 per cent of Nigerians feared violence could prevent them from voting, with the figure rising to 78 per cent in the North-East.

She added that 84 per cent of respondents were likely or very likely to vote, while 83 per cent said improved security would encourage participation.

The Centre identified recent attacks in Enugu, Katsina, Ekiti, Sokoto and Kebbi, including the reported killing of an NDC supporter during a campaign flag-off in Enugu, attacks on APC convoys in Katsina, and the assault on AAC presidential candidate, Omoyele Sowore, in Ado-Ekiti.

The ED also cited allegations of attacks on ADC campaign convoys in Sokoto and Kebbi.

CentreSGD called on the Nigeria Police Force and other security agencies to conduct prompt, transparent, and non-partisan investigations into election-related attacks and to prosecute perpetrators and sponsors, regardless of political affiliation.

PDP said the growing attacks on opposition politicians, intimidation of supporters, denial of access to public facilities for campaigns and alleged manipulation of judicial processes were threatening the country's democratic survival ahead of the 2027 general elections.

National Chairman of a PDP faction, Kabiru Turaki, SAN, raised the alarm in Abuja during a briefing, warning that the country's political temperature was becoming dangerously hot.

He called on Tinubu to demonstrate responsible leadership by placing national stability above partisan interests, insisting that Nigeria's survival was more important than any individual's political ambition.

Turaki, who described the unfolding political developments as a threat to democratic consolidation, drew parallels with the First and Second republics, arguing that the suppression of opposition parties and manipulation of political processes contributed to the collapse of both republics.

Supporting the PDP chairman's appeal, former Minister of Information, Prof. Jerry Gana, urged Tinubu to rise above partisan considerations and discharge his constitutional responsibilities as President, Head of State and Commander-in-

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Lagos guber candidates differ on housing, transport, education, others

By **Kehinde Olatunji**

THOSE contesting the Lagos State governorship election have presented contrasting approaches to housing, transportation, education, public finance and economic development, with opposition candidates criticising the government's policies as favouring the elite at the expense of ordinary residents.

The candidates spoke during a governorship debate, 'A Conversation About Lagos, Its Future and Choices Ahead', where they outlined their plans to address the state's development challenges and improve the living conditions of residents.

The Labour Party (LP) candidate, Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour, criticised successive Lagos State administrations for pursuing policies that, he said, prioritised the interests of the wealthy while neglecting vulnerable residents.

He cited the state's housing policies and the activities of the Lagos State Development and Property Corporation (LSDPC), arguing that its housing developments were concentrated in highbrow areas and often contributed to the displacement of low-income residents.

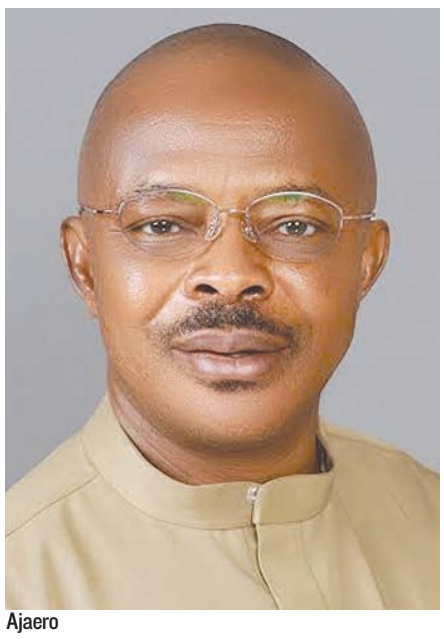
Rhodes-Vivour also recalled the demolition of structures in Makoko, noting that residents who had been promised a new Lagos were subsequently displaced.

He said: "The answer to your question is that the Lagos government in the last over 20 years has been focused on elite policies that only favour the elite. You look at how they do housing. LSDPC is mainly focused on high-brow areas and always pushes out the vulnerable in our society."

He argued that despite Lagos State's high internally generated revenue (IGR), many residents were not benefiting from the state's economic strength because government policies failed to address their needs.


Tinubu


Makinde


Ajaero

NLC rejects N40,000 wage adjustment for public workers

By **Gloria Nwafor**

- Demands new wage talks to start immediately

AS negotiations for a new national minimum wage gather momentum, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has distanced itself from the controversial N40,000 consequential adjustment granted to federal workers in 2024, insisting that the responsibility rested solely with the unions in the public sector.

Also, it accused the Federal Government of ignoring the statutory timetable for the next national minimum wage review, insisting that negotiations should already be under way rather than waiting until 2027.

NLC said its mandate in the minimum wage-setting process was limited to negotiating the national minimum wage with the Federal Government and employers' representatives, while consequential adjustments to existing salary structures were the responsibility of unions in the respective sectors.

The clarification comes as organised labour prepares for another round of minimum wage negotiations, with the NLC warning workers against attributing the outcome of previous consequential adjustment exercises to the national leadership of the congress.

The acting General Secretary of NLC, Benson Upah, stated yesterday that claims that it negotiated the N40,000 across-the-board addition for federal workers were false and amounted to a distortion of Nigeria's collective bargaining framework.

According to the congress, the national minimum wage is determined through a tripartite process involving organised labour, government and employers' representatives, but the implementation of the agreed wage and adjustment of existing salary structures are subsequently negotiated at sectoral levels.

It explained that in the public sector, the Joint Public Service Negotiating Council (JPSNC), comprising government representatives and approximately eight trade unions, negotiates with the Federal Government on the implementation of the minimum wage and consequential adjustments.

At the state level, corresponding negotiating structures engage individual state governments, while industrial unions in the private sector negotiate with employers' associations based on the peculiarities of their respective industries.

Citing the food and beverage industry, the NLC said the Association of Food, Beverage and Tobacco Employers negotiates with the National Union of Food, Beverages and Tobacco Employees on the implementation of the national minimum wage in the sector.

It maintained that although it represents workers across the public and private sectors, it does not negotiate consequential adjustments on behalf of the various unions.

"The N40,000 outcome was the sole responsibility of the leadership of the unions in the public sector," he said

Upah said the clarification effectively places responsibility for the 2024 federal public service consequential adjustment on the unions that negotiated its implementation with the government, rather than the NLC's national leadership.

The distinction was important to prevent confusion over the respective responsibilities of labour institutions, as discussions on a new national minimum wage approach.

He also argued that the division of responsibilities was an established feature of collective bargaining in Nigeria, noting that the JPSNC had historically handled consequential adjustments in the public sector, while Joint Negotiating Councils of industrial unions performed similar functions in the private sector.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

NDC slams Tinubu's repeat of Ibom Deep Seaport promise, queries APC's 2020 approval

Gov Eno hails Tinubu's approval, projects economic transformation

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

THENigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) has criticised President Bola Tinubu over his renewed promise to construct the Ibom Deep Sea Port in Akwa Ibom State, questioning why the All Progressives Congress (APC) continues to make fresh commitments on a project it approved in 2020.

Meanwhile, Governor Umo Eno of Akwa Ibom has described Tinubu's latest approval of financing arrangements for the Ibom Deep Sea Port as a defining moment in the state's economic development.

The governor stated this in a statewide broadcast following the President's visit to Akwa Ibom on Friday, during which he announced approval for the project.

However, NDC described Tinubu's latest pledge as a repetition of an earlier campaign promise, insisting that the Federal Government had yet to demonstrate tangible commitment to translating the proposed multibillion-dollar project into reality.

In a statement yesterday, the NDC's National Publicity Secretary, Osa Director, accused the APC of using the proposed deep seaport as politicalbait rather than demonstrating the political will to implement the project.

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Nigeria must tackle insecurity, unemployment, Obasanjo declares

By **Tobi Awodipe**

FORMER President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, has called for urgent action to address worsening insecurity, unemployment and poverty in Nigeria, warning that leadership failures are forcing citizens to seek better opportunities abroad, often through dangerous migration routes.

Obasanjo spoke on Saturday during a panel session themed "Lest We Forget" at the Creative Africa Nexus Weekend 2026, organised by the African Export-Import Bank in Lagos State.

The former President, who reflected on Nigeria's security situation since independence, said the country must confront the governance failures responsible for declining safety and economic opportunities.

Obasanjo recalled returning to Nigeria in 1959 after completing his military training in Britain, noting that he could travel freely across the country without fear of attacks or kidnapping.

Contrasting that experience with the current security situation, he questioned how Nigeria had deteriorated to the point where citizens could no longer travel safely across several parts of the country.

He argued that unemployment, particularly among university graduates, had become a major source of economic desperation, making it difficult to discourage young Africans from leaving their countries in search of opportunities.

According to him, governments cannot continue producing graduates without creating sufficient employment opportunities and expect them to remain economically productive.

Obasanjo recalled an encounter with Nigerians arrested for drug-related offences, explaining that one of the suspects had attributed his involvement in the illegal trade to the loss of legitimate employment.

He said the encounter demonstrated how economic hardship could push otherwise productive individuals towards desperate decisions, although he stopped short of justifying criminal activities.

MEANWHILE, the Federal Government and other leaders have called for increased financing, stronger intellectual property protection, improved distribution networks and wider market access to enable the continent to retain more economic value from its creative industries.

This call was made at the opening of the four-day Creative Africa Nexus (CANEX) WKND 2026 in Lagos, where policymakers, financial institutions, investors and industry stakeholders stressed the need to transform Africa's growing creative talent into commercially competitive businesses and sustainable wealth.

Opening the gathering on behalf of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Vice President Kashim Shettima said Africa must move beyond celebrating its global cultural recognition to building viable businesses capable of competing in international markets.

'Africa's creative economy needs $2b financing, IP protection to unlock value'



Acting Registrar/Chief Operating Officer, Nigerian Institute of Chartered Arbitrators (NICArb), Williams Odah (left); Chairman, Annual Conference Committee, NICArb, Dapo Akinosun; and Deputy Manager, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Centre, Ms Faith Olufemi, at the Nigerian Institute of Chartered Arbitrators (NICArb) 2026 Conference press briefing in Lagos at the weekend. PHOTO: SUNDAY AKINLOLU.

WTO DG advocates trade reforms to unlock $2.6tr ocean economy

By **Tobi Awodipe**

DIRECTOR General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, has called for stronger international partnerships, trade cooperation and sustainable policies to unlock the potential of the $2.6 trillion global ocean economy and protect millions of livelihoods dependent on marine resources.

She said the multilateral trading system provides important instruments for developing a healthy and prosperous ocean economy, stressing the need to strengthen support for coastal and island economies through improved access to technology, skills, infrastructure and finance.

Okonjo-Iweala made the call in her keynote address at an event on Trade, Biodiversity and the Ocean Economy: Pathways to Resilience, held at the WTO over the weekend.

SERAP demands disclosure of N50,000 relief payments, warns against political interference

By **Silver Nwokoro**

SOCIO-ECONOMIC Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) has urged the Federal Government to disclose details of the funding, selection of beneficiaries and disbursement of the N50,000 National Emergency Relief and Stabilisation Intervention (NERSI), warning against possible political interference ahead of the 2027 general elections.

The organisation also called on the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction, Dr Bernard Doro, to invite the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to monitor the programme's implementation and expenditure.

SERAP made the demands in a Freedom of Information request at the weekend, signed by its Deputy Director, Kolawole Oluwadare.

The request followed the ministry's public announcement on October 30, 2026, introducing NERSI to provide N50,000 financial assistance to vulnerable Nigerians.

Ebola outbreak: WHO moves to test first vaccines

By **Ijeoma Nwanosike**

NCDC, Robert Koch Institute to strengthen AMR surveillance in Nigeria

WORLD Health Organisation (WHO) has recommended two new vaccine candidates for an ongoing Ebola clinical trial in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), paving the way for the first clinical evaluation of vaccines specifically designed to protect against the Bundibugyo virus during an active outbreak.

The candidates, ChAdOx1, developed by the University of Oxford in collaboration with the Serum Institute of India, and mRNA-1469, developed by Moderna, were recommended by WHO's Independent Technical Advisory Group on Candidate Vaccines Prioritisation following an assessment of available preclinical and early clinical evidence.

The two candidates are expected to join the ongoing Tumaini clinical trial, which evaluates multiple vaccines within a single study using a ring-vaccination approach. Under the strategy, people who have had contact with confirmed cases of Bundibugyo virus disease are vaccinated to assess how effectively the candidates prevent further transmission.

The trial is led by the DRC's Institut National de Recherche Biomédicale, in collaboration with the University of Antwerp and international partners, including WHO, Médecins Sans Frontières and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Support from the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations has also facilitated the rapid development of the candidates.

FG's reforms to unlock $1b financing for indigenous airlines, says Keyamo

By **Olusegun Koiki** and **Moyosore Salami**

RwandAir targets Nigerian creatives, food producers for Rwanda market

MINISTER of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, has said that the Federal Government's aviation reforms are expected to unlock more than $1 billion in aircraft financing capacity for Nigerian airlines through the establishment of the Nigeria Aircraft Leasing Company.

Keyamo said the initiative, approved by the Federal Executive Council (FEC) in April 2026, was designed to address the longstanding difficulties faced by indigenous airlines in accessing aircraft on competitive leasing terms.

Keyamo, who disclosed this in a scorecard of the achievements of President Bola Tinubu's administration in the aviation sector as of November 2026 in a chat with The Guardian over the weekend, said that the proposed company would operate as a locally based Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).

He, however, said that the company would have sovereign backing, which would enable domestic carriers to acquire or lease aircraft from international manufacturers and lessors under more favourable conditions.

According to him, the company would be fully privately funded, with no obligation for direct Federal Government investment, while the government's role would be limited to providing sovereign guarantees relating to aircraft repossession and safety.

He added that the government would also hold equity in the company through the Ministry of Finance Incorporated (MoFI).

He explained that the initiative would reduce the financial burden on local airlines and improve their competitiveness.

The minister noted that Nigerian carriers had in the past paid significantly higher aircraft lease rates than their international counterparts, largely because of regulatory uncertainties, insurance challenges and the country's previous poor standing among international aircraft lessors.

He emphasised that the establishment of the leasing company was part of a wider package of reforms aimed at restoring international confidence in Nigeria's aviation industry and improving access to aircraft financing.

Hackers increase activities, target online learning platforms

By **Adeyemi Adepetun**

CYBERCRIMINALS are stepping up their activities, with online learning platforms emerging as a new favourite target.

As digital education continues to expand globally, hackers are exploiting weak security systems to steal personal data, disrupt classes, and infiltrate institutional networks. The rise in attacks underscores growing concerns about the vulnerability of the education sector in the digital age.

Specifically, nearly 63 per cent of online learners across the Middle East, Turkiye and Africa (META) region faced cyber incidents in the past year.

According to a new study conducted by Kaspersky, it surveyed 1,864 respondents aged 18 to 65 who participated in an online or hybrid education format in the past 12 months.

Okutepa faults Imo Attorney-General, defends NJC over appointment of chief judge

By **John Akubo**, Abuja

SENIOR Advocate of Nigeria, Jibrin Samuel Okutepa, has faulted the Imo State Attorney-General over his objection to the National Judicial Council's (NJC) intervention in the appointment of a substantive Chief Judge for the state.

Okutepa described the Attorney-General's position as misconceived, insisting that the NJC acted within its constitutional responsibilities by asking the Imo State Judicial Service Commission to include Justice Ijeoma Agugua in the list of candidates for consideration.

Justice Agugua is the most senior judge of the Imo State High Court and currently serves as Acting Chief Judge.

Okutepa said the NJC's request did not mean that Justice Agugua must automatically become the substantive Chief Judge. Rather, he said.

Seasonal relief masks power sector crisis as supply slumps, debts mount

From **Kingsley Jeremiah** (Abuja) and **Waliat Musa** (Lagos)

- DisCos ration 3,000MW as premium customers spend more on alternative power
- N1.23tr legacy debt paid to GenCos fails to address liquidity crisis

NIGERIA'S electricity crisis could deepen as the dry season sets in, threatening to reverse the modest gains recorded during the rainy season and exposing the country's persistent generation shortfall, mounting debts to power producers and gas suppliers, and failures across the electricity value chain.

Despite the operation of more than 20 power generating companies, electricity generation has remained largely stagnant. It fell from an average of 3,849.60 megawatts (MW) in August to 3,549.02MW in November, after rising marginally from 3,823.66MW in April.

The decline has renewed concerns about the country's ability to sustain electricity supply as water levels in hydroelectric dams drop, demand for cooling rises and liquidity constraints continue to disrupt the gas-to-power value chain.

Managing Director of Azura Power Plant, Edu Okeke, said the temporary improvement in electricity supply during the rainy season often creates the false impression that Nigeria's power problems have been resolved, even though the underlying generation deficit remains largely unaddressed.

According to him, higher water levels in dams during the rainy season enable hydroelectric plants to operate more efficiently, while cooler temperatures reduce demand as households and businesses use less air conditioning.

He, however, warned that the situation changes in the dry season, when falling water levels constrain hydropower generation and demand rises, exposing the inadequacy of available electricity supply.

"In the rainy season, the dams are full and hydros are performing optimally. Also, demand is reduced as people don't turn on their ACs. We go out claiming we have fixed all," he said.

"Then dry season and water level goes down. Hydros reduce their output and all of a sudden, blame game," he added.

The seasonal pattern highlights the danger of interpreting temporary improvements in electricity supply as evidence of structural progress, particularly when the country has yet to resolve the financial and operational constraints affecting thermal generation, which remains heavily dependent on natural gas.

The liquidity problem is particularly troubling because the Federal Government has already paid about N1.23 trillion out of over N4 trillion legacy debts owed to power generation companies (GenCos) through bond issuances, with plans to clear the outstanding balance next year.

However, the intervention has yet to resolve the wider payment crisis confronting the electricity market, with obligations to generation companies, according to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), continuing to increase by more than N1.5 trillion yearly.

Data from the Nigerian Bulk Electricity Trading Company (NBET) showed that between January and April 2026, the government and electricity market were unable to pay GenCos approximately N491 billion for electricity supplied.

The pressure also extends to gas suppliers, whose payments are critical to sustaining fuel deliveries to thermal power plants.

Within the same four-month period, gas suppliers were owed approximately N82 billion, as the sector paid only N60 billion of the N142 billion cost of gas taken up.

The payment shortfall raises concerns about the ability of gas suppliers to sustain deliveries to power plants when commercial obligations remain unsettled, potentially worsening generation constraints as the dry season progresses.



Tinubu



Tegbe

The figures illustrate a fundamental weakness in the electricity market, which shows that even where generating plants are available, insufficient payments across the value chain can undermine the supply of fuel required to convert installed capacity into actual electricity.

The problem is compounded by disagreements over whether gas availability or transportation constraints are responsible for the decline in generation.

The Nigerian Independent System Operator (NISO) had identified inadequate gas supply to thermal power stations and reduced water inflows into hydroelectric reservoirs as major constraints affecting electricity generation.

However, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC) disputed the suggestion that constraints within its gas transportation infrastructure were responsible for the decline.

In a clarification, NNPC said the gas transportation network operated by its subsidiary, NNPC Gas Infrastructure Company Limited (NGIC), remained available to support deliveries to power generating stations nationwide.

The company said its operational records did not indicate transportation-related constraints within its network that could explain the reduction in electricity generation.

NNPC also said its gas production volumes had grown by approximately 10 per cent year-to-date in 2026, attributing the increase to the Federal Government's gas development and monetisation agenda.

The company, however, acknowledged the need for a comprehensive assessment of gas production, commercial supply arrangements, actual deliveries to individual power plants, generating-unit availability and maintenance schedules.

For consumers, however, the consequences are already evident in persistent outages and growing disagreements among operators over responsibility for supply failures.

Data from the national grid showed that the 11 electricity distribution companies received a combined allocation of 3,033MW yesterday, significantly below the country's electricity requirements, which have increased due to more pressure for air conditioning and refrigeration.

Abuja Electricity Distribution Company received the highest allocation of 526MW, followed by Ikeja with 467MW, Eko with 458MW and Ibadan with 325MW. Port Harcourt received 266MW, Benin 220MW, Enugu 211MW, Kano 173MW, Kaduna 167MW, Jos 146MW and Yola 74MW.

The supply constraints have also intensified disagreements between the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) and Ikeja Electric over the causes of recent outages.

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

ADC crisis worsens as campaign council accuses APC of attacks, intimidation

From **Seye Olumide** (Lagos) and **Andrew Oota** (Abuja)

- PCC alleges attacks on opposition members across states
- Aregbesola challenges court's jurisdiction, seeks stay of execution
- Nwosu insists ADC will contest 2027 elections
- Bala faults former VP's continued presidential campaign
- Factions trade accusations over party's leadership, legitimacy

THE struggle for control of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) is fast becoming a test of opposition cohesion and confidence in Nigeria's democratic institutions ahead of the 2027 general elections, as the party's presidential campaign council accuses the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) of deploying intimidation, violence and state institutions to weaken political opponents.

The unfolding crisis has also thrown the party's presidential ticket into uncertainty, with rival factions disputing the legitimacy of the David Mark-led leadership, former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar's candidacy facing legal challenges and conflicting positions emerging over whether the faction's candidates can contest the next elections.

The ADC Presidential Campaign Council (ADC-PCC), which declared that President Bola Tinubu would lose the 2027 election, alleged that the ruling party was manipulating the judiciary and deploying security agencies against opposition parties to retain power.

Director of Media and Publicity of the ADC-PCC, Kola Ologbondiyan, made the allegations in Abuja, warning that attacks on opposition members and supporters across the country posed a serious threat to Nigeria's democracy.

He specifically cited the killing of several members of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) in Delta State, allegedly following an attack on the party's campaign venue by suspected APC thugs.

Ologbondiyan said the incident reflected a disturbing pattern of violence against opposition parties, particularly members of the ADC, NDC and Allied Peoples Movement (APM), in Kaduna, Kogi, Katsina, Kebbi and Sokoto states.

Describing the incidents as an assault on democratic freedoms, he said: "This is not politics. This is state-sponsored terror against democracy."

The council also raised concerns about the preparedness and neutrality of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), alleging that the commission's voter register database had been compromised and that APC sympathisers had been deployed to sensitive positions within the electoral body.

It further alleged that security agencies were being used to harass, arrest and intimidate opposition members, expressing particular concern over the alleged involvement of a serving director of a security agency as a co-director in the APC Presidential Campaign Council.

Ologbondiyan described the development as a violation of the law establishing the agency, arguing that the alleged deployment of state institutions against political opponents reflected a government more interested in retaining power than submitting itself to a credible electoral contest.

"One thing is now very clear to all Nigerians: Tinubu is not preparing for an election. He is preparing for a coronation," he said.

The ADC-PCC warned that neither alleged judicial manipulation nor electoral fraud would guarantee Tinubu's re-election, urging Nigerians, civil society organisations, religious leaders and traditional institutions to remain vigilant and defend democratic freedoms.

It also appealed to security agencies to remain politically neutral, stressing that their allegiance should be to the Constitution and the Nigerian people.

Aregbesola challenges court's jurisdiction

MEANWHILE, the party's leadership crisis has taken a fresh legal turn, with its National Secretary, Rauf Aregbesola, appealing the Federal High Court judgment that nullified the emergence of the David Mark-led leadership.

In a notice of appeal filed on Friday through his lawyer, Mohammed Sheriff, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), the former Osun State governor asked the Court of Appeal to set aside the judgment delivered by Justice Peter Lifu on the grounds that the court lacked jurisdiction to entertain the suit.

Aregbesola listed Nafiu Gombe, the ADC, Mark, INEC and former National Chairman Ralph Nwosu as the first to fifth respondents, respectively.

He challenged the lower court's decision to assume jurisdiction over claims concerning his emergence as national secretary and the validity of resolutions reached at the party's 99th National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting.

He also faulted the declaration that Gombe's four-year tenure remained subsisting and that he was entitled to oversee the party's affairs.

In five grounds of appeal, Sheriff argued that the judge wrongly relied on the absence of a democratic election at the NEC meeting to invalidate Aregbesola's assumption of office under Section 82(3) of the Electoral Act 2022 and Section 223(1)(a) of the 1999 Constitution.

According to him, while Section 82(3) governs elections to party governing bodies, including elections to fill vacancies, Article 23(4) of the ADC constitution empowers the appropriate executive organ to appoint an eligible replacement pending an election at the next convention or congress.

"The absence of voting did not resolve whether the resolutions effected an election or an interim appointment under the provision relied upon by the appellant," he argued.

In a separate motion filed on Saturday at the Federal High Court, Aregbesola also sought a stay of execution of the November 5 judgment pending the determination of his appeal.

The application seeks to restrain the enforcement of, or further consequential steps pursuant to, Orders 7 and 8 of the judgment.

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

'Low insurance penetration threatens sustainable development gains'

By **Bankole Orimisan**

NIGERIA'S sustainable development ambitions may be undermined by low insurance penetration, as inadequate risk protection leaves households, businesses and critical investments exposed to financial losses, industry stakeholders have warned.

The warning comes amid the ongoing efforts to strengthen the financial capacity of insurance companies through recapitalisation, with stakeholders insisting that the exercise must translate into wider coverage, improved claims settlement and greater public confidence rather than merely higher capital bases.

The former African Development Bank (AfDB) President, Dr Akinwumi Adesina, who spoke at the just-concluded 2026 Insurance Companies Directors' Conference, organised by the College of Insurance and Financial Management, in Lagos, at the weekend, identified public trust, enforcement of compulsory insurance and innovation as critical to expanding the market, noting that insurance penetration remains below one per cent.

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

Adeola pledges new roads, renovate schools, others in Imeko-Afon

THE 2027 governorship candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Ogun State, Senator Solomon Adeola, popularly known as Yayi, has announced plan to reconstruct eight major roads, renovate two schools and establish a Free Trade Zone in Imeko-Afon Local Council of the state.

The senator, who made the promise at the Imeko-Afon Local Council stakeholders' meeting held at the weekend, said construction works would commence on listed roads and schools within the next two weeks.

"In the next two weeks, construction works will start on these roads in Imeko-Afon. Construction of Olokuta Iwoye Road, 07 Resort Road, Ilara; Oke-Agbede Moriwi Iwoye Road; Yidi-Catholic Church Road; Ita-Oba Road, Ilara; Old Palace Road, Idofa; Yidi-Awela Road, Owode Idi-Ayin, and Masalam Road Owode, Idi-Ayin.

"Construction works will also commence in these two schools: Community High School, Iwoye and Community Comprehensive College, Idopa Imeko-Afon, within a few weeks," he said.

The senator also announced that work on the proposed Free Trade Zone in Imeko-Afon would commence in December 2026. saying: "I have asked that we get land for the free trade zone and construction works will commence immediately."

APC, APM trade words over prospects, violence claims in Oyo

Gbolarunmi banks on experience, grassroots support to defeat Alli, Adekanmbi

From **Seye Olumide** (Lagos) and **Rotimi Agboluaje** (Ibadan)

THE Director of Strategy and Communications of the Senator Sharafadeen Alli Campaign Organisation, Kehinde Olaosebikan, has said that the All Progressives Congress (APC) governorship candidate stands a better chance of defeating Bimbo Adekanmbi, candidate of the Allied Peoples Movement (APM), in the February 6, 2027 Oyo State governorship election.

But in a swift response, Governor Seyi Makinde's Special Assistant on Print Media, Moses Alao, dismissed the APC camp's claims, insisting that Adekanmbi would win the election and sustain the legacies of the outgoing administration.

Meanwhile, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governorship candidate, Hazeem Gbolarunmi, expressed confidence in his chances, saying that his experience as a former deputy governor and cordial relationship with traditional rulers across the state placed him at an advantage over his opponents.

Olaosebikan, who hinged Alli's electoral prospects on his political experience, grassroots connections and the support of influential political figures who contributed to Makinde's emergence and re-election in 2019 and 2023, said that the history of governorship elections in Oyo State showed that political alliances and coalitions often played decisive roles in determining electoral outcomes.

According to him, some of those influential figures have since joined the APC and are expected to deploy their political networks in support of Alli.

He also identified the defection of former Minister of State for the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Olajumoke Akinjide, to the APC as another development that could strengthen the party's chances.

He also accused the Makinde administration of attracting public dissatisfaction over the management of public assets and infrastructure, and over its relationship with political stakeholders.

However, Alao rejected the suggestion that the defection of some political figures had weakened Makinde's political base, saying that the governor's electoral strength had always rested more on ordinary residents than elite alliances.

He maintained that the administration's achievements in infrastructure, education and healthcare had strengthened public support for Makinde's political camp and would give Adekanmbi an advantage in the succession contest.

Alao also dismissed the suggestion that Adekanmbi was personally imposed on the party by Makinde, saying the candidate emerged through consultations and internal party processes.

Gbolarunmi, on his part, expressed confidence that his political experience and relationship with traditional rulers across Oyo State would strengthen his chances at the polls.

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All Progressives Congress (APC) deputy governorship candidate for Ogun State, Kudirat Adegunwa-Balogun (left); wife of the APC governorship candidate for the state, Temitope Adeola; the governorship candidate, Solomon Olamilekan Adeola; Deputy Governor of Ogun State, Noimot Salako-Oyedele, and Onimeko of Imeko, Oba Benjamin Oyeditan Alabi Olanite (Egi-Ogboye, Akanku IV), during a stakeholders' meeting at Imeko-Afon Local Council, Ogun State, at the weekend.

Groups demand publication of state police bill, 29 amendments, safeguards

Abiodun says over 6,000 Amotekun, So-Safe personnel ready for Ogun state police

From **Bertram Nwannekanma** (Lagos) and **Azeez Olorunlomeru** (Abeokuta)

TWO civil society organisations, the Gani Fawehinmi Memorial Organisation (GAFAMORG) and the National Coalition Against Mass Killings, Extra-Judicial Killings, Mob Actions and Impunity (NCAMKI), have called for the immediate publication of the proposed National Policing Bill 2026 and 29 consequential amendment bills to allow Nigerians to scrutinise the proposed establishment of State Police.

The organisations also urged the Federal Ministry of Justice and the Presidential Working Group on the National Policing Bill to incorporate their 42 proposed safeguards into the legislative framework, warning that decentralising policing without effective accountability mechanisms could expose citizens to political manipulation, arbitrary arrests, torture and extra-judicial killings.

In a joint statement, the groups acknowledged the announcement that the Presidential Working Group had completed drafting the proposed National Policing Bill and 29 related amendment bills and submitted them to the Ministry of Justice for review and validation.

According to a statement by the Chief of Staff to the President and Chairman of the Working Group, Femi Gbajabiamila, the draft legislation was submitted on October 19, with the ministry expected to return the validated documents by October 30 for final consideration before presentation to the President.

MEANWHILE, Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun, has said that the state is well-positioned to establish its own police force, with over 6,000 personnel from the Ogun State Security Network, codenamed *Amotekun*, and the So-Safe Corps, available to provide a manpower base.

Abiodun, who spoke at the weekend, said the state had established a security foundation that would facilitate the transition to state policing and strengthen the protection of lives and property.

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

NLC orders Osun workers to begin three-day strike over withheld LG funds

From **Oluwole Ige**, Osogbo

THE Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Osun State Council, has directed its affiliate unions across the state to embark on a three-day sympathy strike from today, November 9, to Wednesday, November 11, over the lingering dispute surrounding the statutory allocations of local councils.

The directive, which signals an escalation of the labour dispute, followed the expiration of a seven-day ultimatum issued to the Federal Government and the Osun State Government to resolve the controversy over the alleged withholding of the state's councils' funds.

The NLC said the decision became necessary after its efforts to secure a resolution of the dispute failed to yield the desired results, leaving council workers, particularly members of the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE), in continued hardship.

In a statement jointly signed by the State Chairperson, Christopher Arapasopo, and Secretary, Victor Amusan, the Congress said the three-day industrial action was in solidarity with NULGE and was intended to press for the protection of workers' rights and welfare.

The union said that the decision was reached at an emergency meeting of its State Executive Council held on Wednesday, October 28, 2026.

According to the statement, all affiliate unions have been instructed to immediately communicate the strike directive to their members in writing and ensure full compliance across their respective workplaces.

The Congress also warned that unions or members who deliberately undermine the industrial action could face disciplinary measures in accordance with its established regulations.

It maintained that the continued difficulties confronting local council employees should not be treated as an isolated concern of NULGE but as a collective challenge requiring the intervention of the entire labour movement.

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

Adeyemi charges leaders on purpose, impactful life

Idowu, Adeniyi, Dakolo, Ayinde share raw stories of rejection, loss, survival

By **Silver Nwokoro**

THE Senior Pastor of Daystar Christian Centre, Sam Adeyemi, has urged Nigerians to look beyond personal survival and use their influence to fix the country's problems, declaring that "life is too small to be the purpose of one's life."

Adeyemi spoke at the weekend at the close of the 2026 Excellence in Leadership Conference (ELC), a two-day gathering held at Daystar Christian Centre, Oregun, Lagos, themed "Leading in Uncertainty."

He urged leaders to stop chasing certainty about the future and start preparing for it, pointing to the 2027 general elections, sudden government policies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) as sources of disruption Nigerians must plan for.

Global Lead Pastor of Harvesters International Christian Centre, Bolaji Idowu, a Daystar Leadership Academy (DLA) alumnus, recalled that his church began with six people meeting in a hotel for six months. At a time, it could not afford N3,000 to hold midweek services.

He warned that leaders who go silent in a crisis leave their

UI Economics alumni to launch N20b endowment fund

Begin with N5b Phase I campaign

By **Debo Oladimeji**

THE University of Ibadan (UI) Economics Alumni Association plans to use its 2026 homecoming gathering to launch an ambitious N20 billion endowment fund, placing long-term institutional support at the centre of a major reunion of generations of the institution's Economics graduates.

The first phase of the initiative will begin with a N5 billion campaign.

The event is scheduled for December 3–6, 2026, at the institution and will bring together alumni across graduating sets for a programme that includes a public lecture, an economic policy dialogue, student mentorship, alumni networking, reunions, awards, and the endowment fund launch.

The launch will, however, be a major feature of the grand gala and awards programme on Friday, December 4, 2026, when the Association will formally launch Phase 1 of the campaign scheduled for 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

TheMetroSection

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One dies, another injured as truck overturns at Gbagada, Lagos

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

A passenger was killed and another person injured when a truck conveying assorted goods overturned around TREM Bus Stop, Anthony Oke, Gbagada, inward Oshodi, in the early hours of yesterday.

The accident, involving a Mercedes-Benz six-tyre truck with registration number ABJ 37 AC, occurred at about 2:00 a.m. on November 8, 2026, prompting an emergency response by the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) and the Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA).

Preliminary findings by emergency responders indicated that the truck lost control and overturned after its front tyre reportedly burst.

However, LASEMA attributed the incident to reckless driving.

During the accident, an adult male passenger, identified in the LASTMA account as an elderly man, was thrown out of the vehicle and sustained fatal head injuries.

Another occupant, described as a motor boy, was reportedly trapped beneath the overturned truck.

LASEMA's Eagle Response Team from Cappa was activated at 2:06 a.m. and arrived at the scene 10 minutes later.

The team deployed light rescue equipment to recover the trapped victim, whose body was subsequently handed over to the Lagos State Emergency Medical Services (SEHMU).

Another injured victim received medical attention from officials of the Lagos State Ambulance Service (LASAMBUS) at the scene.

LASTMA's Night Rescue Team also arrived promptly, secured the accident scene and evacuated the deceased from the busy carriageway to prevent further danger to approaching motorists.

The rescue operation received support from the Lagos State Fire and Rescue Service and officers of the Pedro Police Division, while LASTMA personnel deployed traffic cones and warning signals to protect other road users and prevent secondary collisions.

The overturned truck, which was conveying assorted consignments, including sealed bags and newly branded event chairs, could not be immediately removed because of its cargo.

Emergency responders therefore arranged for the goods to be transferred into another truck provided by the owner before the damaged vehicle was recovered.

A private tow truck eventually removed the vehicle from the road and conveyed it to the LASTMA yard in Oshodi.

The operation was completed and normal traffic flow restored.

The General Manager of LASTMA, Olalekan Bakare-Oki, commiserated with the family of the deceased, describing the incident as a painful and avoidable loss that underscored the consequences of poor road safety practices.



Scene of the incident

Police transfer case of officer who shot two-year-old girl in Lagos to SCID

By **Eniola Daniel**

The Lagos State Police Command has transferred the case of an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), Omotayo Olajide, whose firearm allegedly killed a two-year-old girl and injured another child in the Ajegunle area of Lagos, to the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) for a thorough investigation.

The incident occurred on Thursday, November 5, 2026, between 9:30 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. in the Nosamu area of Ajegunle, when the officer allegedly discharged his firearm while responding to a violent clash between two rival groups.

Preliminary findings by the police indicated that the officer had been deployed following a distress call over a confrontation between the Nosamu Boys and Alayabiagba Boys, reportedly involving a dispute over toll collection.

The rival groups were said to have been armed with cutlasses and other dangerous weapons when the police intervened.

During the operation, Olajide reportedly fired his weapon, and the bullets struck two young girls. Both victims were rushed to Ajeromi General Hospital for treatment.

However, one of the children was later transferred to the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH), Ikeja, where she died. The second girl is receiving medical attention and is said to be in stable condition.

Following the incident, the police disarmed and detained the officer before transferring the case to the SCID to ensure a thorough and impartial investigation.


Victim

Lagos moves against drainage encroachment, targets 95% flood control success

By **Ayonote Clement**

THE Lagos State Government has intensified enforcement against encroachment on drainage channels and public rights-of-way, warning property owners, developers and other residents to comply with approved building regulations as it targets between 90 and 95 per cent success in its flood mitigation efforts.

Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Tokunbo Wahab, gave the warning during an inspection of strategic locations across the state to assess complaints of drainage obstruction, verify construction compliance and protect critical environmental infrastructure.

The inspection covered Oregun Mixed-Use Scheme, Odo Iya Alaro by Opebi Link Bridge, Modupe Johnson Crescent, off Adeniran Ogunsanya, Surulere, and Osborne Foreshore Phase II Estate, Ikoyi.

At Oregun, Wahab addressed complaints by property owners with valid Lagos State approvals and Certificates of Occupancy (C of O) who alleged that automobile mechanics and other commercial operators had encroached on their properties along System 1 drainage alignment.

He said the government would re-establish the boundaries of affected properties and ensure that legitimate landowners had unhindered access to their assets. He also directed the mechanics occupying the disputed lands to vacate the premises.

According to him, government-approved land titles remain secure, provided owners comply with the conditions and boundaries attached to their allocations.

At Surulere, the commissioner investigated petitions alleging that an ongoing Lagos State Development and Property Corporation (LSDPC) project was obstructing a drainage right-of-way and could worsen flooding in the neighbourhood.

Navy uncovers 185,175 litres of suspected stolen crude oil, dismantles illegal refineries in Rivers

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

THE Nigerian Navy has uncovered a combined 185,175 litres of suspected stolen crude oil and deactivated illegal storage and refining facilities in three communities in Rivers State as part of its sustained crackdown on crude oil theft and illegal bunkering in the Niger Delta.

The discoveries were made during separate intelligence-driven operations conducted between October 24 and November 7 by personnel of the Navy's Forward Operating Base (FOB), Bonny, and Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) SOROH under Operation Delta Sentinel.

In the latest operation on November 7, naval personnel uncovered about 59,500 litres of suspected stolen crude oil at two illegal refining sites in Ogbogolo community, Ahoada West Local Council of Rivers State.

The sites contained two large and 36 smaller dugout pits, alongside other storage facilities.

The operation followed another discovery in the same community on October 24, when personnel of NNS SOROH uncovered two illegal crude oil storage sites containing four dugout pits, 29 sacks and a 25-litre keg. The facilities were estimated to hold 8,675 litres of suspected stolen crude oil.

In a separate operation on November 5, personnel of FOB Bonny uncovered approximately 117,000 litres of suspected stolen crude oil and deactivated three illegal refining sites in Awokiri community, Ogu-Bolo Local Council of the state.


One of the dismantled illegal refineries

Family seeks answers as police arrest woman over death of WHO staff

From **Joy Dennis,** Yola

THE family of Daniel Yedzimai, a staff member of the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Adamawa State, is seeking answers over the circumstances surrounding his death and burial, following a dispute over his properties that has prompted police to arrest a woman, Elizabeth Andrew.

The Adamawa State Police Command confirmed that Andrew was arrested on November 3, 2026, and is being interrogated at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) as investigators probe the circumstances surrounding Yedzimai's death and the alleged handling of his belongings.

The family had raised concerns after discovering that Yedzimai was buried on October 10 without the knowledge or participation of his immediate relatives, despite assurances that his body would be taken to a mortuary.

His younger brother, Sunday Marye Daniel, said he became suspicious when he arrived in Yola after receiving news of his brother's death, only to discover that the burial had already taken place.

He questioned how the deceased could have been buried without the family's involvement, particularly as he had reportedly appeared to be in good health earlier on the day he died.

The situation, he said, became more troubling when disagreements reportedly emerged over the deceased's houses, Mercedes-Benz vehicle, mobile phones and other personal belongings shortly after the burial.

Bonny residents get long-awaited road link to mainland as Tinubu commissions 39km project

From **Obinna Nwaoku,** Port Harcourt

FOR residents of Bonny Island and neighbouring communities in Rivers State, the commissioning of the 39-kilometre Bodo-Bonny Road represents more than the completion of a major infrastructure project.

It marks the end of decades of dependence on water transportation as the principal means of accessing the mainland and opens up new possibilities for trade, mobility and economic development.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on Saturday commissioned the road, establishing the first permanent road connection between Bonny Island and the mainland.

The project, which traverses Bonny and Gokana Local Councils, is expected to ease the movement of people and goods, improve access to markets and businesses, and provide residents with a safer alternative to water transportation.

The commissioning, held at the Adokiye Amiesimaka Stadium in Port Harcourt, attracted government officials, traditional rulers and other stakeholders.

For communities along the corridor, the significance of the road lies in the opportunities it offers to overcome longstanding transportation challenges. Improved road access is expected to facilitate the movement of agricultural produce and other goods.

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TheMetroSection

NDLEA arrests Ugandan woman with 87 cocaine wraps in private part

By Bertram Nwannekanma

• NDLEA intercepts N900m opioids, drugs concealed in female headwear, furniture, snacks

A 34-year-old Ugandan woman who travelled to Nigeria with members of her church for a prayer programme in Lagos has been arrested after allegedly attempting to smuggle 87 wraps of cocaine, weighing 1.15kg, concealed around her pelvic region, out of the country.

The suspect, identified as Farida Nansubuga, was arrested by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) on November 3, 2026, at the screening point of Terminal 2 of the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA), Ikeja, Lagos.

She was reportedly preparing to board a flight to Uganda when a joint passenger screening exercise involving NDLEA operatives and aviation security personnel raised suspicion.

A preliminary body search indicated that she had concealed something around her pelvic region.

She was subsequently taken to a designated private search room, where operatives discovered 87 wraps of cocaine weighing 1.15kg, strapped around her waist and held in place beneath two layers of underwear.



Suspects and recovered illicit drugs



During interrogation, Nansubuga reportedly told investigators that she arrived in Nigeria on October 29 with members of her church for a prayer session at the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), Ikotun, Lagos.

She claimed that while the other members of her delegation returned to Uganda after the programme, she stayed behind to collect the drug on behalf of a friend, identified only as Joy, who lives in Uganda.

According to her account, Joy linked her with a contact in Nigeria, who arranged for a vehicle to convey her to a hotel on the morning of her scheduled departure.

It was there that a man allegedly handed her the cocaine and instructed her to conceal it beneath her clothing to evade airport security.

Although no definite payment was agreed, she reportedly expected to receive at least $1,000 after successfully delivering the consignment.

The arrest was among several major drug interceptions and raids across the country announced by the NDLEA, including the seizure of 750,000 tablets of Tapentadol worth about N900 million, cannabis shipments destined for the United Kingdom and Australia, and substances suspected to be used in producing synthetic cannabis.

At the airport's import shed, NDLEA operatives on November 6 intercepted 750,000 tablets of Tapentadol 250mg, weighing 526kg and valued at N900 million.

The consignment, which arrived from Ahmedabad, India, aboard an Ethiopian Airlines flight on November 3, had been declared as Paracetamol 500mg tablets.

The shipment comprised 11 cartons packed in two wooden structures. Acting on suspicion that the declaration was false, operatives placed the consignment under surveillance before conducting a joint examination with officers of the Nigeria Customs Service and other security agencies.

Widow sues Airtel, ATC for N232m over telecom mast, alleges noise pollution, property damage

By Bertram Nwannekanma

A widow, Mrs Sarah Akinya, has dragged Airtel Networks Limited and ATC Nigeria Wireless Infrastructure Limited before the Lagos State High Court, demanding N232 million in damages over alleged noise pollution, structural damage and environmental nuisance caused by a telecommunications mast near her residence in Okota, Lagos.

Akinya, who instituted the suit on behalf of herself and members of her household, is also seeking an order compelling the companies to dismantle and relocate the facility or restraining them from continuing operations allegedly affecting the peaceful enjoyment of her home.

The suit, marked LD/970/2007, is before Justice Abisoye Jubril Bashua of the Lagos Judicial Division of the High Court.

In her amended statement of claim, the claimant said she had lived in her four-bedroom bungalow at No. 2 Alhaji Adeniran Street, off Moshobolaje Street, Ago Palace Way, Okota, since December 1995. She traced the dispute to April 2004, when Airtel allegedly began construction on an adjoining property at No. 4 Alhaji Adeniran Street. By July of that year, she said, it became apparent that the company was installing a telecommunications mast identified as LAG 101 Base Station.

According to her, the facility comprises a high-capacity mast, heavy-duty electricity generators, an energy reservoir and fuel storage facilities, with some of the equipment located about four metres from her property's perimeter wall.

Through her counsel, Ajibola O. Ajiboye of Fadeson Legal Practice, Akinya alleged that the continuous operation of the generators had subjected her household to persistent noise and vibrations, resulting in cracks in the walls of her building and boundary fence.

She further claimed that fumes, smoke and other emissions from the facility had spread into her home, settling on furniture and floors and exposing occupants to what she described as serious health risks.



Delta Commissioner empowers 500 Isoko North residents with cash, motorcycles, tricycles

From Monday Osayande, Asaba

ABOUT 500 residents of Isoko North Local Council of Delta State have received cash grants, motorcycles, tricycles and other business-support items from the state Commissioner for Health, Dr Joseph Onojaeme, as part of activities marking his birthday.

The beneficiaries also received solar-powered freezers and refrigerators, solar-powered generators and fuel-powered generators to support their livelihoods and strengthen small-scale businesses.

The empowerment programme, dedicated to Delta State Governor, Sheriff Oborevwori, in recognition of his leadership and commitment to grassroots development, was held at Onojaeme's country home in Ovrode, Isoko Nation, over the weekend.

The initiative attracted political leaders, traditional rulers, community stakeholders, women and youth groups, and was designed to create economic opportunities for petty traders, food vendors, transport operators and other small-scale entrepreneurs.

Speaking at the event, Onojaeme said he considered giving back to society a more meaningful way to celebrate his birthday than organising conventional festivities.

He said the decision to empower more than 500 people was driven by his desire to make a tangible difference in the lives of members of his community, particularly those seeking support to improve their economic circumstances.

The commissioner urged beneficiaries to make good use of the items and financial assistance, noting that the programme was intended to promote self-reliance, stimulate economic activities and improve the living conditions of individuals and families.

Customs tightens waterways surveillance ahead of year-end smuggling surge

By Adaku Onyenucheya

THE Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Western Marine Command, has stepped up surveillance across the nation's waterways ahead of an anticipated increase in smuggling activities during the end-of-year period.

The command has placed officers at its operational outposts on heightened alert to prevent smugglers from exploiting the waterways to move prohibited goods and illicit substances into Nigerian communities.

The Acting Area Controller of the command, Thomas Jonah, disclosed this on Friday during a courtesy visit by executives of the Maritime Correspondents Organisation of Nigeria (MARCON).

He said the command had intensified its enforcement efforts and directed officers to remain vigilant across all operational locations to ensure that smugglers had no opportunity to exploit security gaps.

Jonah noted that smuggling activities usually increased towards the end of the year, making sustained surveillance and effective enforcement particularly important.

"As the year is winding up, there is always a surge in smuggling activities. We are not relaxing. We are alert at all our outposts. I have given a marching order. Our officers are on top of things to ensure nowhere is left open for smugglers and economic saboteurs," he said.

He assured that the command would give the waterways the attention required to prevent the movement of prohibited and unregistered goods, as well as psychoactive substances, into the country.

According to him, the circulation of such substances poses serious risks to public safety and the well-being of Nigerians, making their interception a major priority of the Customs Service.

IGP hails LSSTF, says new headquarters will strengthen state policing

By Ayonote Clement

THE Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Olatunji Rilwan Disu, has described the new headquarters of the Lagos State Security Trust Fund (LSSTF) as a major institutional platform for strengthening policing and security operations, particularly with the proposed introduction of state police.

Disu, who made the remarks during a tour of the Fund's newly commissioned headquarters on Assbifi Road, Alausa, Ikeja, on Saturday, commended the LSSTF for its long-standing support for the Nigeria Police Force.

Although he was unable to attend the commissioning ceremony, the police chief said the Fund's sustained investments in operational equipment, infrastructure, logistics and other critical needs of the police had demonstrated the value of collaboration between government, the private sector and security institutions.

He expressed confidence that the new headquarters would strengthen the Fund's institutional capacity and provide a better platform for expanding its interventions to support the Nigeria Police Force and the proposed state police system.

His remarks come amid renewed efforts to decentralise policing in the country, following the approval of the proposed state police arrangement by at least two-thirds of the 36 State Houses of Assembly.

Disu also commended business mogul and philanthropist, Sir Kesington Adebukunola Adebutu, for singlehandedly funding the construction of the new LSSTF headquarters, describing his intervention as a significant example of private-sector commitment to public safety and national development.

Army, PSNAFSA seek lasting peace at Lagbaja's memorial, support fallen heroes' widows

By Glory Sunday

THE widows of fallen Nigerian soldiers have received palliatives at a memorial service held in honour of former Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lieutenant General Taoreed Abiodun Lagbaja, amid renewed calls for lasting peace and an end to insecurity in the country.

The gesture, which formed part of activities marking the second memorial of the late Army Chief, underscored the need to remember not only military personnel who died in the line of duty but also the families left behind to bear the burden of their sacrifices.

The Nigerian Army and the Prayer and Support for the Nigerian Armed Forces and other Security Agencies (PSNAFSA) made the call at the remembrance held at the Maria Lagbaja Event Centre, TA Lagbaja Cantonment, Ikeja, Lagos.

The gathering brought together military and paramilitary officers, family members, friends and civil society organisations to celebrate Lagbaja's life and service while reflecting on the sacrifices of security personnel and the need for greater support for their families.

Speaking on behalf of the General Officer Commanding (GOC), 81 Division, Nigerian Army, Major General Adebayo Babalola, the Commander, 81 Division Garrison, Brigadier General Ahmed Getso, described the late general as a distinguished soldier, exceptional leader and patriot whose life was defined by courage, selfless service and commitment to the nation.

He said Lagbaja's contributions to the Nigerian Army and the country remained indelible, adding that his military career demonstrated dedication, professional excellence and an unwavering commitment to duty.

Babalola recalled that Lagbaja was admitted into the Nigerian Defence Academy as a member of the 39th Regular Course in 1987 and commissioned into the Nigerian Army Infantry Corps in 1992.

His progression through various command, staff and instructional appointments, he said, reflected his professional competence, operational experience and leadership qualities, culminating in his appointment as the 22nd Chief of Army Staff in June 2023.

As Army Chief, Lagbaja was committed to strengthening operational capabilities, improving troop welfare, enhancing professionalism and sustaining the fight against insecurity, Babalola said.



Fallen heroes' wives with donated food items during the event

KANO STATE
THE CENTER OF COMMERCE

Kano in Focus

Governor Yusuf commissions Quick Response Squad, unveils equipment to intensify war against drug abuse

THE Executive Governor of Kano State, Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf, has commissioned the Quick Response Squad of the Multi-Agency Task Force on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, alongside operational equipment worth hundreds of millions of naira, in a major boost to the state's campaign against substance abuse, thuggery and illicit trafficking.

The commissioning, which took place on Thursday, 5 November 2026, marked another milestone in the administration's determination to confront the menace of drug abuse through stronger enforcement, rapid response, rehabilitation, skills acquisition and the effective reintegration of affected persons into society.

Speaking at the ceremony, Governor Yusuf expressed satisfaction with the progress being recorded in the fight against drug abuse across the state, saying sustained efforts by the government and its partner agencies were gradually producing the desired results.

"I am the happiest man in Kano today as we continue to push drug abuse down to the barest minimum," the governor declared.

He said the newly commissioned Quick Response Squad would enhance the operational capacity of the Task Force by enabling it to respond promptly to reports, incidents and emerging threats relating to substance abuse and illicit trafficking.

The governor also highlighted the significance of the newly procured equipment, describing the investment as part of his administration's commitment to providing the Task Force and other relevant agencies with the tools required to effectively confront the drug menace.

According to him, the fight against substance abuse must not end with arrests and prosecution, stressing the need to provide those apprehended and rehabilitated with opportunities to acquire skills and engage in legitimate economic activities.

He said the state government would continue to support skills acquisition and apprenticeship programmes designed to keep rehabilitated persons meaningfully engaged and reduce the likelihood of relapse into drug use or other illicit activities.

Yusuf commended the Chairman and members of the Multi-Agency Task Force for their dedication, courage and commitment to the campaign, noting that the achievements recorded within a relatively short period demonstrated the importance of sustained collaboration among government agencies and other stakeholders.

The governor, accompanied by the Speaker of the Kano State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Jibril Ismaila Falgore, and other senior government officials, was taken on a guided tour of the newly commissioned facility and equipment procured to support the Task Force's operations.



Gov. Yusuf presenting certificate of confirmation to New Commissioner for Information and Internal Affairs, Sanusi Ahmad Bature Dawakin-Tofa at the Government, shortly after the swearing ceremony.

He expressed satisfaction with the level of preparedness and progress made by the Task Force, commending its leadership and personnel for their efforts in confronting one of the most serious threats to the wellbeing and future of young people in the state.

Speaking at the occasion, the Chairman of the Multi-Agency Task Force on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Muhyi Magaji Rimin Gado, reaffirmed the commitment of the Task Force to sustaining its campaign against substance abuse and illicit trafficking in Kano State.

Rimin Gado said the commissioning of the Quick Response Squad and provision of modern operational equipment would significantly strengthen the Task Force's ability to respond swiftly and effectively to drug-related challenges and protect communities from the devastating consequences of substance abuse.

He assured the governor that the Task Force would not relent in its efforts, stressing that the fight against drug abuse required consistency, determination and sustained collaboration among all relevant agencies.

The chairman expressed appreciation to Governor Yusuf for his strong support, political will and commitment to confronting the drug menace in the state.

He said the governor's continued support had provided the Task Force with the confidence and operational backing required to intensify its activities and pursue its mandate without fear or favour.

Rimin Gado noted that the fight against drug abuse was not merely an enforcement responsibility but a collective social obligation requiring the involvement of government, security and regulatory agencies, traditional and religious leaders, communities, parents, educational institutions and other stakeholders.

Kano deepens investment in agricultural value chain, reclaims 2,450 hectares for irrigation

DETERMINED to maximise its agricultural potential and strengthen food security, the Kano State Government is extending investments beyond large-scale production to the development of food processing and other agricultural value chains.

With approximately 1.8 million hectares of arable land suitable for crop and grain production, the state government is shifting attention towards food processing, packaging and export-oriented agricultural activities.

In addition, the government has reclaimed about 2,450 hectares of land for irrigation and provided solar-powered pumping equipment to sustain year-round production while reducing farmers' dependence on fuel-powered irrigation machines.

The Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Dr. Danjuma Mahmoud, said the state government was transforming the agricultural sector through the establishment of processing and packaging hubs designed to add value to surplus agricultural produce.

Mahmoud explained that the new agro-industrial investment drive, being implemented under the State Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ), with support from the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), involved about $131.78 million in investments to boost food processing in Kano.

Briefing journalists on the ministry's interventions towards food security in the state, the commissioner said the project had commenced with the clearing of large tracts of land for cultivation and the provision of farm inputs to ensure sufficient production for processing.

He disclosed that the project, located at the Agricultural Transformation Centre in Baguada, would facilitate the processing of rice, groundnuts, sesame and tomatoes, with additional processing centres planned for Kura, Bagwai, Dawanau and Kakara in Gezawa.

Beyond processing, Mahmoud said the government was investing in all-season agricultural production through the recovery of 1,200 acres of irrigated land from existing irrigation facilities abandoned by successive administrations.

He added that the present administration had also embarked on developing a new irrigation site at Dansoshiya, with a capacity of 1,250 acres, alongside small earth dams and irrigation infrastructure in 11 local government areas.

The combined interventions, he said, had brought the government's irrigation development programme to approximately 2,450 acres.

Away from irrigation, the commissioner disclosed that the Kano State Government had completed more than 70 milk collection centres and provided 1,270 kilometres of demarcated cattle routes across the state as part of efforts to boost livestock production, improve food security and reduce farmer-herder conflicts.

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

Kano repairs Tudun Wada water treatment plant, restores 2.2 million litres of daily supply

THE Kano State Government has completed repairs on the long-abandoned Tudun Wada Water Treatment Plant, restoring its operations with a daily production capacity of 2.2 million litres of clean water.

The rehabilitation has restored water supply to communities, including Gawo, Tsauni, Tsohuwar Nitel and Unguwar Gabas, according to the Commissioner for Water Resources, Dr. Dahiru M. Hashim.

In a statement on Friday, Hashim disclosed this following an on-site visit to the facility, which he said had returned to operation after years of neglect and prolonged inactivity under the leadership of Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf.

He explained that the intervention also included repairs to damaged pipelines and leakages to ensure effective water distribution to households across the benefiting communities and minimise water losses.

The commissioner further revealed that the state government planned to expand the plant's production capacity from the current 2.2 million litres to 4.5 million litres daily.

According to him, the proposed expansion was informed by population growth and the availability of sufficient raw water, adding that it would extend access to water to other communities and villages across Tudun Wada Local Government Area.

Hashim assured residents that the ministry would maintain strict supervision of the facility to ensure its operational efficiency and sustainability.

Gov. Yusuf tasks Sanusi Bature with aggressive sensitisation against drug abuse, clampdown on illegal mining

KANO State Governor, Abba Kabir Yusuf, has charged the newly appointed commissioners for Information and Home Affairs and Solid Minerals Resources to deploy their experience towards addressing challenges facing their respective ministries.

The governor specifically urged the new Commissioner for Information, Sanusi Bature Dawakin-Tofa, to strengthen public sensitisation against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking while promoting collaboration among relevant government agencies and stakeholders.

Yusuf gave the charge on Saturday while administering the oath of office to the newly appointed commissioners, stressing that public office was a position of trust that required the highest standards of integrity, discipline and responsibility.

He challenged Dawakin-Tofa, who previously served as Director-General of the state's media team, to deploy his experience towards improving public communication and sensitising residents to the dangers of drug abuse.

The governor directed the commissioner to work closely with the state's Committee on Drug Abuse to strengthen its activities and improve public awareness campaigns.

He also called on him to collaborate with the committee to ensure effective utilisation and improved services at the newly commissioned drug rehabilitation centre.

Yusuf further tasked Dawakin-Tofa with strengthening and coordinating the state's social media team to ensure professionalism, responsible communication and effective dissemination of government activities and policies.

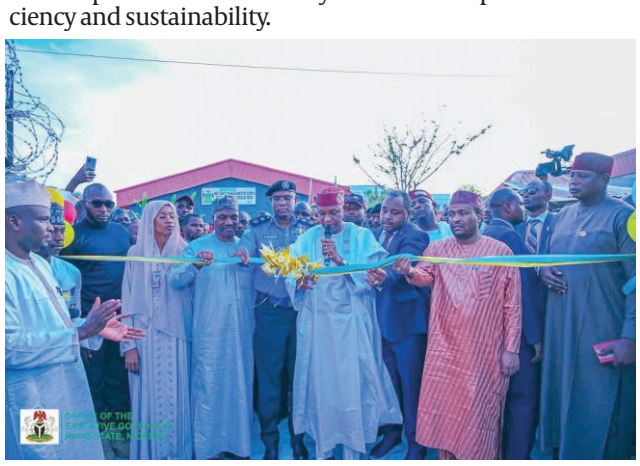
He emphasised the need for close collaboration with ministries, departments and agencies to ensure timely and accurate communication of government programmes to the public.

On the new Commissioner for Solid Minerals Resources, Balarabe Saidu, the governor urged him to bring his experience in the mining industry to bear on repositioning the state's solid minerals sector.

He directed the commissioner to work closely with the Federal Ministry of Solid Minerals Development and other relevant stakeholders to harness Kano's mineral deposits for economic growth and development.

According to the governor, the ministry must focus on creating employment opportunities, promoting economic prosperity and providing an enabling environment for investment in the sector.

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



Gov. Yusuf commissioned a drug rehabilitation centre at Farm center area of Kano state



Secretary to the State Government, Alh. Umar Ibrahim Farouk; Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf; Deputy Governor Alh Murtala Sule Garo, and Chief of Staff to the Governor, Dr. Sulaiman Wali Sani during official function at Government house, Kano



Gov. Abba K. Yusuf and the Deputy Governor Murtala Sule Garo during an official visit to the Secretariat of Arewa4Asiwaju in Kano

THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, AKURE, NIGERIA
www.futa.edu.ng

NOTIFICATION OF THE 37TH CONVOCATION CEREMONY

The Vice-Chancellor, **The Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria, FUTA, Professor Adenike Temidayo Oladiji,** *FAS*, on behalf of the Governing Council, Senate, Staff, and Students of the University hereby notifies parents, guardians, graduating students and the public of the 37thConvocation Ceremony holding between **Friday, 13th and Saturday, 21st November 2026** as scheduled below:

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE 37TH CONVOCATION CEREMONY

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	TIME
Friday, 13th November 2026	❖ Press Briefing	❖ T. I. Francis Auditorium	❖ 10.00 a.m.
	❖ Juma'at Service	❖ FUTA Central Mosque, Obanla	❖ 2. 30 p.m.
Sunday, 15th November 2026	❖ Interdenominational Service	❖ Chapel of Faith	❖ 10.00 a.m.
Monday, 16th November 2026	❖ Excellence and Productivity Award Ceremony	❖ Babatunde Afen Adebayo Multipurpose Hall	❖ 3.00 p.m.
Tuesday, 17thNovember 2026	❖ Career Guidance Programme for Secondary School Students ❖ Exhibition of Scientific and technological products	❖ T.I Francis Auditorium BabatundeAfen Adebayo Multipurpose Hall	❖ 10.00 a.m. 10.00 a.m.
	❖ Novelty Football Match	❖ University Sports Complex	❖ 3.00 p.m.
Wednesday, 18th November 2026	❖ Convocation Meeting	❖ T.I Francis Auditorium	❖ 10.00 a.m.
Thursday, 19TH th November 2026	Award of Diplomas and Certificates	❖ TI Francis Auditorium	❖ 9.00 a.m.
	❖ Alumni Lecture	❖ Obafemi Awolowo Auditorium	❖ 2.00 pm.
	❖ Students' Variety Show	❖ University Sports Complex	❖ 4.00 p.m.
	❖ Alumni Meeting\Dinner	❖ BabatundeAfen Adebayo Multipurpose Hall	❖ 7.00pm
Friday, 20th November 2026	❖ **Convocation Lecture** AND Award of Certificates, Diplomas and First Degrees Title: From Akure to the World: The Next Chapter Is Yours to Write **Guest Lecturer:** Innocent C. Ike, FCIB, FCA, ACS Group Managing Director/ Chief Executive Officer, Access Holdings Plc.	❖ Obafemi Awolowo Auditorium, FUTA	❖ 10.00 a.m.
Saturday, 21ST November 2026	❖ **Award of Postgraduate Diplomas, Masters and Doctorate Degrees, and conferment of Honorary Degrees , Professor Emeriti**	❖ Obafemi Awolowo Auditorium	❖ 10.00 a. m.
	❖ Convocation Luncheon	❖ Vice Chancellor's Lodge	❖ 2.00 p.m.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Parents and Guardians and members of the public will not be allowed into the Auditorium. A Special Area, where the live proceedings can be followed via Digital Screens has been designated for Parents, Guardians, and friends of Graduating Students; and they will be allowed into the Area on the Presentation of Invitation Cards.
- Only Officials with appropriate tags and persons with invitation cards will be allowed into events venues.
- Vehicles with appropriate tags should be parked at designated areas while there will be restriction of vehicles without tags within the Campus.

NOTICE TO GRADUATING STUDENTS

- It is mandatory for graduating students to participate in the academic procession fully dressed in approved academic gowns. Academic gowns will be given to graduating students, on first come, first served basis, after the payment of appropriate fees.
- Graduating students are expected to pay for specially designed scrolls and other official paraphernalia including the Order of Proceedings containing the names of all graduating students.
- All Ph.D. graduating students are to purchase the designated academic gowns through the School of Postgraduate Studies.
- All students must be at the robing venue by 8.00am at the car park of the Obafemi Awolowo Auditorium, FUTA
- Procession for graduating students Starts at 8.30am.
- Graduating Students who are not fully robed will not be allowed to take part in the procession.
- Graduating Students will not be allowed to join the procession midway.
  During the Ceremony, graduating students WILL NOT be allowed in and out of the Venue.

Graduating students should liaise with appropriate officials of their Schools for Schedule of Fees and method of payment, invitation cards, details of the ceremony and other related instructions.

They are also enjoined to visit www.futa.edu.ng for additional details and links for payments relating to the convocation ceremony.

We heartily congratulate all graduating students, their parents, and guardians, and also wish them safe trip to and from Akure , Ondo state.

Signed:
Charles Olusegun Adeleye, ***FNIM***
Registrar /Secretary to Council

FOUNDER: ALEX U. IBRU (1945 – 2011)
Conscience is an open wound; only truth can heal it. Uthman dan Fodio 1754-1816

Editorial

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Inadequacy of the FG's fuel discount initiative

THE federal government may have good intentions in its decision on the fuel discount, aiming to ease the economic pain many Nigerians are currently experiencing. There is no doubt that the high cost of fuel has triggered runaway inflation across most goods and services, including transport costs, thus grossly reducing the spending power of the average Nigerian. Indeed, multidimensional poverty is increasing across the land. But the scepticism of labour unions regarding the adequacy of that measure should be understandable. This is because the government measure appears to raise more questions than answers. Nevertheless, the issue is symptomatic of the changing face of economic policy in Nigeria.

Since fuel subsidy was removed in May 2023, the state of the Nigerian economy has not been the same, and the working class and members of the informal sector have been the worst hit in the unfolding drama, continuing to struggle to eke out a living for their families daily under an unfriendly and excruciating economic environment. Just when it appeared that the country was achieving a reasonable level of stability, the U.S.- and Israel-instigated war in Iran destabilised the international oil market, further raising fuel prices consistently for about 10 months. In these circumstances, the labour unions must rise to protect workers.

The concern of the Tinubu administration in seeking ways of cushioning the pains of the ordinary man in all this has led it to come up with the fuel discount to ameliorate the effects of the fuel subsidy removal on the people. Under the arrangement, the administration's fuel price relief initiative through the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), a 30-day petrol discount initiative, provides for a N66 per-litre reduction in the pump price of premium motor spirit. Labour's basic objection is the scheme's 30-day limit and whether the N66 per-litre reduction adequately relieves the masses. This is against the background that the average pump price of premium motor spirit, or fuel, as it is commonly called, is about N1,370 across the country, with more being paid in some remote parts of the country. Deducting N66 from N1,370 for every litre of fuel makes little or no difference in ameliorating the pains of the ordinary man. Moreover, implementing such a scheme is fraught with complications that may not guarantee that this discount initiative will reach the nooks and crannies of the country or provide much-needed relief.

In addition, many are wondering whether the provision of about 70 million litres of NNPCL fuel supply per month, which is higher than the estimated national petrol consumption of 50 million litres per day, will not encourage siphoning of funds which could be used for corrupt purposes instead of providing relief to Nigerians. Nigerians are understandably wary of the government shifting from the perennial use of "rice and noodles and spaghetti" as economic palliatives to that of fuel discounts. Over the past two years, government palliatives have either not reached the ordinary man or helped him.

Short-term measures by the government to stem economic adversity are important, but the country needs a well-functioning economy that would assure a reasonable quality of life for any hardworking citizen to take care of himself and members of his family. While the government points to the necessity of the Tinubu reforms, given the huge sleaze previously associated with fuel subsidy, and the drain it constituted on public resources, the reforms have nevertheless been painful. Moreover, many Nigerians are not seeing them as translating into prosperity as the government promised.

There is undeniable growth of the macroeconomic indicators, but there is so far little to suggest that prosperity will necessarily follow if adequate steps are not taken subsequently. Nigerians need to see these steps, if the government is indeed taking them. Measures supporting the reforms should be strengthened; the government should be seen to reduce the cost of governance drastically and plug leakages in the system such that the engines of economic growth are strengthened. If there is stability in the macroeconomic indicators operating side-by-side with poor and dilapidated infrastructure, relative insecurity, high cost of doing business and high cost of transportation of goods across the country, the transmission of the effects or benefits of the reforms to the grassroots becomes suspect. There will thus be very little trickle-down effect and the benefits of the reforms will remain only at the top, thus constituting mere decorations. These are part of the concerns of the people that have led to some great measure of scepticism across the country.

The pump price of premium motor spirit can still go down, lower than the current N1370, for many reasons. First, Nigeria is an oil-exporting country and is thus expected to earn extra income from the crisis at the Strait of Hormuz in Iran. Indeed, it has earned more from the crisis. Many oil-exporting countries across the world have been able to absorb some of the price shocks of the Iran and United States/Israel conflict on their citizens. Some of the benefits of that gain should have been transferred to the ordinary man.

Second, the conduct of government affairs needs to be done with frugality. When government officials, especially political office holders, live large and display a great degree of opulence, it sends a wrong signal to the ordinary man, especially the Labour Unions, that there is a lot of money in the system and that they have to fight for their own share of the booty. Moreover, the income structure of the country has, over the years, become increasingly skewed such that the poor are getting poorer and the rich are getting richer. This is more so with the national minimum wage still at N70,000 per month and, worse still, with some states still paying less. Government needs to address these issues. The 30-day petrol discount initiative, which provides for a N66 per-litre reduction in the pump price of premium motor spirit, is inadequate to address, even temporarily, the economic hardship afflicting Nigerians.

LETTER

Nigeria's problems are worth weeping for

SIR: Whoever has taken a closer study of Nigeria's trajectories would never but weep for the country. The magnitude of damage done to both the country and the people's psyche by past rapacious leaders, the dire consequences the country faces sadly without any of hope of emancipation in the horizon as the country continues to drift further and further into the abyss of foreign loans would definitely elicit tears of emotions.

There is a common saying that when people are pushed to the wall, they are bound to react violently but some people have countered that Nigerians would rather enter such wall and keep pushing forward like chained slaves. That is because no matter whatever happens in the country, the most passionate concern of most Nigerians is to forge ahead with their lives and avoid all appearances of trouble at all cost and by all means.

Due to such innate attitudes of tolerance and perseverance occasioned by extreme fears, those in the helms of affairs in Nigeria have seen through the citizens and now dip their hands directly into the people's eyes knowing full well that absolutely nothing would happen.

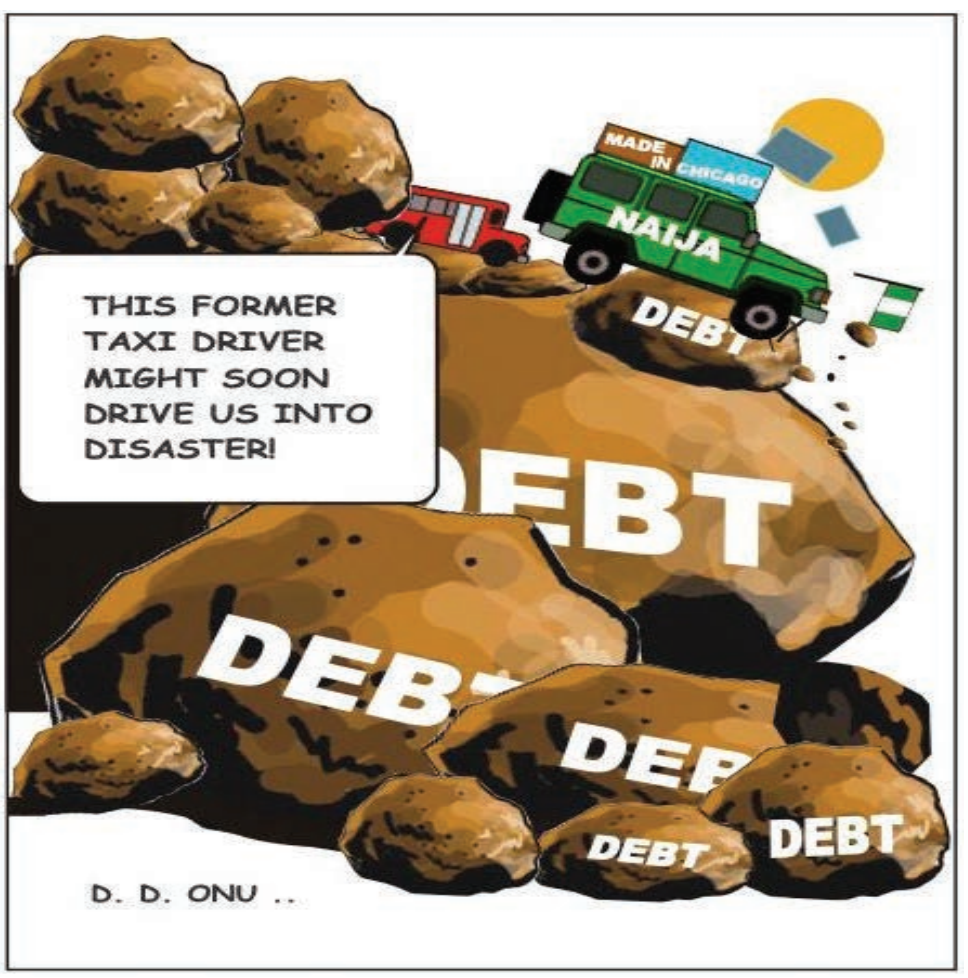
Nigerians in all works of life are ever so afraid of even their own shadows than to try to challenge any manner of absurdities playing out in their country. That is why cases such as alleged missing N210 trillion unaccounted for by the NNPCL can just be allowed to slide without any slight protest.

The same reason why the immediate past governor of the Central Bank could commit so much atrocities while in office and by now, his issue is almost becoming forgotten, What about the former Accountant General of the Federation accused of embezzling billions of naira or the case of a former minister whose assets gathered through foul means are worth more than two hundred billions? How many of such mind-boggling fraud cases do Nigerians remember? What about Nigeria's solid minerals said to be under the whims and caprices of powerful Nigerians reaping all the revenues that normally should accrue to the federal government?

It is most disheartening that while all the massive frauds and lootings continue unabated, the nation's health and education sectors are in shambles. Nigerians continue to die in large number on daily basis owing to the absence of standard medical facilities in the country and even those in government themselves prefer medical tourism to fixing Nigeria's moribund health sector.

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

Jide Oyewusi is coordinator of Ethics Watch International and Friends of The Denied Inc.



Opinion

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Institutional memory, professional knowledge and CORFEPS journal

By Tunji Olaopa

THE Council of Retired Federal Permanent Secretaries (CORFEPS) is an association of patriotic former public servants that embodies administrative experiences, institutional memories and professional knowledge that could pull a lot of political and administrative weight within the reform imperative to transform governance architecture, the civil service and its ecosystem.

As a multidisciplinary body of retired public servants with vast knowledge of the workings of the system, CORFEPS possesses a huge significance in connecting the institutional and reform dots in terms of where the civil service system is coming from, where it is at the moment and where it intends to be, given the democratic imperatives and development necessities of the current Tinubu administration.

It is one of the most critical stakeholders in the public administration communities of practice and service that articulates a continuing professional and institutional interest in furthering the relevance of the civil service as a significant player in the development process in Nigeria.

The necessity of such a body derives from the fact that patriotic and meritorious service does not need to end with retirement. Indeed, more can still be done in entrenching the institutional memories that retired permanent secretaries embody. CORFEPS, under the able chairmanship of Mahmud Yayale Ahmed, has been energetic in its consistent push to regain the vocational honor, professional ethos and administrative efficiency of the civil service. And in furtherance of this enthusiastic push for the significance of the civil service system as one critical cornerstone of democratic governance in Nigeria, CORFEPS has just launched an amazing initiative: the CORFEPS Journal on Pubic Policy and Governance.

This significant initiative must be situated within a larger context of the institutional reform of the civil service system, especially its status as a value-based institution founded on merit, public spiritedness and professionalism. That context facilitates a framework that allows the past and the present to initiate conversation, and for both retired and current public servants to incessantly brainstorm the future of the bureaucratic system and its capability readiness to shoulder the burden of public policy implementation. The journal, I must say, presses the advantage of escalating the fundamental significance of professional knowledge and its role in deepening institutional progress.

In other words, through it, CORFEPS provides a rare forum—draw, I dare say, from the administrative history of that golden era when administrative theorists (the gown) and practitioners (the town) were in conversation—within which administrative ideas, practices and initiatives could be discussed, extended and applied.

The inaugural edition of the CORFEPS journal is indeed a full, rich and exciting package that is sufficiently exciting to signal to the communities of service and practice that something new and challenging has arrived in the administrative space. This is because the editorial board went all out to create a splash especially with the range of topics covered, and even more specially with the array of contributors and their unique specialties.

As is to be expected, CORFEPS pulled strongly from within its own ranks for reflections that combine past administrative experiences with current observations from behind the scenes. The majority of the contributors are retired permanent secretaries who have served in one capacity or the other, and who have faced one crucial challenge or the other with wide ranging levels of successes.

In this regard, the CORFEPS journal, in its inaugural edition, is drawing on the immense institutional memories and professional knowledge of its members to ventilate both diagnostic, recuperative and reformative insights. And this is salutary in ways that serve to complement the mediatory role CORFEPS has been playing as a staunch and energetic stakeholder in the civil service reform project in Nigeria.

We now have an opportunity to listen and take note, outside of the usual high-power meetings, of the single-minded understanding of the civil service system from those who have manned its various aspects, especially the ministries, departments and agencies. Their reflections and analyses are complemented by others, critical watchers of the civil service, whose many years of dealing with the system make them significant participants in the ongoing efforts to transform it into a value-based, public-spirited, meritocratic and high-performing world class institution.

In terms of the range of topics and themes discussed in the inaugural edition, the CORFEPS journal becomes an automatic administrative keepsake.The inaugural edition is divided into eight parts. Each of the segments, with the exception of the last two, speaks intentionally to the most dominant issues involved in assessing and transforming Nigeria's democratic governance experiment.

This is indeed a well-thought out scholarly first step by the editorial board. Part one, titled "The Nigerian Civil Service," has four essays; part two with seven essays is concerned with governance tools; part three has just one essay dealing with Nigeria's infrastructural development; part four has two essays surrounding leadership and management; the two essays in part five are wrapped around the theme of health and lifestyle; part six is dedicated to three book reviews; part seven signals recent appointments and tributes to distinguished former public servants; and part eight speaks to the activities of CORFEPS itself.

In all, these thematic segments are all-encompassing. They are meant to lay on the table the diagnoses, prognoses and resolution frameworks for understanding the totality of Nigeria's administrative and governance challenges and the ways forward to transcending them.

Without daring any in-depth review of each essay—which goes beyond the space of this piece—I will touch on some of the significant contributions. And of course, we start with the civil service system. This is key, even to the current advocacy responsibilities of CORFEPS itself. And the four essays in this segment did not disappoint.

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

Prof. Olaopa is a retired Federal Permanent Secretary and Chairman, Federal Civil Service Commission.

Sacrosanct power of voters: What America's midterm elections teach Nigeria

By Ebuka Ukoh

FROM Texas to Kansas, the 2026 U.S. midterm elections remind us that political power is borrowed from the people, never permanently owned by those who hold it.

There is something profoundly instructive about watching a political stronghold change hands—not because one political party is inherently better than another. At the same time, an electoral defeat does not necessarily mean every policy of the losing party was wrong. Still, it reminds us of a fundamental democratic truth: the people who give political power retain the right to take it away.

On November 3, 2026, Americans went to the polls for the midterm elections. By the following morning, the political landscape had shifted considerably. Democrats secured control of both chambers of Congress. At the same time, Republicans suffered defeats in states where their electoral dominance had endured for decades: Kansas, Texas, South Carolina, North Carolina, Iowa, Ohio, and Georgia.

Places whose political histories had long defined what was assumed electorally possible suddenly produced different results.

For Nigerians watching from thousands of miles away, these elections raise a vital question: What happens when citizens refuse to treat political power as the permanent property of those who occupy it?

Consider Kansas. For 94 years, the state had not elected a Democrat to the United States Senate—not since 1932. Yet on November 3, Democrat Adam Hamilton defeated incumbent Republican Senator Roger Marshall. Nearly a century of electoral history did not prevent voters from choosing differently.

Then there is Texas. For decades, the state has been central to Republican strength, having elected neither a Democratic US senator since 1988 nor a governor since 1990. In this election, however, Democrat James Talarico won the Senate race, while Gina Hinojosa defeated Republican Governor Greg Abbott. Texas did not erase its political history; its voters exercised their right to write a new chapter.

South Carolina offered another example, electing Democrat Annie Andrews to the Senate and ending a drought stretching back to 1998. In Iowa, Democrat Josh Turek won a Senate seat in a state that had not elected a Democrat to the chamber since 2008. Democrats also captured governorships in Georgia and Ohio, breaking years of uninterrupted Republican control.

North Carolina tells a similar story. For 18 years, Republicans held the Senate seat previously occupied by Thom Tillis. Yet on November 3, former Democratic Governor and a fundamental character became the first Democrat elected to the US Senate since 2008. While North Carolina is competitive in statewide contests, this result shows that even an established pattern of party control remains subject to the voters' final verdict.

These outcomes do not mean every voter in those states changed their political allegiance, nor that each state's fundamental character transformed overnight. But collectively, the results challenge one of politics' most persistent assumptions: yesterday's electoral dominance does not guarantee tomorrow's victory.

People aren't bound by political loyalty

Political parties often speak about strongholds as though they were the electorate's consent; the state belongs to us. That region will always vote for us. Those voters have nowhere else to go.

Such language is painfully familiar in Nigeria. We speak of states as the personal territories of governors, political godfathers, and dominant parties. We describe entire regions as though their political preferences were permanently fixed, sometimes treating a politician's popularity as a substitute for the electorate's consent.

But citizens are not political property. Their loyalty is not an inheritance, and their votes should never be regarded as an entitlement. A person who supported a party in one election has every right to reconsider that support in the next. Changing one's political preference is not betrayal; it is the essence of democratic freedom.

According to Associated Press reporting, affordability, high living costs, concerns about corruption, and dissatisfaction with federal government policy heavily influenced American voters. While these concerns affected individuals differently, they ensured voters could reassess political leadership against their current realities. A political mandate is permission to govern, based on citizens' priorities and future judgement.

Nigeria must learn to respect people's verdict

Nigeria's own political history makes this lesson acutely relevant. In 2015, Nigerians voted out an incumbent president for the first time, proving that federal incumbency does not guarantee victory.

However, democratic progress cannot be measured solely by whether an incumbent loses. A functioning democracy must protect citizens' right to retain a government they support just as much as it protects their right to replace one they no longer want. Both outcomes must emerge from a credible process.

Consequently, Nigeria's political discourse must move beyond merely predicting which party will win the next election. The more fundamental questions concern the conditions under which citizens vote: Do they feel safe? Are they confident that their ballots will be counted? Do electoral institutions act impartially? Are disputes resolved through credible legal processes? And do political actors respect outcomes? Are disputes resolved through lawful procedures? Without satisfactory answers, the language of popular sovereignty is difficult to reconcile with political reality. The power of the people is meaningful only when the electoral system respects what the people decide.

Opposition must offer more than opposition

American elections offer another vital lesson: political competition requires alternatives that voters regard as credible. In Nigeria, conversations about opposition politics too often revolve around personalities, defections, tactical alliances, and the race for the next presidential ticket.

While these matters attract attention, an opposition party's democratic responsibility extends far beyond identifying government failures. It must articulate what it proposes to do differently. What is its economic programme? How would it tackle insecurity? What structural reforms would it pursue in education, healthcare, employment, and public finance?

Cooperation between opposition parties is a legitimate choice where shared policy priorities and democratic principles exist. However, collaboration does not automatically produce public confidence, just as fragmentation does not automatically signal a lack of seriousness. What matters is whether parties build accountable structures, communicate coherent policies, select candidates transparently, and demonstrate absolute respect for democratic rules. The same standards apply equally to governing parties.

Elections are about more than election day

The American experience also warrants careful interpretation. Its electoral system faces significant controversies, including disputes over redistricting, campaign finance, voter access, and administration. The 2026 results do not imply that American democracy is flawless; indeed, ballots were still being counted days after the polls closed. But the elections underscore the importance of robust institutions through which political competition takes place and outcomes remain publicly verifiable.

For Nigeria, strengthening those institutions requires sustained, active attention between electoral cycles. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) must possess the operational capacity and independence to administer credible elections. Security agencies must protect voters and officials without partisan bias. Political parties must democratise their internal processes, and courts must adjudicate electoral disputes fairly and promptly. Civil society organisations and journalists must continue scrutinising public resource management, while citizens demand unhindered access to reliable information. Credible elections do not emerge automatically from neglected institutions.

What about the Nigerian voter?

As citizens, we must also examine our own criteria: How do we evaluate those seeking to govern us? By ethnicity? Religion? Party loyalty? Personal relationships? Or by evidence of performance, integrity, policy commitments, and the capacity to deliver public goods?

Nigeria's political choices occur within complex socio-economic realities. Many citizens face severe barriers to participation, including insecurity, financial hardship, and institutional distrust. It would be unfair to place the burden of democratic shortcomings entirely on voters. Government and electoral authorities carry profound obligations.

Still, where citizens have meaningful freedom to participate, their choices matter. We must be willing to question politicians we support, demand accountability from those in office, scrutinise challengers, and reject the notion that political loyalty demands permanent agreement. Democracy does not demand that citizens always change their leaders; it demands that they remain free to do so.

Power is borrowed, never owned

The 2026 American midterm elections will generate extensive debate about the direction of US politics and the legacy of the presidential term. But the core lesson extends far beyond American shores.

Political power remains subject to public judgement. Kansas went 94 years without electing a Democratic senator; Texas went decades without a Democratic statewide victor. Yet those patterns changed. For Nigeria, the lesson is not that a particular party must win or another must lose, but that no political office should escape electoral accountability.

No governor owns a state. No president owns a country. No party owns a people's loyalty, and no citizen owes permanent allegiance to a politician. The ballot must remain powerful enough to change a government without pushing the nation into violence.

That is the democratic principle worth defending. And as another election cycle approaches, the most critical question for Nigeria remains: When Nigerians speak through their votes, will our institutions faithfully deliver their verdict?

Ukoh, a P.hD student and co-author of Built By The Ancestors, wrote from New York, the United States.

Opinion

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Rev360: Reimagining tax administration for a digital Nigeria

By Emmanuel Jonathan

FOR many taxpayers, the true measure of an effective tax system is not the complexity of its laws or the sophistication of its technology, but a much simpler question: how easy is it to comply?

This question is central to the Nigeria Revenue Service's (NRS) ongoing transformation of tax administration through Rev360, its next-generation digital tax administration platform.

Since its go-live on April 30, 2026, Rev360 has marked an important milestone in the Service's transition towards a more integrated, intelligent and taxpayer-centric system. Building on previous advances in digital tax administration, the platform is designed to simplify compliance, improve service delivery, strengthen transparency and support more efficient revenue administration.

As implementation progresses, attention is increasingly shifting from the introduction of the platform to its adoption, operational effectiveness and the tangible improvements it delivers for taxpayers and other stakeholders.

More than a digital platform

Rev360 comprises an interconnected digital architecture designed to serve different participants in the tax ecosystem.

The Unified Revenue Collections Workspace (URCW) is the internal workspace for NRS personnel. It provides staff with a digital environment for administering revenue and managing taxpayer-related processes and information.

The Taxpayer Self-Service Portal (TSSP) is the principal digital channel for taxpayers. It enables taxpayers to access tax services and interact with the NRS without depending entirely on physical offices and manual paperwork. Through the TSSP, taxpayers can undertake key compliance activities and access relevant services digitally.

The Tax Consultants' Portal (TCP) provides a dedicated channel for tax consultants and professionals who assist taxpayers with their obligations. It gives them a structured digital interface through which they can support their clients.

The Government Tax Portal (GTP) is designed for Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), extending the digital tax environment into government institutions and supporting their interaction with tax administration.

The Developers' Portal provides a connection point for third-party software developers and supports interoperability between external technology solutions and the wider Rev360 ecosystem.

The significance of these channels lies not merely in the existence of separate portals, but in their connection within a broader digital tax administration environment. Taxpayers, tax professionals, government institutions, NRS personnel and technology developers can therefore engage with the Service through channels designed around their respective roles.

What Rev360 means for taxpayers

For taxpayers, however, the technology behind Rev360 matters less than the experience it creates.

The important questions are practical: Can a taxpayer register more easily? Can returns be filed without unnecessary complications? Can payments be made conveniently? Can compliance issues be resolved more efficiently? Can taxpayers obtain assistance without repeated visits to tax offices?

The TSSP is particularly significant because it creates a direct digital channel between taxpayers and the NRS, providing access to services such as tax filing, payments, tax clearance, assessments and other taxpayer services.

The Tax ID also plays an important role in the wider digital tax administration framework by providing a basis for identifying taxpayers and supporting access to tax services. However, the Tax ID framework should be distinguished from Rev360 itself. The NRS Tax ID service states that the Tax ID is jointly issued by the NRS and the Joint Revenue Board in accordance with Nigerian tax laws.

For businesses, predictable processes and easier access to tax services can reduce the administrative burden associated with compliance.

The objective, therefore, is not simply to digitise existing procedures but to make the overall experience of dealing with the tax authority more convenient, accessible and predictable.

From implementation to adoption

Since its introduction, Rev360 has progressed through a phased implementation process designed to support an orderly transition for taxpayers and other stakeholders.

Beyond the deployment of technology, the NRS has prioritised stakeholder sensitisation, user training, technical support and continuous engagement to facilitate adoption and address implementation challenges.

The early implementation period is naturally one of adjustment. Taxpayers, professionals, government institutions and NRS personnel have to become familiar with the digital environment and adapt to processes that may differ from previous ways of working.

The success of Rev360 will ultimately be determined by measurable improvements in taxpayer experience, service reliability, processing efficiency, accessibility and voluntary compliance.

As implementation progresses, user feedback and operational performance data will remain essential to identifying opportunities for improvement and ensuring that the platform delivers on its objectives.

Turning data into an advantage

Another important dimension of digital tax administration is data.

Tax administration generates enormous amounts of information. When that information exists in disconnected systems, its usefulness can be limited. When appropriately integrated, it can provide a clearer picture of taxpayer behaviour, compliance patterns and revenue trends.

Rev360's digital architecture is intended to support greater integration of tax administration processes and information. Such integration can help reduce duplication, improve coordination and strengthen the Service's ability to use data in administering tax obligations.

The potential benefits extend beyond revenue collection. Reliable tax data can support economic planning and policy decisions by providing government with a stronger evidence base on economic activity.

This makes the digital transformation of tax administration relevant not only to taxpayers and the revenue authority but also to the wider economy.

Connecting to global tax practice

Rev360 is being implemented at a time when tax administration globally is becoming increasingly digital.

Businesses increasingly operate across borders, while tax authorities are relying more heavily on digitalisation, data integration, transparency and information exchange.

Nigeria therefore needs a tax administration capable of operating effectively within this changing international environment.

A modern digital tax ecosystem can improve domestic administration while strengthening the country's capacity to respond to developments in international taxation and cross-border economic activity.

Rev360 consequently represents an important stage in Nigeria's continuing transition towards a more connected and digitally enabled tax administration.

Adoption will determine success

Technology alone cannot guarantee transformation.

Nigeria's taxpayer population is diverse, ranging from large corporations to medium-sized businesses, entrepreneurs, professionals and individual taxpayers. Their levels of digital literacy, access to technology and familiarity with tax processes vary.

This makes communication, taxpayer education and user support essential to the success of Rev360.

Users need clear information about which channel applies to them, what services they can access, how to use those services and where to obtain assistance when problems arise.

The success of digital tax administration will therefore depend not only on the technology itself but also on the ability of taxpayers and other stakeholders to understand, trust and effectively use the system.

As implementation continues, sustained engagement, responsive support and attention to user feedback will be critical to ensuring that the benefits of digitalisation are experienced across different categories of taxpayers and stakeholders.

The real measure of transformation

The significance of Rev360 extends beyond the tax office. Nigeria needs stronger domestic revenue to finance infrastructure, public services and development. At the same time, businesses need a tax environment that provides greater certainty, accessibility and predictability.

A more efficient digital tax administration can contribute to both objectives by making compliance easier for taxpayers while providing the revenue authority with more effective tools for administering the tax system.

The transformation of the NRS under the leadership of Executive Chairman Dr Zacch Adedeji reflects a broader effort to reposition tax administration around technology, data, efficiency and improved taxpayer experience.

But the real measure of that transformation will not be the sophistication of the technology or simply the number of digital channels created. It will be whether taxpayers experience a meaningful difference.

Can taxpayers register and access services more easily? Can businesses file and pay with fewer complications? Can tax consultants manage their clients more efficiently? Can government institutions interact more effectively with the tax authority?

Can NRS personnel work with better-integrated information? And can the Service use reliable data to improve compliance and revenue administration?

These are the questions that will increasingly define the success of Rev360.

Nigeria is moving from a tax administration shaped largely by physical processes towards one increasingly built around digital connectivity, integrated information and self-service.

Rev360 provides an important architecture for that transition.

Its ultimate achievement, however, will not be measured by technology alone. It will be measured by whether taxation becomes simpler for taxpayers, more efficient for government, more transparent for stakeholders and more predictable for the Nigerian economy.

Jonathan, a communications expert and manager with the Nigeria Revenue Service, wrote from Abuja.

Put the ocean at COP31 centre

By Peter Thomson

FOR over 30 years, Pacific island countries have issued the same warning at the annual United Nations Climate Change Conference: the warming ocean threatens not just food and energy security, but global survival itself. And almost every year, our warning has been treated as a regional problem, a challenge confined to remote small islands and thus not warranting more than lip service from international leaders.

I wish I could say we were wrong. Instead, the climate devastation unfolding before our eyes, supercharged by an El Niño cycle and record-breaking ocean heat, proves that this crisis does not stop at the shoreline.

Rising sea levels are swallowing fertile farmland, displacing communities, and driving up insurance premiums for families. Ocean warming threatens the energy grids and ports that power the world economy and keep global supply chains running. In the Arctic, 60 per cent of coastal infrastructure, much of which is used for critical security activities, has become vulnerable to erosion. In 2024, the Mediterranean and Black Sea, major fishing and aquaculture hubs that generate $21.5 billion in direct and indirect revenue per year, experienced marine heat waves with temperatures nearly 5° Celsius above normal, raising concerns about food insecurity.

Another overlooked factor is the ocean's role as the planet's largest carbon and heat sink, absorbing 30 per cent of CO_2 emissions—as much as the world's forests—and capturing 90 per cent of the excess heat generated by those emissions. But it pays the price: the most heat-sensitive ecosystems are underwater, and every fraction of a degree of global warming beyond the 1.5°C target set by the Paris climate agreement destroys more of them. By 2050, under a 2°C warming scenario, the losses caused by ocean-linked disasters could reach $56 billion, exposing the hard limits of adaptation and the urgent need to keep warming as close to 1.5°C as possible.

These are not trivial problems. They imply major global economic and security risks. And they have existential implications for Pacific island countries: staying below the 1.5°C limit is a matter of survival, which is why we fought so fiercely to secure the Paris climate agreement and, in the intervening years, to stick as closely as possible to that target.

Last year's UN Climate Change Conference in Belém, Brazil, put forests at the center of the climate agenda. This month's UN Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya, Turkey, can do the same for the ocean. Political support for ocean-based climate action is strong: more than 100 countries signed a letter declaring that the ocean is a core part of the Paris climate agreement and should be treated as such at COP31.

In practice, this means that negotiators should include the ocean prominently in discussions about reducing emissions, building resilience, and climate finance. Moreover, the latest ocean science must inform the next global stocktake, which would add a level of accountability to climate action by creating ocean-related commitments that countries must report on and standards against which they are measured.

Every country with a coastline should join the Blue NDC Challenge, a group of governments committed to meeting their national climate goals through ocean-based solutions. The ocean can help accelerate the energy transition with the greening of ports and shipping, as well as the development of offshore renewables. Of course, the blue whale in the room is the oil and gas industry. Rapidly shifting away from fossil fuels is the most effective way to reduce the pressure on coral reefs, fisheries, coastal economies, and the local communities that depend on them.

Investment flows must reflect this rising ambition. Current financing for marine protection is estimated at $1.8 billion per year, leaving a gap of approximately $14 billion. And while many proven solutions are ready to scale, coalitions must be mobilised to ensure that marine protected areas can deliver returns through sustainable fishing and tourism revenues.

For too long, the message of Pacific island countries has fallen on deaf ears. COP31 offers a chance to change that. The health of the ocean will shape the future for all people. Now is the time for everyone to accept that it is a shared asset—and a shared responsibility.

Thomson is the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean.

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Finance&Economy

www.guardian.ng Monday, November 9, 2026 Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

CRUDE OIL PRICE UPDATE Brent crude: $109.9 | WTI crude: $101.4

FOREX MARKET UPDATE I&E Window: N1,368.33

Naira weakens by 1.79% to N1,394/$ as forex demand rises

By **Helen Oji**

THE naira depreciated by 1.79 per cent to an average of N1,394 to the dollar at the parallel market last week, from N1,369 the previous week, as increased demand for foreign exchange, seasonal payment obligations and a stronger U.S. dollar weighed on the local currency.

The pressure also showed up at the official foreign exchange window, where the naira weakened by 0.04 per cent to close at N1,346.79 to the dollar, compared with N1,346.26 the previous week.

The depreciation came amid a 10.45 per cent decline in Nigeria's Bonny Light crude oil price to $106.90 per barrel from $119.37, while the country's gross external reserves fell marginally by 0.16 per cent to $55.13 billion as of Wednesday, down from $55.22 billion the previous week.

Analysts at Cowry Asset Management Limited said the naira was expected to remain relatively stable in the near term, supported by continued foreign exchange interventions by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and measures aimed at improving liquidity at the official foreign exchange window.

They explained that the CBN's efforts to sustain liquidity and ensure foreign exchange availability would help moderate volatility and support orderly trading in the market. However, they noted that the local currency could continue to face pressure from persistent demand for foreign exchange, particularly as businesses and individuals meet seasonal payment obligations and other foreign currency commitments.

The analysts added that movements in the U.S. dollar in international markets would also influence the naira's performance, as a stronger dollar could increase demand for the greenback and put additional pressure on emerging market currencies.

They further identified crude oil price movements and the pace of foreign exchange inflows as critical factors that would determine the direction of the local currency.

According to them, sustained crude oil earnings and improved foreign exchange inflows would strengthen the supply position, while a prolonged decline in oil prices could moderate inflows and constrain the CBN's capacity to support the market.

The foreign exchange market experienced renewed pressure during the week as the US Dollar Index strengthened amid changing global market conditions. Investors also assessed concerns that a slowdown in artificial intelligence-related investments could weaken the outlook for the US economy.

In the international oil market, crude prices fell sharply, with Brent crude dropping towards $90 per barrel at one point on Friday, marking its steepest weekly loss since mid-April.

The decline followed renewed hopes of a diplomatic breakthrough in the Middle East, prompting traders to reduce the geopolitical risk premium in oil prices.



Andreas Kurtz (left); Minister of Art, Culture, Tourism and the Creative Economy, Hannatu Musa Musawa; Senior Curator, International Art, Africa and Diaspora, Tate, Osei Bonsu; Governor of Lagos State, Babajide Sanwo-Olu; Director, Tate St Ives, Anne Barlow; Chairman, Access Holdings and Coronation Group, Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede; Co-Founder & Executive Vice-Chair, Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation, Ofovwe Aig-Imoukhuede; Director-General, National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM), Gbile Holloway and Lana David, at a dinner hosted by Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede as Coronation and Access Holdings welcomed members of Tate's International Council and supporters of Tate's global Acquisitions Committees in Ikoyi, Lagos.

Reinsurer retains 14.8% stake ahead of Botswana listing

By **Bankole Orimisan**

CONTINENTAL Reinsurance Holdings Limited has strengthened its proposed listing on the Botswana Stock Exchange (BSE), with its promoter-controlled shareholder, ACA Cornerstone Limited, committing to retain its entire shareholding for at least five years after the listing.

The commitment, disclosed in a supplementary prospectus approved by the BSE, changes the original offer structure under which ACA Cornerstone had contemplated selling its stake.

The shareholder will now retain all 253,951,336 existing shares, representing 14.8 per cent of the current shareholding and approximately 11.9 per cent of the enlarged share capital after the contemplated new shares are issued.

The retention undertaking is subject to specified conditions and is intended to demonstrate the promoter's continued commitment to the reinsurer beyond the public offer.

The Group Managing Director, Mutsunge Lawrence Nazare, said the revised offer structure reflected investor feedback and reinforced the company's long-term commitment to the business.

The development comes as the group reported improved financial performance in the six months ended June 30, 2026, with profit before tax rising by 352 per cent to P79.2 million, compared with P17.5 million in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Profit after tax also rose by 902 per cent to P64.4 million from P6.4 million, while insurance revenue grew by 2.4 per cent to P1.213 billion. The underwriting margin improved to 6.8 per cent from 4.2 per cent.

Cost management lifts NAHCO's revenue to N55.64 billion

By **Helen Oji**

THE Nigerian Aviation Handling Company (NAHCO) Plc's interim report and accounts for the nine months ended September 30, 2026, released on the Nigerian Exchange (NGX), showed that the company's total revenue rose by 16.5 per cent to N55.64 billion, against N47.78 billion recorded in the corresponding period of 2025.

The firm's higher operating margin expanded its operating profit by 19.5 per cent. A 19.7 per cent decline in finance costs moderated a 39.1 per cent drop in finance income, leaving pre-tax profit higher by 18.39 per cent. After taxes, net profit rose by 19.2 per cent. Earnings per share consequently increased by 19.2 per cent.

The company's gross profit increased by 8.5 per cent, from N25.9 billion to N28.2 billion, while operating profit improved from N18.14 billion to N21.66 billion. Its finance costs declined from N1.57 billion to N1.26 billion. However, finance income also dropped substantially, from N1.37 billion to N834 million.

With more efficient cost management, profit before tax rose to N21.2 billion in the third quarter of 2026, up from N17.94 billion in the comparable period of 2025. After taxes, net profit increased from N13.46 billion to N16.04 billion. As a result, earnings per share stood at N7.20 in the third quarter of 2026, up from N6.04 in the third quarter of 2025.

The strong third-quarter performance puts NAHCO on a firm trajectory to sustain its much-applauded consecutive dividend increases over the past five years. Despite the increase in outstanding shares following a bonus issue for the 2025 business year, the third-quarter 2026 dividend cover stands at 1.15 times, up from 0.97 times in the same period of 2025, providing enough headroom for the company to consider higher dividend payouts.

At its annual general meeting in May 2026, NAHCO shareholders approved a combination of cash dividends and bonus shares. The company increased its cash dividend to N12.18 billion for the 2025 business year, up from N11.58 billion for the 2024 business year. Shareholders received a dividend of N6.25 per share for the 2025 business year, compared with N5.94 paid for the previous year.

Shareholders also received one ordinary share of 50 kobo each as a bonus for every seven ordinary shares held, automatically increasing each shareholder's shareholding by 14.3 per cent. The company's outstanding paid-up shares thus increased from 1.949 billion ordinary shares of 50 kobo each to 2.228 billion ordinary shares of 50 kobo each.

The group's balance sheet also strengthened, underscoring the strong operational foundation driving its activities. Its total assets rose from N55.12 billion in December 2025 to N58.85 billion in September 2026. Following the bonus issue, paid-up share capital increased from N974.53 million to N1.114 billion.

CBN fixes N15b capital requirement for dollar stablecoin issuers

By **Isaac Chibuife**

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has set a minimum paid-up capital of N15 billion for companies issuing foreign currency-backed stablecoins, including those pegged to the US dollar.

The requirement is contained in the Regulations for the Operations of Non-Security Virtual Assets in Nigeria, released in a circular over the weekend.

Under Section 15.2 of the regulations, issuers of foreign currency-referenced stablecoins (Class 2) must always maintain at least N15 billion in paid-up capital. Issuers of naira-backed stablecoins (Class 1) are required to hold N10 billion, while other virtual asset service providers must maintain N1 billion, separate from any capital requirements imposed by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) or other regulators.

The CBN said it could impose higher capital requirements based on transaction volumes, market significance, redemption obligations, technology risks and an operator's exposure to the financial system.

The capital must be kept separate from reserve assets, customer funds and operational liquidity. It must also be held in cash in a designated CBN account or in approved Federal Government securities under the regulator's lien.

Operators whose capital falls below the prescribed minimum are required to notify the CBN immediately and submit a capital restoration plan within 10 business days. The regulator may restrict new token issuance and customer onboarding until the shortfall is addressed.

The regulations also require stablecoin issuers to maintain reserves equivalent to at least 100 per cent of tokens in circulation, alongside an additional two per cent buffer. Issuers are prohibited from creating new tokens without first receiving corresponding reserve assets.

Holders must be able to redeem their stablecoins at face value, with issuers required to complete valid redemption requests no later than the end of the next business day.

The CBN also prohibited algorithmic stablecoins and fiat-linked tokens backed mainly by other cryptocurrencies.

Under the rules, a stablecoin will be classified as systemically important if its circulating value exceeds N500 billion for 30 consecutive days or its user base in Nigeria surpasses five million people.

The regulations require foreign currency-backed stablecoins to be issued through entities incorporated in Nigeria and licensed by the CBN. Licences obtained from foreign regulators will not be recognised as substitutes for local authorisation.

Existing operators have 180 days from the commencement of the regulations to apply for the required licences.

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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
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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.**

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Time: 10AM



APPLICATION CLOSES: FRIDAY, 22ND JANUARY 2027

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Bawa Bwari House, Plot 2047, Micheal Okpara Way, Wuse Zone 5, PMB 7012, Garki, Abuja.

COMMUNIQUE OF THE 57TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE / ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF TOWN PLANNERS HELD AT BALMORAL CONVENTION CENTRE, SHERATON HOTEL, IKEJA, LAGOS STATE FROM MONDAY, 26TH TO FRIDAY, 30TH OCTOBER, 2026.

1. PREAMBLE

The Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (NITP) held its 57th International Conference and Annual General Meeting at Balmoral Convention Centre, Sheraton Hotel, in Ikeja, Lagos State, from Monday, 26th October to Friday, 30th October 2026. The theme of the Conference was "Shaping the Future of Regional Development through Physical Planning."

The Conference was declared open by the Executive Governor of Lagos State, Mr Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu, represented by the Honourable Commissioner for Physical Planning and Urban Development, Dr Oluyinka Abiodun Olumide. The keynote address was delivered by the Honourable Minister of the Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Engr. Dr. Muttaqha Rabe Darma, represented by TPL. Wemimo Adejobi, FNITP. During the Conference, goodwill messages were presented by the National President, Nigerian Institute of Town Planners; the President, Town Planners Registration Council of Nigeria; the President, Association of Town Planning Consultants of Nigeria; the National Chairperson, Association of Women Town Planners in Nigeria; the President, Ghana Institute of Planning; the President, Uganda Society of Planning; the President, International Society of City & Regional Planners; the President, International Urban Professional Forum; the President, Order of Urban Planners of Cameroon; government officials and traditional rulers. Awards were also given to deserving personalities, including the Emir of Zazzau, HRH. Ambassador Ahmed Nuhu Bamalli, CFR, who was represented by the Tambarin Zazzau, Alhaji Sulaiman Saidu Bamalli.

The Conference recorded 2,846 participants and 17 insightful papers presented in three parallel sessions. Two lead papers were presented. The first lead paper from Prof. Adamu Ahmed, FNITP (Vice-Chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria), titled *"Physical Planning as the Driver of Regional Development"* highlighted the need for functional planning regions and identified the gaps between plans and their implementation as a major challenge in Nigeria. It called on physical planners to be strategic, to coordinate with other professionals, and to influence decision-making. The paper argued that planning success should be measured by its causal impact on territorial development. The second lead paper, presented by Mr. Rabah Ait Ali, was titled "*Regional Development Plans in Nigeria"*. Using the South-west region of Nigeria as a case study, he emphasized that the region should move from fragmented State-by-State physical planning to an integrated regional development framework that coordinates land use, infrastructure, economy, environment, investment, and governance across the six states.

2. OBSERVATIONS

The Conference made the following observations:

a). **Weak Institutionalization:** The Conference observed that regional development planning at both national and state levels in Nigeria has not received the institutional attention it deserves. Although regional development structures and policies exist, their effectiveness has been undermined by political considerations and weak institutional commitment.

b). **Absence / Poor Implementation of Regional Development Plans:** States and regions either do not have functional regional development plans or have plans that are not effectively implemented. The gap between policy formulation and implementation remains a major challenge to regional development in Nigeria.

c). **Need for Greater Integration among the Geopolitical Zones:** There is a need for stronger collaboration, synergy, and integration among Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. Regional challenges transcend individual state boundaries and therefore require coordinated planning and development strategies.

d). **Weak Coordination among Regional Governments:** State governors and other regional stakeholders have not sufficiently institutionalized strategic inter-state meetings and mechanisms for coordinating development across regions. Such coordination is essential for addressing shared infrastructure, housing, environmental and socio-economic challenges.

e). **Implementation Gaps in Existing Policies and Institutions:** Existing policies and institutions should establish and promote regional development, including targeted measures for specific regions, yet have not achieved their intended objectives due to inadequate implementation. The Conference noted the need to move beyond policy formulation to concrete, measurable action.

f). **Limited Involvement of Planners in Decision-Making at the Federal and State Levels:** The Conference observed that Urban and Regional Planners are insufficiently involved in strategic decision-making and development processes at the federal and state levels. Planners are often brought in primarily to address or mitigate problems after development challenges have become pronounced, rather than being involved proactively at the planning and policy-formulation stages.

g). **Urgent Need to Address the Housing Deficit through Effective Policy:** The persistent housing deficit was identified as a major regional development challenge. It was observed that existing housing policies require review, strengthening, and attention to social settlement planning to produce meaningful results.

h.) **Implementation Gap:** The Conference observed a gap in the implementation of the Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Law in addressing planning issues in some states of the federation.

3. RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were reached:

a). **Government should make physical planning an integral part of national and regional development decision-making:** The Conference noted that physical planning should be integrated into economic development, infrastructure, environmental management, and broader development policy to ensure territorial equity and enhance spatially coordinated development.

b). **Need to move from plan preparation to effective plan implementation:** Government at all levels should establish clear institutional responsibilities, financing mechanisms, legal authority, monitoring systems and accountability frameworks that translate spatial plans into actual programmes, projects and measurable development outcomes.

c). **Regional planning must transcend administrative boundaries and respond to functional realities:** Regional development strategies should be based not only on existing administrative structures but also on functional economic, social, environmental and spatial relationships.

d). **Strong institutional coordination and governance mechanisms:** There is a need for clearly defined relationships among the federal government, regional development commissions, states, local governments and planning institutions, particularly where development challenges and infrastructure systems cut across political boundaries.

e). **Spatial planning should be linked directly to development finance, infrastructure, and investment decisions:** Government should strengthen the linkages among spatial plans, public budgets, infrastructure programming, private investment, and the financing of spatial plans.

f). **The planning profession must reposition itself as a strategic driver of territorial transformation:** The Conference called on planners and planning institutions to move beyond the traditional image of planners as development-control officers and plan preparers. Planners should increasingly function as territorial strategists, development coordinators, geospatial analysts, infrastructure planners, policy advisers, and environmental managers. NITP, TOPREC and planning education institutions should, therefore, strengthen professional competencies in regional economics, GIS/spatial data, climate resilience, development finance, and scenario planning and implementation.

g). **Need for Longer-Term Regional Planning Horizons:** The Federal Government was charged with considering extending the current four-year regional planning framework to a minimum of ten years to promote continuity, consistency, and sustainable development.

h.) **Need to Shift from Reactive to Proactive Planning:** The Conference resolved that development planning in Nigeria must move from a reactive approach—where planners are called upon only after problems have emerged—to a proactive approach in which planners are centrally involved in anticipating, coordinating, and managing development processes.

i). **Need for Domestication and Enforcement of Planning Laws:** The call for states to domesticate the Urban and Regional Planning Law cannot be overemphasized. Its non-implementation undermines the objectives of physical and regional planning.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, NITP and the conference appeal to the government and various stakeholders to take necessary actions, as articulated in the observations and recommendations, to ensure that equitable regional development is achieved and sustained in line with the global goal. The Conference ended with an Annual General Meeting, where the following new National Executive Committee members were elected to run the Institute's affairs for 2026/2027.

1	National President	TPL. Prof. Kingsley C. Ogboi, FNITP
2	1st National Vice President	TPL. Dr. Garba Jibrin, FNITP
3	2nd National Vice President	TPL. Prince Effiong Akpan, FNITP
4	National Secretary	TPL. Dr. Edmund Chinem Nwokaeze, FNITP
5	1st Assistant National Secretary	TPL. Prof. Oluwole Philip Daramola, FNITP
6	2nd Assistant National Secretary	TPL. Abdulfatai Olanrewaju Anofi, MNITP
7	National Treasurer	TPL. Adekemi Oluwayemisi Ologun, FNITP
8	National Financial Secretary	TPL. Sani Adamu, FNITP
9	National Auditor	TPL. Dr. Sabina Chiaka Nnenne Osuji, FNITP
10	National Public Relations Secretary	TPL. Akpabio Ufot-Akpabio, MNITP
11	Assistant National Public Relations Secretary	TPL. Michael Adewale Adebayo, MNITP
12	Ex officio I	TPL. Dr. Andrew Ogbonna Chime, FNITP, PP NITP
13	Ex officio II	TPL. Dr. Muhammed Zayyanu, FNITP
14	Ex officio III	TPL. Olanike Elizabeth Abiola, FNITP
15	Ex officio IV	TPL. Soledotun Titilope Abdulkarim-Yusuf, MNITP
16	Chairman, Practice Committee	TPL. Emmanuel Ikechukwu, FNITP
17	Chairman, Publications Committee	TPL. Rekiyat Ahuoiza Fache, FNITP
18	Chairman, Membership Committee	TPL. Akeem Oladimeji Adebayo, FNITP

Signed

TPL. Akpabio Ufot-Akpabio, MNITP
National Public Relations Secretary

NAICOM tasks insurers on governance, warns against capital erosion

By **Bankole Orimisan**

THE National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) has challenged the boards of insurance companies to translate the gains of the recapitalisation exercise into stronger corporate governance, prudent capital management and improved protection for policyholders, warning that meeting new capital requirements alone will not guarantee institutional resilience.

The Commissioner for Insurance, Olusegun Omosehin, gave the charge at the 2026 Insurance Directors' Conference in Lagos, where he urged directors to take greater responsibility for strategic oversight, risk management and accountability as the industry transitions to the Risk-Based Capital (RBC) regime.

Omosehin, who commended shareholders, boards and management of insurance companies for their commitment and sacrifices during the recapitalisation exercise, said its successful conclusion marked the beginning of a more demanding phase for the industry.

He identified poor governance, inappropriate investment decisions, ineffective risk management, excessive operating costs and uncontrolled business expansion as factors that could undermine the financial strength of insurance institutions.

Omosehin said directors must move beyond receiving management reports to actively interrogating business decisions, challenging assumptions and demanding adequate information before approving strategies that could expose their institutions to financial and operational risks.

Explaining the significance of the transition to Risk-Based Capital, the NAICOM chief said the new supervisory framework would require insurance companies to demonstrate that their capital positions were adequate for the risks they assumed, rather than merely meeting prescribed minimum capital thresholds.

He explained that while the Minimum Capital Requirement establishes the baseline capital an insurer must maintain to operate, Risk-Based Capital assesses the nature, scale and complexity of an institution's risk exposures and the capital required to support them.

He said NAICOM would increasingly direct its supervisory attention to the quality of capital, the effectiveness of risk management frameworks, corporate governance structures, institutional resilience and insurers' ability to meet their obligations to policyholders.

The commission, he added, would also place greater emphasis on the quality and reliability of regulatory returns, financial reporting, actuarial assessments and disclosures, urging insurance companies to ensure that information submitted to the regulator was accurate, complete and timely.



Partner, AELEX, Prof Fubara Anga (left); Wife of the keynote speaker, Mrs Oramah; Keynote speaker, Prof Benedict Okey Oramah; Lecture chair and Chairman Ecobank Nigeria Limited, Mrs Bola Adesola; Event moderator, Femi Ojumu and AELEX partner, Theophilus Emuwa, during the firm's 20th yearly lecture at Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Victoria Island, Lagos.

Wema awards N300 million to winners of Hackaholics 7.0

By **Abigail Ikhaghu**

WEMA Bank has awarded up to N300 million in prizes, funding and ecosystem support to young innovators and technology startups at the seventh edition of its Hackaholics initiative, following the participation of 5,329 youths who submitted 1,632 ideas aimed at addressing various challenges.

The programme, which ended with a grand finale in Lagos under the theme, 'Festival of the Future', shortlisted 21 startups for the final stage, with 11 teams emerging as winners across the competition's categories. Niteon Team emerged as the overall winner, securing a record N60 million grand prize.

Speaking at the grand finale, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Wema Bank, Moruf Oseni, said the programme was established to bridge the gap between the creative abilities of young Nigerians and the resources required to turn their ideas into viable businesses.

Oseni said the bank had spent the past four months engaging innovators across the country's six geopolitical zones, including Kano, Uyo, Benin, Enugu, Ibadan and Lagos.

He noted that the strong participation reflected the willingness of young Nigerians to develop solutions to problems despite challenges such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure and limited access to resources.

Oseni explained that the initiative was built on the understanding that talented young people needed more than encouragement to succeed, stressing the importance of access to funding, mentorship, technical support and opportunities to develop their innovations.

Appraising Makinde's alternative to Nigeria's public financing crisis

AFor a country that has struggled to reconcile rapidly rising expenditure with slow-growing revenue, Seyi Makinde's 2027 blueprint under The Reset Agenda appears to offer an alternative to present economic discourse, ***ISAAC CHIBUIFE*** *reports.*

NIGERIA'S fiscal crisis has reached a point where the sustainability of governance itself is becoming a serious economic concern. With debt servicing consuming an overwhelming proportion of public revenue, governance is almost sustained by debt. The previous administration went as far as turning the Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) temporary relief into a major source of budget financing.

It is against this background that the presidential candidate of the Allied Peoples' Movement (APM), Seyi Makinde, presented what he described as an alternative economic direction for Nigeria ahead of the 2027 general election.

In his 74-page policy document, The Reset Agenda, Makinde promised to reduce the debt-service-to-revenue ratio, which stood at about 67 per cent as of September last year, to no more than 50 per cent within three years, bring the fiscal deficit within the statutory limit of three per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), end excessive reliance on government-owned refineries and overhaul their management.

Like other politicians who have led the country in recent years, Makinde has set tough targets. For over 10 years, fiscal deficit targets have remained above the three per cent threshold set by the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA), while actual deficits have, in most cases, surpassed five per cent. Public refineries had remained largely non-functional for decades despite gulping billions of dollars in turnaround maintenance (TAM), until last year's revival, which was short-lived.

Makinde proposed ending government funding of facilities that cannot operate reliably. If elected, he said his administration, within six months of taking office, will undertake independent technical, financial and asset assessments of each state-owned refinery, according to the document.

Also, within 12 months, each facility would be assigned one of three options: a competitively selected private operating partner, conversion to another petroleum or logistics use through commercial financing, or orderly decommissioning. Viable transactions, it noted, would be concluded within 18 months, with performance milestones enforced by the end of the third year.

The document proposes a reconfiguration of public borrowing, monetary policy, petroleum revenue management, electricity market regulation, business taxation, infrastructure financing and agricultural production. The proposals are significant because they attempt to address some of the structural weaknesses that have made Nigeria's economic management inefficient, expensive and less productive.

But questions remain about whether the proposed alternative can deliver the promised fiscal discipline without confronting the political interests that have sustained the prevailing rot in the public sector.

The proposed reduction of the debt-service-to-revenue ratio to 50 per cent within three years is perhaps the most consequential promise in the agenda. A high debt-service-to-revenue ratio speaks to a fundamental weakness inherent in the country's public finances – its inability to generate sufficient revenue to support expenditure.

Hence, the problem is not just the debt stock but also the relationship between the debt burden and earned income. In effect, Makinde would need to increase revenue significantly, reduce the debt burden or achieve both. Neither option, however, is an easy undertaking.

With continued resistance to tax increases, the government needs more than mere political will to expand revenue. Rising social and economic demands could also complicate efforts to reduce debt-service costs. Still, lower debt-service costs would free up more resources for allocation to critical infrastructure that could serve as catalysts for economic growth.

When debt servicing consumes about two-thirds of revenue, the government has limited room to finance development without additional borrowing. Many economists say the challenge has created a vicious cycle in which borrowing becomes necessary to finance obligations created by previous borrowing. More painfully, current debt tends to increase the future tax burden on citizens.

The document also proposes introducing a Domestic Energy Value Credit (DEVC) to give Nigerians a share of the value generated from crude oil refined and consumed locally.

Under the arrangement, a specified percentage of the budget benchmark crude price would be used to reduce the effective cost of eligible fuel. Where the realised crude price exceeds the benchmark, an agreed share of the additional revenue would increase the credit.

The proposed scheme would operate within defined fiscal limits and would not involve fixing pump prices or introducing an open-ended fuel subsidy. Only independently verified volumes supplied for domestic consumption would qualify, with a digital system deployed to track eligible supplies.

According to him, crude supplied to domestic refineries would also be priced using a published netback formula.

On electricity, the agenda proposes retaining federal control of interstate transmission, wholesale electricity trading and system operations, while allowing qualifying states to regulate distribution and local supply.

Tariff adjustments would be tied to verified electricity supply and metering, with distribution companies required to publish supply hours and outage records by location.

It also promises a protected tariff for the first 50 kilowatt-hours consumed monthly by verified low-income households. Electricity suppliers would be paid only for power actually delivered.

To reduce the cost of doing business, Makinde proposes a 'Tell Government Once' system under which businesses would submit verified core information to one federal institution without repeatedly providing the same details to other agencies.

The system would cover 20 high-volume business processes across at least 10 federal institutions in its first year.

The agenda also proposes establishing a public register of all federal taxes, levies, licences, permits, inspections and fees, while prohibiting government agencies from collecting charges that are not legally authorised and published.

Major tax, trade and regulatory changes affecting investments would require published evidence, stakeholder consultation and clear implementation timelines, except in emergencies.

The government would also identify up to five priority value chains, including agro-processing, textiles, pharmaceuticals and construction materials linked to locally sourced minerals.

Existing federal enterprise funds with overlapping mandates would be consolidated into fewer financing windows.

On infrastructure, the agenda promises to identify priority federal freight corridors within six months, based on published technical and economic assessments. It also proposes a Federal-State Road Compact to establish funding responsibilities, reimbursement arrangements and maintenance obligations before construction begins.

For agriculture, rice, maize, cassava, beans and tomatoes have been identified as the first national food value chains, subject to confirmation through current data.

The document says the proposed reforms would be funded mainly by redirecting existing government spending away from duplication, persistent losses and abandoned projects.

Any cost arising from the DEVC would be capped in the annual budget and funded only from petroleum revenue above the budget reference price. The scheme would not rely on Ways and Means financing or additional borrowing.

The agenda promises quarterly progress reports, where data are available, against published baselines. It also says performance would be assessed by actual outcomes rather than funds released, people trained or contracts awarded.

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

EIB Assisted Nigeria Climate Adaptation-Erosion & Watershed Project (NEWMAP-EIB)

CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNDER THE NIGERIA CLIMATE ADAPTATION –EROSION AND WATERSHED PROJECT (NEWMAP-EIB)OGUN STATE PROJECT MANAGEMENT / IMPLEMENTATION UNIT
Reference No.: OGNEWMAP-EIB/CS/RP/2026/002 Date: 9th November, 2026
Project:Consultancy Services for Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) in Ogun State (in 2 Lots) Client/Procuring Entity:Ogun State NEWMAP-EIB

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), through the Federal Ministry of Environment (FMEnv.) has received a credit from the European Investment Bank (EIB) towards the cost of Nigeria Climate Adaptation Erosion and Watershed Project – EIB (NEWMAP-EIB). Ogun State is a beneficiary of the Credit and now intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the contract for Consultancy Services for Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) of Gully Erosion Sites in Ogun State (in 2 Lots).
Accordingly, the Ogun State SPIU invites qualified, experienced and reputable consulting firms, consulting organizations, consortia and/or joint ventures to express their Interest in providing the consultancy services described under the Lots below;

LOT No.	DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES
1.	Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)
2.	Resettlement Action Plan (RAP)

2. Interested consulting firms must demonstrate relevant institutional experience, technical capacity and availability of qualified multidisciplinary personnel. The following criteria shall apply, as relevant to the firm expresses interest.

- **At least five (5) years' relevant general experience in environmental, water resources, catchment, watershed, erosion-control, climate-resilience or related consulting services.**
- **Specific and successful experience in catchment/watershed management planning and integrated water resources management.**
- **Successful experience in erosion and flood-risk assessment and hydrological assessment/modelling.**
- **Successful experience in GIS/remote sensing and spatial watershed analysis.**
- **Successful experience in environmental and social assessment, participatory community planning and climate-risk assessment.**
- **Experience in investment planning and development partner-financed projects.**
- **Experience in the World Bank, EIB, IsDB, AfDB or comparable development-partner projects shall be advantageous.**

3.SHORTLISTING / MINIMUM QUALIFICATION CRITERIA
Interested consultants/firms are to submit an Expression of Interest containing below Mandatory requirement:
Evidence of Company's registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) or equivalent in the country of incorporation
Evidence of the company's current Tax Clearance Certificate for the last three (3) years (2023,2024 and 2025)
Company's audited account for the last three years (2023, 2024 and 2025) duly stamped
Evidence of Registration with State Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) 2026 or equivalent at national level or in the country of incorporation
Well detailed company profile with managerial and technical structure, office address and functional contact details including staff list with functions and years of experience and years with firm
For joint ventures, a draft memorandum of understanding must be attached
Evidence of experience as required for the qualification criteria for the assignment under consideration inclusive of Client contact details
The attention of interested consultants(s) is drawn to section I sub-section 1.5 of Guide to procurement for projects financed by EIB September 2024, setting forth the bank's policy on conflict of interest
Following the shortlisting of qualified consultants based on the information submitted in response to this REOI, the shortlisted consultants will be invited to submit a technical and financial proposal in the next stage and subsequently evaluated and the successful consultant selected in accordance with the Consultant Qualification Selection (CQS) method set out in the applicable procurement regulations
Request for proposal will be issued to the shortlisted applicant.
Interested eligible consulting firms may obtain further information from the State Project Coordinator (SPC) Ogun State NEWMAP-EIB, State Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) during office working days/hours from 0900 to 1600 at the address stated below
Office Address:
Address for submission and Opening of Tenders.
Ogun EIB Assisted Nigeria Climate Adaptation-Erosion & Watershed Project (OGNEWMAP-EIB)
Contact Address: 2nd Floor, Moyo House, MTD, Ibara, Abeokuta.
Contact Email Address: ogunnewmapeibproc@gmail.com
cc: ogunnewmapeib@gmail.com
Phone Number: 09137144620
Invitation to Tender (ITT) No.: OGNEWMAP-EIB/CS/RP/2026/002

4. SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
Expressions of Interest should be clearly marked with the title and submitted to:
The State Project Coordinator,
Ogun State NEWMAP-EIB
NEWMAP-EIB Office, 2nd Floor, Moyo House, MTD-Ibara, Abeokuta, Ogun State
Email: ogunnewmapeibproc@gmail.com, cc: ogunnewmapeib@gmail.com
Closing Date:30th November, 2026
Closing Time: 11.00am
Only shortlisted consultants/firms will be invited.
Signed
Project Procurement Officer

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA
CROSS RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MURTALA MOHAMMED HIGHWAY, PMB 1249, CALABAR, CROSS

INVITATION FOR TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL BIDS FROM INTERESTED BIDDERS FOR PROJECTS UNDER 2026 APPROPRIATION OF THE CROSS RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

OPEN TENDER

1.0 INTRODUCTION
1.1 The Cross River Basin Development Authority (CRBDA) is a Parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation charged with Comprehensive Development of Surface and Ground Water Resources, Flood and Erosion Control, Agricultural Land Development/Dam and Irrigation works etc in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. The Authority intends to carry out Procurement for the below listed projects under its 2026 Appropriation.
1.2 Cross River Basin Development Authority hereby invites Bids and Proposals from interested, eligible and reputable, Contractors/suppliers for the execution of the listed Projects in the 2026 Appropriation under the following categories:

2.0 CATEGORY
WATER – LOT A
A1. Provision of Solar Powered Boreholes in Drought affected Communities of Ogoja/Yala Federal Constituency, CRS.

EROSION CONTROL – LOT B
B1. Erosion Control at Ekeya, Okobo LGA, Akwa Ibom State

GENERAL WORKS – LOT C
C1. Renovation of selected Primary Health Center in Cross River Central Senatorial District, Cross River State.
C2. Construction of Youth Development and Recreation Center Bassan Osokom – Boki, Ikom/Boki Federal Constituency, Cross River State.
C3. Construction of Town Hall Akparabong, Ikom LGA, Ikom/Boki Federal Constituency, Cross River State.

GENERAL GOODS – LOT D
D1. Supply of Grains to Constituencies in Ikot Ekpene/Essien Udim/Obot Akara Federal Constituency of Akwa Ibom State.

CONSULTANCY SERVICES – LOT E
E1. Training and Empowerment of women in various micro businesses in Ogoja/Yala Federal Constituency, Cross River State.

3.0 COLLECTION OF TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS
3.1 Technical and Financial Bid Documents for the above Lots will be available for collection at the office of the Head of Procurement Cross River Basin Development Authority P.M.B. 1249, Basin Town, Calabar from 9th November, 2026 to 7th December, 2026 from 9am to 4pm daily, upon presentation of evidence of payment of non-refundable tender fee of 10,000.00 (Ten Thousand Naira) only per Lot, into the Authority's Account below;
Account Name: CRRBDA
Account Number: 0050503961013
Bank: Any Commercial Bank VIA REMITA

CRRBDA GIFMIS CODE FOR RRR: 1000174618 (Tender Fee)

4.0 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
Bidders are to provide the following as minimum prequalification requirements for the project of their choice;
I. Evidence of Certificate of Incorporation with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), including form CAC2 and form CAC7
II. Evidence of Company Income Tax clearance certificate for the last three (3) years (2023, 2024 & 2025) valid till 31st December, 2026 with minimum average turnover for each project.
III. Evidence of current pension compliance Certificate valid till 31st December, 2026.
IV. Evidence of current Industrial Training Fund (ITF) Compliance Certificate valid till 31st December, 2026.
V. Evidence of current Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) Compliance certificate valid till 31st December, 2026.
VI. Evidence of registration on the National Database of Federal Contractors, Consultants and Service Providers by submission of Interim Registration Report (IRR) expiring on 31st December, 2026 or valid certificate issued by the BPP.
VII. Sworn affidavit disclosing whether or not any officer of the relevant committee of the Cross River Basin Development Authority or the Bureau of Public Procurement is a former or present Director, Shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the bidder and to Confirm that all information presented in his bid is true and correct in all particulars.
VIII. Company's audited accounts for the last three(3) years dully stamped i.e 2023, 2024 & 2025
IX. Evidence of financial capability to execute the project by submission of reference letter from a reputable commercial bank indicating willingness to provide credit facility for the execution of the project when needed.
X. Company profile with the curriculum vitae of the key staff to be deployed for the project, including copies of their academic/professional qualifications (in case of construction: COREN, QSRBN, ARCON, CORBON etc.)
XI. Verifiable documentary evidence of at least three (3) similar jobs executed in the last five(5) years including letters of award, valuation certificates, job completion certificates.
XII. List of plants/equipment's with proof of ownership/lease (where applicable)
XIII. For joint venture/partnership, memorandum of understanding (MOU) should be provided (CAC, TAX Clearance certificate, Pension compliance certificate, ITF Compliance Certificate, NSITF Compliance Certificate, IRR & Sworn Affidavit are compulsory for each JV Partner
XIV. All documents for submission must be transmitted with a covering/forwarding letter under the company/firm's letter headed paper bearing amongst others, the registration number (RC) as issued by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), contact address, Telephone Number (preferably GSM No.) and e-mail address.
XV. The letter headed paper must bear the names and nationalities of the directors of the Company at the bottom of the page duly signed by the authorized officer of the firm.

5.0 CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS AND PROPOSALS
Two copies each of completed Technical/Proposal and Financial bid documents (One Electronic copy in Microsoft Excel format) shall be submitted in separately sealed envelopes and labeled "TECHNICAL" & "FINANCIAL" also stating clearly "LOT NUMBER & PROJECT TITLE". Thereafter put both envelopes into a bigger envelope seal properly and address to;
THE MANAGING DIRECTOR
CROSS RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MURTALA MOHAMMED HIGHWAY
P.M. B. 1249, BASIN TOWN, CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE

5.1 The closing date for the submission of bids in respect of all projects is on or before 12 noon on 7th December, 2026
5.2 OPENING OF TECHNICAL BIDS
Only Technical Bids will be opened immediately after the deadline at 12 noon on 7th December, 2026 at the Authority's Conference Centre, Basin Town, M/M Highway, Calabar.

6.0 ENQUIRIES
6.1 All enquiries should be directed to:
THE MANAGING DIRECTOR
CROSS RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MURTALA MOHAMMED HIGHWAY
P.M. B. 1249, BASIN TOWN, CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE

7.0 DISCLAIMERS AND CONCLUSION
7.1 This announcement is published for information purposes only and does not constitute an offer by the Authority to transact with any party for the project, nor does it constitute a commitment or obligation on the part of the Authority to procure concession services.
7.2 The Authority will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by any interested party(ies) in connection with any response to this Invitation and/ or preparation or submission in response to an inquiry.
7.3 The Authority pledges fair and equal treatment of all participants but is not bound to shortlist any bidder and reserves the right to annul the selection process at any time without incurring any liabilities.
7.4 This advertisement should be regarded as a PUBLIC Invitation to all interested bidders, Non-Governmental Organisations working with Transparency and Accountability and relevant Regulatory and Professional bodies to attend the Bid Opening sessions.

SIGNED:
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Shell Power Conference 2026: Industry Leaders Call for Sustainable Investment, Stronger Partnerships to Transform Nigeria's Power Sector

INDUSTRY leaders and stakeholders across Nigeria's power sector have called for increased investment, stronger collaboration and improved financial sustainability to address the challenges confronting the country's electricity industry.

The call was made at the third edition of the Shell Power Conference 2026, hosted by Ardova Plc alongside its valued partner, Shell Lubricants, under the theme, "Powering Nigeria's Progress: Turning Ambition and Action into Sustainable Impact."The conference brought together policymakers, regulators, power sector operators, investors and other industry stakeholders to examine the challenges and opportunities shaping Nigeria's power sector and explore practical pathways towards a more reliable and sustainable electricity market.

In his welcome address, the Chairman of Ardova Plc, Dr. Abdulwasiu Sowami, highlighted the opportunities created by the Electricity Act 2023, particularly in advancing decentralisation, encouraging private sector participation and supporting the development of competitive electricity markets.

He noted that 15 states had transitioned to regulating their electricity markets as of May 2026, describing the development as an important milestone in the evolution of Nigeria's power sector.

Delivering the keynote address on behalf of the Vice Chairman and Commissioner of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Dr. Yusuf Ali, the Director of Economic Regulation, Mr. Abba Terab, highlighted the financial sustainability challenges confronting the industry.

He identified energy theft, poor revenue collection, market liquidity constraints and infrastructure deficits across the gas, generation, transmission and distribution value chains as some of the key issues affecting the sector.

Terab stressed that sustainable investment remained essential to the growth of the industry, noting that investors required clear regulatory frameworks and appropriate incentives to recover their investments. He explained that the objective was to strike a balance between investment recovery, improved service delivery and consumer protection.

"A sustainable power sector cannot be built without investment. Investment is key for the power sector to grow. One of the enduring challenges confronting the Nigerian electricity supply industry is the issue of financial sustainability," he said.



Speaking at the conference, the Managing Director of Ardova Plc, Dr. Abiola Babatunde-Ojo, highlighted the strategic partnership between Ardova and Shell, which reaffirms the company as the sole authorised distributor of Shell lubricants in Nigeria.

She noted that the partnership, established in 2021, brings together Shell's global lubricants expertise, technological innovation and product quality with Ardova's strong local market presence, distribution capabilities and understanding of Nigeria's energy landscape.

Through this partnership, Ardova makes Shell's range of automotive and industrial lubricants accessible to customers across Nigeria, including operators in the power generation sector. The company also works with customers to support their operational requirements through product solutions and technical engagement.

"Through our partnership with Shell, we are committed to supporting businesses and industries with quality lubrication solutions that contribute to equipment protection, operational reliability and efficiency. The power sector is particularly important because of its role in driving economic growth and productivity. We believe that bringing industry stakeholders together to exchange ideas, share experiences and explore practical solutions is an important part of supporting the sector's progress," she said.

The conference also featured an industry panel discussion, "The Power Conversation," which brought together stakeholders from different segments of the power sector to examine the challenges, opportunities and practical considerations shaping the industry's future.

Through the Shell Power Conference, Ardova Plc and Shell reaffirmed their commitment to providing a platform for industry engagement and supporting conversations that can contribute to the development of Nigeria's power sector.

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Life and Earth Sciences Institute
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

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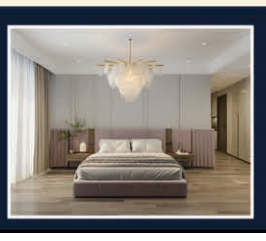
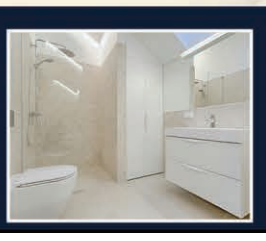
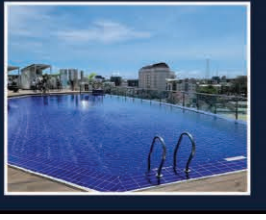
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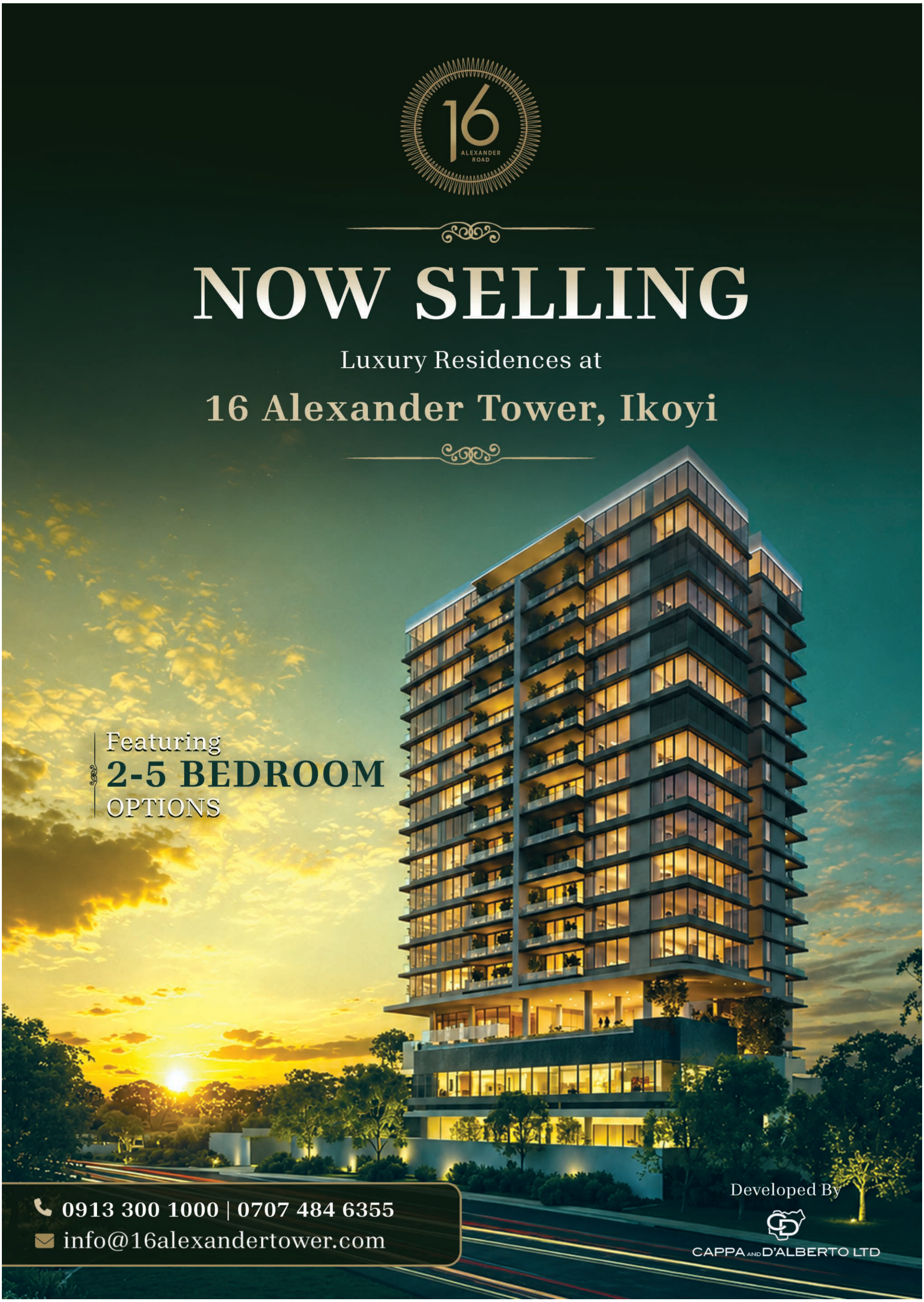
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‘Why WCS supports ecological integrity report, biodiversity conservation’

By **Gbenga Akinfenwa**

THE Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has thrown its weight behind a new report from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) calling for ecological integrity to become a central measure of success in global biodiversity conservation, climate action, and ecosystem restoration.

Released at the opening of the UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD CoP17) in Yerevan, the report provides governments, conservation organisations, and other stakeholders with practical guidance for incorporating ecological integrity into conservation policies, national biodiversity strategies, and climate commitments.

The new guidance is particularly timely as governments at CBD CoP17 undertake the first global review of progress toward the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including its goals for protecting and restoring biodiversity by 2030.

The report was developed by the IUCN Task Force on Ecological Integrity, co-chaired by WCS scientist John G. Robinson and Emily Nicholson, with support from WCS and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

Ecological integrity describes the extent to which an ecosystem retains its native species, natural structure, ecological functions, and processes. The report emphasises that protecting intact ecosystems and restoring degraded ones are essential to achieving lasting results for biodiversity, climate resilience, and human well-being.

WCS Scientist and Co-Chair of the IUCN Task Force on Ecological Integrity, John G. Robinson, said: “The world has made ambitious commitments to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, but success cannot be measured by simply counting the number of conservation areas established, the species protected, or the amount of land and water conserved. The real test is whether natural ecosystems – forests, grasslands, freshwater systems, and oceans – are maintaining or recovering the ecological integrity needed to sustain life.

“Do these places continue to support healthy wildlife populations, functioning ecosystems, and the natural processes that make life possible? By focusing on ecological integrity, we can make conservation more effective and governments can be more accountable for results.

“This report provides a scientific foundation and practical guidance for making ecological integrity central to conservation decisions. It recognises that ecosystems are dynamic, that their integrity can be measured, and that conservation must protect not only species and habitats but also the relationships and processes that sustain them.

“As governments gather at CoP17 to assess progress toward the Global Biodiversity Framework, ecological integrity offers a way to move towards measurable and verifiable goals for nature conservation. Protecting the world’s remaining high-integrity ecosystems, and restoring those that have been degraded, must become a global conservation priority.”

The Chair of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas and the Director of Protected and Conserved Areas for the Wildlife Conservation Society, Madhu Rao, said ecological integrity can tell whether protected and conserved areas are actually working, for nature and for the people who depend on them.

The Executive Vice President of Global Conservation at the Wildlife Conservation Society, Joe Walston, said: “Ecological integrity is not only the best overall measure of the health of nature, but it is the real measure of whether conservation action is working or not.

A protected area on a map means little if its wildlife is gone, its rivers are cut off, or its forests no longer function. Conversely, land and seascapes with high ecological integrity store more carbon, regulate water, sustain fisheries, and more resilient in withstanding climate change and other impacts.



Agropastoral transformation via AgriConnect unites IFAD, Cameroon

By **Gbenga Akinfenwa**

IN its bid accelerate agropastoral and agrifood sector transformation, strengthen food security, create jobs, particularly for young people and women, and mobilise public and private investment, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), launched the AgriConnect Country Compact with the Government of Cameroon, the World Bank Group and development partners.

The Compact is built around three pillars – strengthening the foundations of the agrifood sector, accelerating policy and regulatory reforms, and providing access to finance for producers and businesses – and will target rice, maize, cassava, oil palm, cocoa, soybean, dairy and aquaculture value chains.

Speaking at the ceremony on behalf of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Cameroon, the IFAD Country Director, Eric Rwabidadi, said IFAD is proud to be a founding partner of the AgriConnect initiative.

“We remain fully committed, alongside the Government of Cameroon and our partners, to leveraging our experience and investments to advance this shared vision particularly by supporting youth agropastoral entrepreneurship, developing inclusive value chains, increasing access to rural finance and stronger resilience to climate change.

Jointly developed by the Government and the World Bank Group in collaboration with the private sector and development partners, the Compact aims to accelerate Cameroon’s national pririties in alignment with the National Development Strategy 2020-2030 (NDS30), Rural Sector Development Strategy/National Agricultural Investment Plan (SDSR/PNIA) and Integrated Agropastoral and Fisheries Import-Substitution Plan (PIISAH).

Cameroon’s agrifood sector accounts for around 17 per cent of GDP and 42 per cent of employment, or some 4.7 million workers. Limited access to quality inputs, infrastructure, technologies, markets and finance continues to constrain the sector’s development. Food imports account for an average of 3.5 per cent of GDP, underscoring the potential for increased local production and processing.

Don unveils green technology solutions to combat environmental pollution

By **Divine Yusuf**

PROFESSOR Babatunde Bada of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Ogun State has advocated for green technology, waste recycling, tree planting and the restoration of contaminated lands as pathways to a sustainable environment.

The don who made the call as the 116th Inaugural Lecturer of the institution, titled: “Harnessing Green Technology for a Sustainable Future Environment,” maintained that although human activities contribute significantly to environmental degradation, scientific research, technological innovation and nature-based interventions could transform the same challenges into opportunities for environmental recovery and sustainable development.

Identifying vehicular emissions, oil spills, mining, quarrying, indiscriminate waste disposal, poultry operations and cement production as major sources of pollution, Prof. Bada warned that harmful substances, including heavy metals and greenhouse gases, continued to threaten the quality of soil, water and air.

He advocated improved sanitation, responsible waste disposal, reduced industrial emissions and extensive tree planting, identifying mango, white teak and masquerade trees as useful for carbon absorption and improved air quality.

In a compelling case for waste-to-resource innovation, the Inaugural Lecturer challenged the perception of waste as useless material, explaining that market refuse, animal dung and agricultural residues could be converted into valuable resources for agriculture, energy generation and industrial production. He noted that composted organic waste could restore degraded soils, improve fertility and supply essential nutrients for crop growth, while reducing dependence on inorganic fertilisers.

Highlighting the environmental benefits of plant-based remediation, Prof. Bada identified kenaf as a promising crop for cleaning up soils contaminated by petroleum hydrocarbons and heavy metals, including cadmium, lead, copper, chromium and zinc.

He disclosed that cattle dung, pig dung and composted market waste achieved up to 99.99 percent removal efficiency of total petroleum hydrocarbons from oil-polluted soils, demonstrating the potential of organic materials to support affordable environmental rehabilitation.

Akwa Ibom to sponsor 100 youths for agribusiness training in Nasarawa

From **Cornelius Essen,** Abuja

THE Akwa Ibom State government has offered to sponsor 100 youths for agricultural entrepreneurship training at CSS Global Integrated Farms in Nasarawa State, as part of efforts to promote youth empowerment, self-reliance and business development.

Speaking at the ninth edition of the Ibom Ignite Conference in Uyo, Governor Umo Eno urged young people in the state to embrace innovation, acquire new skills and continually reinvent themselves to remain relevant and achieve sustainable entrepreneurial success.

He argued that the theme of the conference, “Reinvent, Rethink, Reimagine, Redesign, and Become,” encouraged participants to believe in their abilities, work intelligently and pursue their ambitions with passion and determination.

“Since the inception of Ibom Ignite in 2017, the initiative had inspired new ideas, changed mindsets and strengthened the entrepreneurial spirit of young people, leading to the transformation of several businesses and lives across the state.”

Eno identified Idara Adiakpan, David Elisha, Ikemesit Bassey Awak, Uduak Rubin, Churchill Mfon Monday and Pius Titus as some of the programme’s beneficiaries who had distinguished themselves in their respective fields.

“The success stories demonstrate the potential of young people when they receive the right guidance, skills and opportunities. Our commitment to mentoring and empowering young people was driven by desire to help them achieve personal development, fulfilment and meaningful societal impact.”

Similarly, he also explained that its passion has always been to nurture youths and equip them with both entrepreneurial and leadership skills so that when opportunities present themselves to them, they will be properly equipped, distilled and ready to make tremendous impact as it is done in other climes.

He therefore cautioned the participants against relying on outdated methods, stressing that changing economic realities require entrepreneurs to continually improve their skills, strategies and services. “Those who are willing to reinvent, rethink, reimagine and redesign always triumph.”

TheGuardian Property

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COP 31: Africa pushes for climate finance that builds industries, not debt

As the COP31 begins, African countries are leveraging talks to demand predictable, accessible and affordable climate finance from developed economies, while defending their right to industrialise and benefit from their natural resources. For Nigeria, priorities include financing renewable energy, electricity transmission, solar manufacturing, climate-resilient agriculture, coastal protection and responses to flooding and desertification, ***CHINEDUM UWAEGBULAM*** *reports.*



Land degradation is a common sight across southeastern Nigeria.

AFRICAN countries are heading into the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31), opening today in Antalya, Türkiye, with a demand from developed economies to move beyond political commitments and provide predictable, accessible and affordable financing for climate adaptation, energy transition and industrial development.

For the continent, the negotiations offer an opportunity to bridge the widening gap between climate pledges and actual financial support while protecting its right to industrialise, responsibly exploit its natural resources and create jobs without deepening economic dependency.

The African position, articulated by the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) and supported by civil society organisations under the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), centres on climate justice, financing Africa's transformation and preserving its development space.

African countries argue that a continent responsible for a relatively small share of historical global greenhouse gas emissions should not bear a disproportionate share of the cost of addressing climate change. They want developed countries to meet their climate finance obligations through grants and highly concessional funding rather than loans that worsen the debt burden of vulnerable economies.

Africa needs between $1.3 trillion and $1.6 trillion cumulatively by 2030 to meet its adaptation and mitigation requirements. The funding would support renewable energy, climate-resilient infrastructure, agriculture, water security, coastal protection, early-warning systems and industrial transformation.

According to Greenpeace Africa, the continent receives less than 15 per cent of its yearly adaptation funding requirements, while nearly 70 per cent of climate finance delivered comes through debt-creating loans. This has heightened concerns that countries already struggling with debt servicing could be forced to borrow more to protect their populations against climate impacts.

The financing debate has gained urgency following the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) 2026 Adaptation Gap Report, which estimates that developing countries will require approximately $305 billion annually by 2035 to meet their adaptation needs. However, international public adaptation finance from developed to developing countries stood at between $28.2 billion and $31.7 billion in 2024, an increase of only about $1 billion over the previous year.

Even if the commitment made at COP30 to achieve at least triple adaptation finance by 2035 is realised, it would cover only 20 to 29 per cent of estimated requirements. The report also warns that private-sector adaptation financing needs could almost double the overall estimate.

For Africa, recurrent flooding, prolonged droughts, desertification, coastal erosion and extreme heat threaten agricultural productivity, water supplies, housing, transport infrastructure and public health. Adaptation is therefore not merely an environmental concern but a development priority with direct implications for food security, employment, poverty reduction and infrastructure investment.

African negotiators are pushing for a dedicated agenda item under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to address implementation of the commitment to triple adaptation finance. The AGN wants clear baselines, funding trajectories, delivery arrangements and accountability mechanisms to establish how much additional financing will be provided, who will contribute and how resources will reach developing countries.

The demand follows the COP30 agreement in Belém, Brazil, which established the tripling aspiration by 2035 but left unresolved questions about the baseline year, actual financial target and delivery mechanisms.

The African Group is also seeking formal discussions on climate finance obligations under Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement and the financing arrangements of the Green Climate Fund. It wants greater attention to climate-related trade measures, which could restrict developing countries' market access and undermine their industrialisation ambitions.

Besides financing, Africa wants the global energy transition to create economic opportunities rather than reinforce inequalities in international trade and resource extraction. The continent holds significant deposits of critical minerals, including lithium, cobalt and manganese, required for batteries, electric vehicles, solar technologies and renewable energy infrastructure. However, much of the economic value generated from their extraction and processing remains outside Africa, with countries largely exporting raw materials for manufacturing elsewhere.

African negotiators and civil society groups are therefore advocating local processing, manufacturing, technology transfer and investment in domestic industrial capacity. They argue that the transition to a low-carbon economy must enable African countries to move up international value chains rather than remain exporters of unprocessed minerals and importers of expensive clean-energy technologies.

A just transition, they maintain, must expand electricity access, create decent jobs, develop skills and strengthen industrial competitiveness while reducing emissions.

For Nigeria, the negotiations have particular significance as the country requires investment in renewable energy, electricity transmission, solar manufacturing and battery value chains to address its energy deficit and diversify the economy.

Oil and gas remain important to public revenue, foreign exchange earnings and domestic energy supply. Managing the transition will therefore require financing that supports cleaner energy development without undermining energy security, employment and economic stability.

Water security and food production also feature prominently in Africa's priorities. Climate variability is placing pressure on agricultural systems through irregular rainfall, prolonged dry spells, flooding, declining soil productivity and water shortages.

The African Union's emphasis on water security, climate-resilient agriculture, early-warning systems and combating desertification reflects the need to link adaptation with food security, public health and economic resilience. Governments are seeking investment in irrigation, resilient farming systems, water infrastructure, storage facilities and improved agricultural technology to strengthen food production.

> **"Africa cannot simply export raw materials required for the global transition while importing finished technologies at significantly higher value. The transition must create value in Africa, build industries in Africa, strengthen skills in Africa, and create jobs for Africans. That is part of climate justice."**

Nigeria faces similar challenges. Flooding in urban and rural communities, coastal erosion, desertification in northern states and rising temperatures are placing additional pressure on infrastructure and agricultural production.

The country must complement its international demand for climate finance with stronger domestic planning, investment and accountability. Its Nationally Determined Contribution, which outlines climate commitments towards 2035, will require substantial funding, institutional coordination and technology transfer to translate targets into action.

The terms of financing will be as important as the volume. African countries want grants and concessional resources that will not worsen their debt positions. They are also seeking simpler procedures for accessing international climate funds and stronger institutional capacity to manage them.

Climate finance, they argue, must reach state and local governments, farmers, coastal communities and vulnerable households rather than remain concentrated in national programmes with limited evidence of benefits at community level.

Chair of the AGN, Dr Antwi-Boasiako Amoah, urged delegates to move the climate summit from pledges to tangible action, saying COP31 in Antalya must be defined by delivery rather than another cycle of unfulfilled promises.

Speaking at the African Group of Negotiators Expert Support (AGNES) Pre-COP31 Strategy Meeting in Nairobi, he described the continent's demands as fundamental conditions for sustainable development.

"When Africa speaks about adaptation, agriculture, finance, loss and damage, just transition and means of implementation, we are not presenting a list of negotiating preferences. We are rather talking about the conditions under which our countries can develop, protect their people and build resilient economies in a changing climate," Amoah said.

He cautioned against uniform energy transition frameworks that ignore regional economic realities, insisting that Africa's transition must prioritise energy access, clean cooking, poverty eradication and green industrialisation.

"Africa cannot simply export raw materials required for the global transition while importing finished technologies at significantly higher value. The transition must create value in Africa, build industries in Africa, strengthen skills in Africa, and create jobs for Africans. That is part of climate justice," he said.

Amoah also urged negotiators to scrutinise emerging global trade policies, warning that climate measures must not become instruments of economic protectionism or reinforce unequal economic relationships.

He called on the international community to honour existing agreements on climate finance, adaptation and development to rebuild confidence in multilateral climate negotiations. Maintaining the 1.5°C temperature goal and accelerating climate action, he said, depend on providing developing countries with the resources needed to implement their commitments. "Developing countries need the means to act, and the multilateral system has to deliver on what it has already agreed," he said.

The African Group also called for a clear commitment to replenishing the Green Climate Fund, urging the conference to use existing mandates to assess developing countries' financial needs and guide resource mobilisation.

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Experts seek improved private sector role in housing delivery

By **Victor Gbonegun**

HOUSING experts have called for stronger private sector participation in the Federal Government's Renewed Hope Housing Programme, urging government, developers and financial institutions to expand access to affordable homeownership.

The Chairman of Qshelter Nigeria Limited, Niyi Oyedele, made the call at the 2026 annual lecture and awards of the Property and Environment Writers Association of Nigeria (PEWAN) in Lagos, themed "Reimagining Housing in Nigeria: Sustainability, Facility Management and Innovative Building Materials."

Represented by the firm's Head of Operations, Adeyinka Adeleye, Oyedele said government could not bridge the housing deficit alone, noting that public-private partnerships were needed to mobilise investment, construction expertise, technology and finance. He said housing delivery must address buyers' needs, including suitable properties, transparent pricing, secure titles and affordable payment plans.

Oyedele disclosed that Qshelter had sold more than 2,000 properties and engaged over 50,000 prospective homeowners in two years. Its portfolio includes Renewed Hope City projects in Karsana, Abuja, Janguza, Kano, and 2004 Estate, Sangotedo, Lagos.

He urged developers to consider the long-term costs of homeownership, including energy, water, repairs and maintenance, and called for proper management of estate infrastructure such as roads, drainage and shared facilities.

Oyedele, who is also the Vice Chairman, Lagos branch, Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers, also advocated greater use of locally manufactured building materials to lower construction costs, create jobs and shorten delivery timelines. Government, he said, should accelerate land titling, building approvals, infrastructure provision and access to housing finance, while developers must honour commitments to buyers.

The Chairman of the occasion and Managing Director of UPDC Plc, Odunayo Ojo, said most houses Nigerians would occupy by 2050 had yet to be built, presenting an opportunity to rethink housing design and delivery.

He urged government, developers and investors to plan for future housing needs, with greater attention to sustainability, infrastructure and technology. Ojo also stressed that housing development must be coordinated with transport infrastructure to ensure new communities are accessible and economically viable.

The General Manager of the Lagos State Building Control Agency (LASBCA), Mrs Florence Gbaye, called for closer cooperation among government, property owners, developers and built environment professionals to improve building safety.

Speaking at the event, she urged developers to use quality materials, obtain planning and building approvals, maintain properties and comply with construction standards.

She said agencies such as the Lagos State Physical Planning Permit Authority (LASPPPA) ensure that developments meet approved planning requirements, while LASBCA inspects and enforces building regulations.

Gbaye urged professionals, journalists and residents to report buildings that violate construction standards or pose safety risks, adding that regulations protect lives, property and investments.

She also encouraged young Nigerians to plan early for homeownership and explore available housing options despite rising property prices.

Earlier, PEWAN Chairman, Mrs Okwy Iroegbu-Chikezie, said housing should provide more than shelter, urging developers to incorporate energy and water conservation, waste reduction and climate-responsive designs.

She identified natural ventilation, energy-efficient lighting, solar power and rainwater harvesting as measures that could lower operating costs and improve residents' comfort. She also called for responsible land use to prevent unplanned development.

Iroegbu-Chikezie said the value of buildings depended on their maintenance and management after construction, urging developers to prioritise facility management.

Lagos tasks cooperatives on real estate investment, members' welfare

By **Favour Udezue**

THE Lagos State Government has urged cooperative societies to invest in real estate and other productive sectors to improve members' welfare and generate long-term returns.

The State Director of Cooperatives, Dr Adeyemi Adeyinka, gave the charge during a visit to Louisville, a mixed-use development by TotalEnergies Staff Housing Cooperative Multipurpose Society Ltd (TEHC) in Eko Atlantic City.

Adeyinka commended TEHC for undertaking the project, following presentations on its construction progress, financing structure, safety measures and proposed facilities. He said the development could improve members' living standards and provide the cooperative with sustainable income. It could also create economic opportunities beyond its membership. Adeyinka urged TEHC to plan for funding shortfalls and put measures in place to avoid construction delays.

The Deputy Director of Cooperative Services, Mr Omotayo Kazeem, praised the project's scale and location in Eko Atlantic, which hosts major corporate and institutional investments.

He said Louisville showed how cooperatives could pool resources for property investments, urging other societies to move beyond thrift and credit operations and pursue ventures that offer long-term returns.

The officials said cooperatives could contribute to housing delivery through sound governance, financial discipline and accountable leadership.

The delegation urged societies to share experiences through the Lagos State Cooperative Federation, enabling others to learn from TEHC's investment model. It also discussed closer engagement between TEHC and the state's cooperative authorities, although no formal partnership was announced.

At a roundtable session, TEHC officials disclosed that Louisville covers about 22,000 square metres and is being developed in phases. The first residential phase comprises 157 apartments of between two and five bedrooms, currently under construction.

The development will also feature hospitality facilities, retail and commercial spaces, sports and wellness amenities, alongside supporting infrastructure. TEHC said the project is financed through members' contributions, property subscriptions and institutional financing.

The cooperative's Chief Operating Officer, Ehima Uwumarogie, said Louisville illustrated how collective resources could be converted into long-term assets through shared commitment and purposeful leadership.

He said effective management, sound governance and institutional support could strengthen cooperatives' contribution to Nigeria's economy.

Other members of the delegation included Mrs Hunpe Esther, Area Officer; Mr Abimbola Kolawole, Assistant Area Officer; and Mr Arisu Olumide and Mr Olatunji Tawak, Registrars of Cooperatives.



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Developer decries high cost of land titles in Ogun

By **Victor Gbonegun**

A PROPERTY development company, Noble Grounds Limited, has criticised the rising cost of obtaining Certificates of Occupancy (C of O) in Ogun State, saying excessive and unexplained charges are discouraging property investment and slowing real estate development.

The company's Managing Director, Olajide Dosunmu, who spoke to journalists in Lagos, urged the state government to review its land documentation process and publish a transparent and standardised fee structure.

He cited the case of a developer processing a C of O for a 50-acre parcel of land, whose title documentation and associated charges were initially estimated at N50 million before the present administration took office.

However, following a prolonged suspension of C of O processing and its subsequent resumption, the developer reportedly received a bill of N1.5 billion.

Dosunmu questioned the increase, saying the government had not provided a clear valuation formula or breakdown to justify the charges. He warned that unpredictable title costs could discourage investment, particularly as developers without valid land documentation struggle to secure bank financing.

He said the situation was slowing formal property development and encouraging informal construction, while investors who obtained titles under previous administrations faced fewer obstacles than new entrants.

Dosunmu also warned that the charges could favour foreign investors with deeper financial resources over indigenous developers.

Comparing Ogun's land administration with Lagos, he said the latter publishes gazetted land values and statutory charges, allowing applicants to estimate the cost of obtaining titles. He urged Ogun to adopt a similar system based on published rates, location-specific valuations and clearly defined processing fees, including stamp duties.

Dosunmu said the issue had also been raised by industry stakeholders at a forum involving the Federal Minister of Finance, particularly during discussions on infrastructure and affordable housing finance. He urged developers to speak out on the challenges, adding that transparent land administration would improve access to finance, attract investment, expand housing delivery and create jobs.

He appealed to the state government to prevent title documentation costs from becoming a barrier to legitimate property development.

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GuardianProperty

Experts seek people-centred real estate development, sustainable cities

By **Victor Gbonegun**

EXPERTS under the International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI), Nigeria chapter, have urged developers, investors and government to prioritise people-centred real estate development to build inclusive and sustainable cities.

They said property development should extend beyond constructing buildings to creating communities that improve living standards, support businesses and promote economic prosperity.

The Nigeria chapter President, Ayodeji Odeleye, made the call at a joint commemoration of World Habitat Day and World Cities Day in Lagos, themed "Beyond Housing: Building Sustainable, Inclusive and Liveable Cities."

Odeleye stressed the need for responsible investment, community participation and collaboration among built environment professionals, adding that commercial returns must be balanced with fairness and community interests.

He said the success of urban development should be measured by the opportunities created, lives improved and environmental benefits, rather than the number of completed buildings.

He urged stakeholders to translate discussions into policies and partnerships that promote decent housing, viable businesses, environmental protection and equal opportunities.

Odeleye said FIABCI was established in 1951 to rebuild real estate businesses and professional relationships across national boundaries after the Second World War. The federation now has chapters in more than 80 countries, while its presence in Nigeria dates back to 1972.

The Chief Executive Officer of Eximia Realty, Hakeem Ogunniran, called for land reforms, strategic partnerships and innovative housing finance to address Nigeria's housing deficit, estimated at between 15 million and 30 million units.

He identified fragmented land administration, high construction and financing costs, regulatory bottlenecks and limited access to titled land as major obstacles to housing delivery.

Ogunniran urged the government to shift from direct housing construction to creating an enabling environment for private developers, financiers and other investors. He called for reform of the Land Use Act 1978, which he said complicates land ownership, property transactions and housing investment.

"We need to unlock institutional capital, particularly pension funds, through properly structured real estate investment products capable of attracting long-term financing.

Stakeholders also need to embrace technology and industrialised construction to move from conventional building methods to manufacturing homes at scale.

"Affordable housing cannot be achieved through market forces alone. Government, developers, financiers and regulators must collaborate to provide accessible options, including rent-to-own and social housing schemes," he said.

The Chief Executive Officer of UPDC Plc, Odunayo Ojo, called for development models that balance social needs, environmental protection and commercial returns.

He urged developers to consider communities' cultures, traditions, history and demographics when designing housing projects, while adopting environmentally resilient designs and conserving resources.

Ojo said homes must remain affordable and financially sustainable, while providing developers with returns capable of attracting investment.

The Project Director, Arctic Infrastructure, Dr Lookman Oshodi, urged government to strengthen public-private partnerships and invest in climate-resilient infrastructure, particularly in Lagos.

He said private sector financing and expertise could expand affordable housing delivery, while urban green strategies would help reduce flooding and rising temperatures.

Oshodi identified the proposed Affordable Housing Development Fund and Mass Income Housing Bill as potential instruments for mobilising finance and improving access to decent homes for low- and middle-income earners and vulnerable groups.

The Senior Technical Adviser and Head of Sub-office, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Nigeria, Dr Okafor Christian, called for integrated land management and housing policies to address the housing deficit, rapid urbanisation and the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

He said housing delivery should combine shelter with access to land, basic services and economic opportunities, rather than focus solely on physical structures.

Christian urged the government to integrate displaced persons into existing communities instead of relocating them to isolated settlements far from jobs and essential services.

Professionals outline blueprint for unified real estate regulation

By **Chinedum Uwaegbulam**

PROFESSIONAL associations in Nigeria's built environment have outlined proposals for the establishment of a unified regulatory framework for the real estate sector, urging lawmakers to address professional misconduct, fraudulent property transactions and weak consumer protection without creating overlapping regulatory responsibilities.

The proposals were presented at a stakeholder conference organised by the Office of the Speaker, House of Representatives, in conjunction with the House Committee on Housing and Habitat, to deliberate on the proposed National Real Estate Regulatory Authority (NRERA).

With Nigeria's property market expanding amid rising housing demand, private investment and the growing participation of informal operators, stakeholders said effective regulation was necessary to establish professional standards, improve transparency and protect property buyers, tenants and investors.

However, the proposed authority has raised questions about its relationship with existing professional and statutory bodies responsible for regulating different aspects of the built environment. The submissions are expected to shape the legislative debate, particularly on NRERA's mandate, enforcement powers, registration of practitioners, disciplinary procedures and institutional relationships.

At the conference, President of the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (NITP), Prof. Kingsley Ogboi, supported the establishment of NRERA, pledging the institute's collaboration with the National Assembly, government agencies, professional bodies and the private sector.



Chief Executive, Cromwell Centre for Research in Housing and Urban Development Ltd, Sola Enitan(left); President, Real Estate Developers Association of Nigeria (REDAN), HRM Oba Akintoye Adeoye, President, Cooperative Housing Federation of Nigeria (COHFON), Dr Yemi Adelakun and Founding Director, Centre for Housing and Susrainable development, Prof. Timothy Nubi, during the stakeholder conference organised by the Office of the Speaker, House of Representatives, in conjunction with the House Committee on Housing and Habitat in Abuja.

He described the authority as an important step towards strengthening transparency, accountability, professionalism and public confidence in the real estate sector. "Real estate development goes beyond land ownership, property transactions, building construction and investment returns. It involves the systematic transformation of land into residential, commercial, industrial and other uses within an organised spatial framework," he said.

Ogboi said such development required careful consideration of land suitability, land-use compatibility, residential density, infrastructure provision, accessibility, environmental sustainability and neighbourhood functionality.

These, he noted, were fundamental concerns of town planning and fell within the professional competence of registered town planners.

The NITP maintained that sustainable housing delivery and effective real estate regulation required the institutional recognition and active involvement of physical planning professionals. "Real estate development, housing delivery and human settlements must be planned. Town planning must be at the centre of Nigeria's real estate regulatory framework," he said.

The institute recommended that the proposed legislation provide for the representation of a registered town planner nominated by NITP on NRERA's governing board. It also called for recognition of the Town Planners Registration Council of Nigeria (TOPREC) as the statutory regulator of town planners, mandatory engagement of registered town planners in relevant development processes and integration of statutory planning approvals into the registration of qualifying projects.

Ogboi further advocated the establishment of a Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate within NRERA, headed by a qualified town planner, as well as the institute's representation on technical committees responsible for developing national standards and guidelines.

The Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV), however, cautioned against provisions that could duplicate or undermine the statutory responsibilities of the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria (ESVARBON).

Group seeks presidential assent to NOSDRA amendment bill

By **Victor Gbonegun**

ENVIRONMENTAL advocacy group, Spaces for Change (S4C), has urged President Bola Tinubu to assent to the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (Establishment) Act (Amendment) Bill 2026, following its passage by the Senate.

The group's Executive Director, Victoria Ibezim-Ohaeri, made the call in Lagos, describing the bill as a step towards tougher sanctions for oil pollution and stronger enforcement by the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA).

The amendment introduces criminal liability and higher financial penalties for environmental offences, seeking to deter oil spills and hold operators accountable.

Ibezim-Ohaeri said weak penalties had failed to deter violations, leaving oil-producing communities, particularly in the Niger Delta, to bear the cost of polluted water, destroyed farmlands and damaged fishing livelihoods.

She said effective enforcement required NOSDRA to investigate spills independently, identify responsible operators and compel them to meet their environmental obligations.

S4C, however, warned that tougher sanctions would achieve little without adequate funding and operational independence for the agency.

At the fifth National Extractive Dialogue (NED 2026), organised by S4C in partnership with the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) and NOSDRA in Port Harcourt on September 29 and 30, participants examined weaknesses in pollution investigations and the settlement of outstanding liabilities in the petroleum sector.

A major concern was NOSDRA's reliance on oil and gas companies for logistics, facilities and other resources during investigations.

The group said such dependence could compromise investigations, restrict access to evidence and undermine public confidence in regulatory findings. "Where a regulator depends on a company whose operations or assets are under scrutiny, questions can arise about independence, credibility and public confidence in the investigation," Ibezim-Ohaeri said.

Ibezim-Ohaeri urged the Federal Government to provide NOSDRA with predictable funding, independent laboratory facilities, monitoring and sampling equipment, trained investigators and reliable transport.

She also called for transparent procedures for collecting, analysing and reporting evidence.

Ibezim-Ohaeri said environmental enforcement should not depend on the goodwill or resources of companies under investigation.

Don advocates gender-sensitive policies to tackle inequality

By Iyabo Lawal

A PROFESSOR of Public Administration at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Yemisi Ogunlela, has called for gender-sensitive policies and administrative reforms to address gender inequality and promote inclusive national development.

Ogunlela made the call while delivering the 44th inaugural lecture of the institution.

The university teacher argued that gender inequality was not merely a product of cultural beliefs and individual discrimination, but was also embedded in the structures, policies and practices of public institutions.

She explained that institutional arrangements often turned biological differences into unequal access to education, healthcare, employment and leadership opportunities, thereby limiting the contributions of women and men to national development.

According to her, everyday expressions used to describe newborns often reinforce societal expectations that shape their experiences from childhood.

She noted that while girls were commonly associated with beauty and domestic responsibilities, boys were linked to strength and achievement. Such stereotypes, she said, could influence educational and career choices, professional advancement and access to leadership positions.

Highlighting Nigeria's gender-related development challenges, Ogunlela identified maternal mortality, women's limited participation in decisions concerning their reproductive health and their underrepresentation in political leadership as issues requiring urgent attention.

She said addressing these challenges requires effective public administration, institutional reforms and respect for human rights, alongside appropriate cultural and healthcare interventions.

The professor warned that policies presented as gender-neutral could perpetuate inequality if they fail to recognise the different circumstances and responsibilities of men and women.

She cited promotion systems that reward uninterrupted career progression as an example, explaining that such arrangements could disadvantage women, who often bear a disproportionate share of unpaid caregiving responsibilities.

To address the disparities, Ogunlela urged governments and public institutions to collect and use gender-disaggregated data to identify inequalities and develop policies that respond to the specific needs of different population groups.

She also advocated a shift from reproductive administration, which sustains existing practices, to "transformative administration", which critically examines established systems and promotes fairer and more effective outcomes.

Her recommendations included integrating gender considerations into development plans, investing in the girl child, improving maternal and reproductive healthcare, and strengthening collaboration among ministries responsible for health, education, infrastructure and finance.

She further urged policymakers to move beyond treating everyone identically and adopt approaches that recognise different needs while removing structural barriers that perpetuate inequality.

"The goal is not to make men and women identical but to ensure that a child's sex does not determine the quality of opportunities available to them," she said.

In his remarks, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Prof. Chiedu Mafiana, said the lectures provided scholars with opportunities to present research findings and propose solutions to societal problems.



Assistant Director of Education, District Counsellor, Education District III, Falomo, Ikoyi, Lagos State, Olaoye Temitope Oluwaseyi(left); Principal, Girls Senior Secondary Grammar School Ikoyi, Mrs Akinmutimi Abiola; Head, Marketing and Corporate Communications, Quest Merchant Bank Limited, Adefisayo Akinsanya; Chief Information Security Officer, Quest Merchant Bank Limited, Maji Allamogu, and Head of Science Department, Girls Senior Secondary Grammar School, Ikoyi, Mrs Olaore Adeola during a financial literacy and health education outreach held at Girls Senior Secondary Grammar School, Ikoyi, Lagos.

LASU VC tasks members on institutional impact

By Adelowo Adebumiti

THE Vice-Chancellor of Lagos State University (LASU), Prof. Ayodeji Badejo, has emphasised the need for the institution to move beyond being admired for its large student population to becoming indispensable to Lagos State's development.

Badejo gave the charge at her inaugural Senate meeting, where she outlined her vision for the institution and called for collective commitment to academic excellence, institutional unity and measurable impact.

She also acknowledged the contributions of her predecessors, both to the university's stability, disciplined academic calendar and growing reputation as a first-choice institution for candidates across the country

Describing the Senate as the place where the university thinks, Badejo said she was appearing before its members not merely as an administrator but as a colleague whose professional life had largely been shaped by LASU.

The university's spokesperson, Ademola Adekoya, noted that the vice-chancellor particularly appealed to senior professors who had stopped attending Senate meetings to return to the chamber, participate actively in deliberations and freely challenge the administration whenever necessary.

She stressed that the experience of senior academics remained essential to the university's development, especially as a new generation of scholars emerged across its faculties.

"A Senate without its elders is a Senate condemned to repeat its mistakes," she said, urging younger academics to work alongside experienced colleagues to combine fresh ideas with institutional memory.

Reflecting on LASU's establishment in 1983 by the administration of the late Governor Lateef Jakande, the vice-chancellor said the university had fulfilled much of its founding promise in terms of size and reach.

She disclosed that 84,326 candidates had chosen LASU as their first-choice institution in the current admission cycle, making it the most preferred university in Nigeria for the second consecutive year.

She added that the institution currently serves more than 85,000 students across its campuses in Ojo, Ikeja, Epe, and Badagry, with almost all its academic programmes fully accredited.

Badejo added that these achievements must translate into greater institutional value and impact, rather than merely serve as measures of physical expansion and institutional growth.

According to her, while LASU had earned recognition for its admission figures, accredited programmes and infrastructure, it had yet to achieve comparable recognition for its outputs and measurable contributions to society.

She identified low research income, which she said remained in millions when it should be in billions, inadequate classrooms and laboratories relative to student enrolment, and uncertainty among some staff members over their verified entitlements as areas requiring urgent attention.

Badejo maintained that identifying the university's shortcomings should be seen as an act of institutional courage rather than an accusation against any individual or group.

She further stressed the need for all LASU campuses to operate as one cohesive institution, with achievements and policies that endure beyond the tenure of any particular administration.

UNILAG expands digital humanities research with new facilities

By Isaac Taiwo

THE University of Lagos (UNILAG) has strengthened its commitment to advancing digital humanities in Nigeria and Africa with the inauguration of two new facilities at its Centre for Digital Humanities.

The facilities, comprising a remodelled Centre for Digital Humanities Learning Hub and workstation, as well as a graduate lecture room, were unveiled at the Faculty of Arts, UNILAG.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof Folasade Ogunsola, said technology has become part of human existence and can no longer be denied its importance not just to the sciences but also to the humanities.

Ogunsola, who was represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research), Prof. Mathew Ilori, said that as technology changes everything, the humanities would remain indispensable in shaping its ethical and societal applications.

The Director of the Centre, Prof. Tunde Ope-Davies, described the development as another milestone in the university's efforts to expand the frontiers of digital humanities practice and research across the continent.

The facilities comprise a research hub, equipped with a laboratory for developing digital products and innovations, and a postgraduate lecture room designed to train future leaders with specialised knowledge and strong foundations in the humanities.

Ope-Davies said the postgraduate programmes would equip students with skills in the humanities and technology, enabling them to develop innovative products that address societal challenges and contribute to Nigeria's digital economy.

He disclosed that his exposure to digital humanities during a research fellowship in Germany inspired him to introduce similar initiatives at UNILAG.

The professor also attributed the National Universities Commission's (NUC) introduction of digital humanities into the revised curriculum for Nigerian universities to UNILAG's pioneering efforts.

On artificial intelligence, Ope-Davies said the university was developing a policy to promote its ethical and responsible use.

He cautioned students against submitting AI-generated content as their own, stressing that the technology should support research rather than replace critical thinking.

He said postgraduate students would be required to produce digital products with potential for patenting and commercialisation, rather than limiting their academic achievements to written dissertations.

Institute unveils 2030 research agenda to drive devt, SDGs

From Rotimi Agboluaje, Ibadan

THE Pan-African University Life and Earth Sciences Institute (PAULESI), hosted by the University of Ibadan (UI), has commenced developing a comprehensive research agenda to advance African development and support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through 2030.

The initiative was unveiled during the second edition of the institute's research agenda workshop, coming shortly after the recent full accreditation of all its postgraduate programmes by the National Universities Commission (NUC).

The one-day workshop brought together programme coordinators, academic staff, and external experts from research institutes and industry to deliberate on and refine a consolidated research agenda to guide the Institute's research priorities through 2030.

Declaring the workshop open, the Director of PAULESI, Prof. Mubo Sonibare, described the exercise as more than a procedural requirement, saying it was designed to provide a strategic direction for the institute's research activities and position it to respond effectively to Africa's development challenges.

Sonibare said the research agenda would serve as "the intellectual compass" for PAULESI, stressing that research at the Pan-African University was expected to provide the intellectual, innovative, and human-resource foundation required to achieve the African Union's Agenda 2063.

Caleb wins N5m Zenith tech prize

By Adelowo Adebumiti

CALEB British International School (CBIS), Abijo, Lagos, has won the Zenith Bank Future Innovators Challenge at Zecathon 6.0.

The winning team, drawn from the senior secondary school class and comprising Deborah Iweha, Makayla Inyere, Fife Alonge, and Okeke Janelle, defeated finalists from across Nigeria to secure the coveted first-place position.

The team was rewarded with the grand prize of N5 million for its groundbreaking project, ReLearn.

The Future Innovators Challenge is Zenith Bank's premier innovation contest dedicated to senior secondary schools.

Run in partnership with a non-governmental organisation, 'Beyond Limits' as part of the broader Zecathon 6.0 innovation programme, the initiative provides African students early exposure to teamwork, problem-solving, and technology, offering a combined N10 million prize pool for the top three schools.

The CBIS quartet impressed the national panel of judges with ReLearn, a student-built digital platform designed to give unused textbooks a second life.

Developed after the team conducted independent research with parents, ReLearn targets the high cost of educational materials.

Instead of allowing old textbooks to sit idle in homes after an academic session, the platform seamlessly redistributes them to students in need.

Speaking on the project, Iweha said the platform helps families save money and ensures that no child goes to school without the right set of books.

Additionally, Alonge noted that 'ReLearn' actively bridges educational gaps by enabling children in underserved communities to access high-quality learning materials at a fraction of the market price.

The project directly aligns with three United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Quality Education (SDG 4), Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10), and Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12).

World Report

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Six killed in Krakow shooting, as bodies found in suspect's home

A GUNMAN believed to have been inspired by far-right ideology has killed six people and injured more than a dozen others in an attack in the busy centre of Poland's second largest city. The three bodies found in the suspect's home are his father, mother and sister

Police said the attacker drove on to Main Market Square in Krakow, a popular tourist attraction, on Saturday afternoon and fired randomly at people.

Four women and two men were killed. Three were Polish, one was British and two have not been identified.

Among the 16 injured are five foreign nationals from Austria, Germany, Portugal, Russia and Britain.

Another three bodies were found when counter-terrorism police searched the suspect's home around 125 miles (200km) away, Polish Prime Minister, Donald Tusk said.

A massive armed police presence was deployed across Krakow on Saturday evening, as security measures were ramped up in the capital Warsaw and elsewhere.

A period of mourning has been declared in Krakow until November 11.

Two police officers are also among those injured, one in critical condition.

The suspect, who was equipped with military-style weapons and attire, is a 25-year-old Polish man, described by a minister as 'ultra-nationalist.'

Police shot and arrested him, and he remains in hospital having undergone surgery.

Tusk said there were strong indications the two women and one man found dead at the suspect's home in Ostrowiec wi tokrzyski were his immediate family members.

"Until now in Poland, we haven't had such drastic cases of terrorism.That is what we have to call this cruel attack on people's lives here in Krakow", Tusk said.

Meanwhile, United Kingdom (UK) Prime Minister, Andy Burnham,has expressed shock over the incident, and has condoled with the grieving families.

"The United Kingdom stands in solidarity with the people of Poland", he added.

The rampage began shortly before 15:00 local time (14:00 GMT) in the historic centre of Krakow, an ornate square which has long been a draw for tourists.

Footage showed the attacker's vehicle speeding through the centre of the city, and people fleeing as the sound of gunfire rang out.

ANC leads SA's local polls but records all-time election low

AFRICAN National Congress (ANC) has emerged thefirst-placeposition in South Africa's local elections. It however suffered its worst-ever electoral setback, according to final results on Saturday.

While still the largest party in the country, the once-dominant ANC has won just 32.5 per cent of the vote.

Frustrated voters have turned to the Democratic Alliance, the MK party and other smaller lists.

The ANC's performance marks a drop of roughly 14 percentage points from its 2021 local election results.

The party has failed to win an outright majority in any of the eight metropolitan municipalities although it finished ahead in four of them, including Johannesburg, Mangaung and Buffalo City.

The centre-right Democratic Alliance is the second-largest party, with about 22.9 per cent of the vote. The party came first in Nelson Mandela Bay and Tshwane and has secured a majority in Cape Town.

Former President, Jacob Zuma's MK party is finishing in third place nationally with around 9.9 per cent of the vote and came first in the metro of eThekwini.

The results point to a fragmented political landscape. With the available results, the parties will need to engage in coalition negotiations to form governing alliances.

With outright majorities elusive in several major cities, the results will usher in complex coalition negotiations as parties bargain to assemble the alliances needed to govern.

Such marriage of convenience has often proved unstable, leaving local administrations consumed by internal wrangling at the expense of basic service delivery.

The national government's existing coalition arrangements could further complicate negotiations, political analyst, Daniel Silke told AFP.

Iran suggests blasts not U.S. attacks as both sides report ships hit

IRANIAN media suggested explosions in southern Iran last Saturday evening were related to Iranian military activities rather than United States strikes while both sides reported that shipping had been hit in or near the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's state television said officials had not confirmed any missile strikes on Iranian territory following blasts heard in several areas, including on Qeshm Island in the Strait.

U.S President, Donald Trump, had hinted at renewing major attacks on Iran after last week's midterm elections but there has been no sign of a large-scale military operation, which Iran has said it would respond to by striking America and Israeli targets.

Both sides have continued strikes on vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, restricting exports of energy and other commodities vital to the world economy.

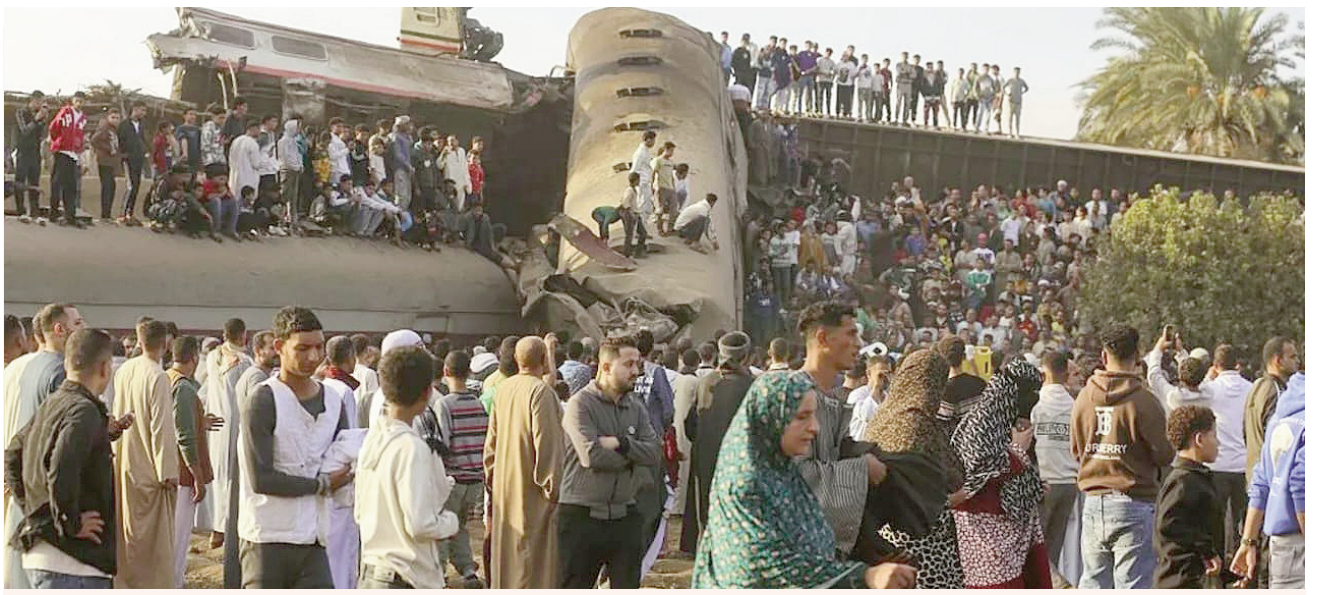
Iran's state television said the evening explosions might be related to Iranian military activity in the waterway, where Iran said two vessels had hit mines and a third had caught fire.

The U.S said its air force had disabled a vessel in the Gulf of Oman beyond the strait.

Tasnim news agency said two missiles had struck Qeshm Island, with no official information on possible damage. Neither Iran nor the U.S has commented on the report.

Washington had admitted-last week tostriking the island in a limited defensive measure against Iranians using surface-to-air missiles against American assets.

Since the U.S and Israel began attacks on Iran in February, Tehran has sought the upper hand by hitting vessels in the Strait of Hormuz to block Gulf energy exports while American forces began blockading movements to and from Iranian ports in April.



The force of the collision outside Giza caused some carriages to derail

At least, four dead, dozens injured after trains collide in Egypt

A TRAIN crash near the Egyptian city of Giza has killed four people and injured at least, 88 others, the health ministry has said.

Egypt's railway authority said a train travelling from Giza to Fayoum, south of Cairo, crashed into the rear of another service heading south from Cairo to Aswan.

Images from the scene showed several carriages had derailed and fallen down an embankment.

The Egyptian health ministry said at least, 72 ambulances were sent while local media reported a train driver was among the dead.

Egyptian President, Abdul Fattah al-Sisi, said he was following the incident with great concern and extended his deepest condolences to the families of those who lost their lives.

"I have directed state agencies to provide the necessary medical care, promptly investigate the circumstances of the accident, and hold accountable anyone found to have been negligent", he wrote on X.

The government said hospitals in the area had been out "on heightened alert" as they coped with a massive influx of patients.

Trains between Giza and the Upper Egypt region have been suspended, BBC Arabic reported.

The collision occurred in the area between Kafr Ammar and Al-Raqqa stations in Al-Ayyat.

The rail authority dispatched emergency teams and cranes to the scene.

Al-Ayyat is the site of Egypt's worst-ever rail disaster, when a fire on a train killed more than 370 people in 2002.

China, Africa seek stronger ties, gains from zero tariffs

By Ngozi Egenuka

CHINESE and African scholars have called for stronger collaboration in trade, industrialisation, research and knowledge exchange, urging both sides to ensure that China's zero-tariff policy for African countries translate into tangible economic and development gains.

They made the call at the opening of the 15th China-Africa Think Tanks Forum in Yiwu, Zhejiang Province, China, where participants also urged African countries to strengthen their research institutions and develop independent development strategies that reflect their national circumstances.

According to a statement, the two-day meeting with a theme, Openness, Cooperation, Mutual Learning and Shared Development: China and Africa Joining Hands to Advance Modernisation', featured two plenary sessions, four parallel forums and a closing ceremony.

At the opening ceremony, Chinese and African scholars unveiled two documents - the Think Tank Action Declaration on China-Africa Cooperation to Advance Modernisation in the Global South, and China-Africa Consensus on Mutual Learning Between Civilisations.

The documents seek to promote cooperation between Chinese and African research institutions, encourage exchanges of governance experience and strengthen the intellectual contributions of both sides to the development of the Global South.

Speaking at the meeting, Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the former President of Senegal, Oumar Demba Ba, said Africa and China had maintained longstanding relations founded on peace and mutual respect.

He noted that the growing threat of unilateralism and trade protectionism made stronger cooperation between both sides necessary, particularly following China's decision to extend zero-tariff treatment to African countries with which it has diplomatic relations.

Ba urged stakeholders to work towards implementing the policy through existing cooperation frameworks, including the Belt and Road Initiative and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation.

He said the two sides should study the conditions required to make the arrangements effective, adding that the initiative would help translate political commitments into tangible development outcomes.

Ba also called on African countries to strengthen their think tanks and develop independent narratives capable of challenging longstanding prejudices about the continent.

Senior Consultant, Policy Studies Institute of Ethiopia, Balew Demissie, charged Africa to pursue a development path based on its national circumstances rather than adopt a single model of modernisation.

According to him, the continent's development strategy must reflect its aspirations under Agenda 2063.

Demissie urged African and Chinese research institutions to move beyond exchanging information to jointly producing knowledge that could influence development policies and global governance.

He also called for stronger collaboration in policy research, institutional partnerships, exchanges among young scholars and responses to emerging challenges, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Politics

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Benue 2027: Will Gov. Alia push back Rainbow Coalition's ambush?

The battle for Benue's governorship has intensified, with incumbent governor, Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Alia, facing rival camps linked to SGF George Akume, former Senate President David Mark and immediate past governor Samuel Ortom. ***SAMSON KUKWA YANOR*** *reports.*

BARELY ninety days before the February 6, 2027 governorship election, the African Democratic Congress (ADC) has emerged as a formidable opposition force in Benue State.

Led by its national chairman, Senator David Mark, the party has assembled political warlords whose political sagacity has been proven over time. Senator Emmanuel Yisa Orker-Jev is a four-time member of the House of Representatives and the immediate past senator representing Benue North-West Senatorial District.

A deep thinker, he is known to be a shrewd and taciturn political strategist. While David Mark holds sway at the national level, Senator Orker-Jev is the leader of the ADC in Benue.

Former minister and immediate past governor, Samuel Ortom, will be at the forefront of the PDP's political machinery. His party has presented a governorship candidate in the person of former Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Chief Mike Kaase Aondoakaa. Ortom is considered one of the smartest politicians in Benue State.

A grassroots politician, he has a profound understanding of the political terrain. A cunning and elusive politician, Ortom has proven to be a ferocious fighter who can hold his own on the political battlefield any day.

Though a contestant himself, the incumbent governor, Rev. Fr. Alia, will be a decisive factor. A relatively recent entrant into politics, Alia has nevertheless forged an impressive political structure and cultivated a loyal, almost cult-like following across the state.

His calling as a priest, particularly as a healing priest before his foray into politics, earned him the people's trust and a large following. While his relationship with the higher echelons of the political class in Benue is strained, his popularity among the masses remains strong and constant.

Governor Alia's combination with the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), George Akume, proved formidable in 2023. With Akume at the helm of affairs for the 2023 general elections and the priest as the governorship candidate, the APC ran an electrifying campaign across the nooks and crannies of Benue State with the "Yes Father!" campaign mantra.

In the end, the then-ruling PDP was almost completely swept aside, save for the Benue South senatorial seat, which was won by the current Senate Minority Leader, Abba Moro, of the PDP.

The "Yes Father" movement, in addition to winning the governorship, took the PDP to the cleaners, winning two of the three senatorial seats, 10 of the 11 House of Representatives seats and 26 of the 32 State Assembly seats.

But in 2027, the dynamics are no longer the same. In fact, there is strong suspicion that the Akume camp within the Benue APC is seeking to replace Governor Alia if it can have its way.

The leader of the Benue PDP and former governor, Samuel Ortom, who has reconciled with SGF Akume, has publicly stated that the PDP will enter into a "strategic alliance" with Akume's APC faction.

It was therefore not surprising to political observers that, at the birthday party of former Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Shippers' Council, Emmanuel Jime, who had defected to the Akume camp of the APC after losing out in the primary election for his senatorial bid, one of the guests, with the SGF in attendance, was the Benue PDP governorship candidate, Mike Aondoakaa (SAN), who sat comfortably among them.

Only a few days ago, Austin Agada, factional chairman of the Akume camp of the APC, emerged as secretary of the Wike-led Rainbow Coalition and promptly declared in an interview with newsmen that "Governor Alia has not given the coalition any reason to support his re-election bid".

While all the major contestants are formidable personalities in their own right, the opposition remains largely fragmented in its challenge to the ruling party. Professor Sebastine Tar Hon, of the SDP, for instance, enjoys goodwill, but beyond a platform he has to build from scratch, his aspiration is considered premature in the face of the iron-clad Tiv zoning formula of ya-na-angbian, or zoning, which significantly shapes the state's politics.

He is considered to be swimming against the tide of zoning, which does not favour his socio-political zone of Jemgbagh.

Notwithstanding, he is already building a political structure of his own. If he sustains the momentum, he may become a political force to be reckoned with in the near future.

Professor Terhemba Shija is highly experienced in Benue politics. A one-time member of the House of Representatives and a former commissioner, Shija also successfully delivered a governorship candidate, former governor Gabriel Suswam, as Director-General of Campaigns in 2011.

He is therefore well versed in the nuances of Benue politics. However, political alliances had already been formed before he emerged as the NDC's governorship flagbearer.

Though a good candidate with a very popular presidential candidate in the person of Peter Obi, his party lacks grassroots reach in an environment where the majority of the electorate are not sufficiently politically enlightened to vote independently. That may prove to be his albatross.

A lawmaker, Herman Hembe, is generally considered to have performed well as a member of the House of Representatives. The youngest among the array of governorship aspirants, he is very popular among the youths. His major undoing may turn out to be his party platform, the ADC.

> "The leader of the Benue PDP and former governor, Samuel Ortom, who has reconciled with SGF Akume, has publicly stated that the PDP will enter into a "strategic alliance" with Akume's APC faction."

Though he holds the Tiv chieftaincy title of Zege Mule u Tiv, the ADC presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, is of Fulani ethnic stock. The Fulani are now widely distrusted in Benue because of the killings and displacement of residents, which are largely attributed to them.

This perception affected Atiku's performance in the 2023 general election in Benue, when he was the PDP's presidential candidate. He came a distant third with 130,000 votes, against the APC's Ahmed Bola Tinubu, who polled 310,000, and the Labour Party's Peter Obi, who scored 308,000.

Atiku's candidacy partly accounted for the PDP's abysmal performance in Benue in 2023. If anything, that distrust and resentment have become even more pronounced following the Yelwata massacre and other attacks, and are likely to affect Hembe's candidacy negatively.

The Labour Party's governorship candidate, Mathias Byuan, is another household name in Benue. However, he has no real political structure of his own, and the soul of the Labour Party of 2023 has gone with Peter Obi, leaving behind an almost empty shell. Considered by many to be a generous and likeable fellow, he nevertheless lacks the political clout to swing the tide in his favour, except if, in the course of events, one or more of the established political structures adopts his candidacy, a prospect that currently appears very unlikely.

As things stand, the actual contest is between Mike Kaase Aondoakaa of the PDP and the incumbent, Rev. Fr. Alia of the APC. Aondoakaa has the most organised and experienced media handlers among the governorship candidates, with a two-pronged strategy: to project the PDP candidate as much as possible and discredit the incumbent governor, Alia.

He has strategically positioned himself to capitalise on the rift between the SGF, Akume, and the Alia camp within the APC.

Through the proposed "strategic alliance" announced by PDP leader and former governor Samuel Ortom, which they are now seeking to consolidate through the Rainbow Coalition, they hope to secure Akume's approval for his APC faction to align with the PDP to oust the incumbent governor. Aondoakaa's major undoing, however, is the general distrust of the masses towards the old-school political class to which he belongs.

He is part of a class that has wielded political power for two decades while the people's living conditions have deteriorated. As a result, media hype notwithstanding, his candidacy is still viewed with quiet suspicion and distrust by many in the state.

The APC candidate and incumbent governor, Alia, is the common enemy of all the opposition parties. Alia's weak point is his image management. The governor has created employment opportunities and engaged more people in gainful employment than any other governor in Benue State's history.

On infrastructural development, he is also perceived by the masses to have performed comparatively well. Ironically, his achievements have not been adequately projected. His strongest weapon, however, is the trust of the masses, which an organised media onslaught by the opposition has been unable to erode.

In Benue State, the Rainbow Coalition is, in actual fact, an intended amalgamation of the Akume faction of the APC and the PDP. Interestingly, the PDP has fielded candidates for all elective positions, and electioneering activities are already intensifying.

For instance, the PDP candidate for Benue North-West Senatorial District is Samuel Ortom's wife, Mrs Eunice Ortom, who will square up against Akume's candidate for the same seat, the incumbent senator, Dr Titus Zam, if the court rules in his favour in the tussle over the senatorial ticket between him and ACG Benjamin Aber (rtd.).

The same scenario is playing out in other places, too. The Rainbow Coalition does not appear to have its act together or to be sufficiently organised to oust Alia. Most importantly, despite their less-than-cordial relationship, Akume has not yet given his supporters the go-ahead to vote against his party's governorship candidate. For now, in a free and fair contest, the indices seem to favour Alia's re-election.



Concerns as police confirm one dead, five injured in Asaba NDC rally violence

From **Monday Osayande**, Asaba

• Delta govt, Obi condemn incident, demand arrest of perpetrators

POLICE in Delta State have confirmed that a violent attack on supporters of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) during a political rally in Asaba left one person dead and five others seriously injured.

The state government and the NDC presidential candidate, Peter Obi, condemned reported attacks on members and coordinators of the NDC and the *Obidient* Movement in the state.

The incident, which occurred along the busy Nnebisi Road, triggered accusations and counter-accusations between the opposition NDC and the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), raising fresh concerns about the safety of political activities ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Confirming the death and injuries, the police disclosed that it had commenced a full-scale investigation to establish the circumstances surrounding the violence and identify those responsible.

The police spokesperson, SP Bright Edafe, said the rally was organised by the Obedient/OK Movement in support of the NDC presidential candidate.

According to the police, the command had received intelligence indicating the possibility of violence before the rally and consequently invited the organisers to a security meeting.

Edafe explained that during the meeting, the organisers were briefed on the identified security threats and advised against embarking on an open-road procession. Instead, the police reportedly recommended that the political activities be conducted at a designated venue where adequate security arrangements could be provided.

However, the command alleged that the organisers disregarded the security advice and proceeded with the road procession.

Former Speaker of the Delta State House of Assembly and NDC senatorial candidate for Delta North, Victor Ochei, accused members of the ruling APC of being responsible for the attack, describing the incident as unacceptable and a dangerous threat to democratic participation.

Ochei, who addressed journalists at his campaign office in Asaba after the incident, accused the ruling party of allegedly resorting to political intimidation rather than engaging the opposition through issue-based campaigns.

He called on Governor Sheriff Oborevwori to rein in members of his party and prevent the state from descending into an atmosphere of political hostility and bloodshed.

Reacting, the Delta APC Publicity Secretary, Valentine Onojeghuo, dismissed Ochei's claims, insisting that there was no evidence linking members of the ruling party to the violence.

In a statement issued yesterday by the Commissioner for Works (Rural Roads) and Public Information, Charles Aniagwu, the government reiterated its zero tolerance for political violence, intimidation and other forms of political rascality.



A cross-section of beneficiaries at the just-concluded National Poverty Reduction with Growth Strategy (NPRGS) training, organised by the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Technical, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Education, Dr Abiola Arogundade, in Enugu, at the weekend

Niger Delta groups reject Ogoni oil resumption without clean-up

• MOSOP seeks partnership to sustain clean-up gains

From **Ann Godwin** and **Obinna Nwoku**, Port Harcourt

NO fewer than 20 civil society organisations in the Niger Delta have demanded the completion of environmental remediation and community consent before oil production resumes in Ogoniland, Rivers State.

Separately, the Green Ogoni Initiative (GOI), a grassroots mobilisation movement of Ogonis in the Diaspora, rejected the Federal Government's plans to restart oil production in Ogoni against the will of the people. GOI says the plan does not respect the rights of the Ogoni people to self-determination, nor does it include an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the region.

Meanwhile, the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) has expressed readiness to partner with the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) to strengthen community support, protect completed projects and sustain the ongoing Ogoni clean-up.

NGA seeks stronger industry voice, liberalised gas market

By **Waliat Musa**

ENCOURAGED by discussions with Aradel Holdings Plc on policy reforms, infrastructure development and investment in Nigeria's gas sector, the Nigerian Gas Association (NGA) has called for stronger collaboration among industry groups and a competitive, liberalised gas market.

The association spoke during a courtesy visit to Aradel Holdings, led by the NGA President, Yetunde Taiwo, where both organisations discussed critical issues affecting the domestic gas industry's growth and competitiveness.

The talks focused on the implementation of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA), particularly gas pricing, distribution, gas flaring, pipeline infrastructure, and the funding and implementation of the Nigerian Gas Master Plan.

The discussions also highlighted the need to expand gas pipeline infrastructure across the country, alongside addressing regulatory issues involving the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority.

Planners urge implementation of devt plans for cities, emerging settlements

By **Chinedum Uwaegbulam** and **Victor Gbonegun**

TOWN planners have called for the preparation and implementation of regional, master, structure and local development plans for cities, towns and emerging settlements to promote orderly, inclusive and sustainable growth.

They also urged governments to strengthen physical planning institutions through adequate funding, capacity development and the appointment of qualified, registered town planners to relevant professional positions.

The Nathaniel Atebije Foundation for Planning Advocacy (NAFPA) and the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (NITP), Lagos State chapter, gave the charge to mark this year's World Town Planning Day, celebrated yearly on November 8 and themed: "Great Communities are Built on Planning: Together We Deliver, Together We Thrive, Together We Sustain."

In a statement signed by its Director, Nathaniel Atebije, NAFPA expressed concern that despite Nigeria's enormous human and economic resources, many cities, towns and rural settlements continued to experience poor planning, weak development control, fragmented institutions and inadequate investment in planning infrastructure.

It, however, identified the proliferation of informal settlements, indiscriminate land-use conversion, encroachment on green spaces and public reservations, poor drainage and outdated development plans as major challenges, describing the situation in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), as particularly worrying.

The Foundation, therefore, called for a shift from development without physical planning, insisting that approved spatial development plans should guide decisions on housing, transportation, infrastructure, industrial development, agriculture and environmental management.

It also advocated stronger development control to ensure compliance with approved plans, building regulations and environmental standards, without political interference or selective enforcement.

NAFPA stressed the need to protect parks, green spaces, waterways, wetlands and public reservations from incompatible development, while promoting inclusive planning through community engagement and collaborative decision-making.

According to Atebije, physical planning goes beyond preparing master plans, allocating land and regulating buildings. It involves coordinating land and other resources, managing competing interests and creating conditions for economic growth, environmental protection and improved quality of life.

FG secures W/Bank's $200m to boost fisheries, aquaculture in states

By **Adaku Onyenucheya**

THE Federal Government has secured a $200 million commitment from the World Bank Group to support a renewed national drive to expand fisheries and aquaculture production across the country.

The funding, available to state governments as concessional loans, is expected to strengthen their capacity to develop and expand fisheries and aquaculture activities, unlock investment opportunities, boost domestic fish production, and ultimately bridge Nigeria's widening fish supply deficit.

The Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, Dr Adegboyega Oyetola, renewed the push, placing greater emphasis on collaboration among federal and state governments, investors, and development partners to reduce the country's dependence on imported fish and strengthen national food security.

The minister's position was conveyed by the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Marine and Blue Economy, Prof. Busayo Fakinlede, who represented him at a high-level Executive Training on Aquaculture Investment Guide organised by the Federal Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy in collaboration with the World Bank Group.

According to a statement signed yesterday by the Special Adviser to the Minister, Dr Bolaji Akinola, the training, held in Abuja, was designed to equip state-level decision makers with the expertise to translate investment opportunities into bankable aquaculture projects, with emphasis on viable business models, risk management, environmental and social safeguards, and public-private partnerships.

Speaking through his representative, Oyetola said Nigeria's ambition to achieve fish sufficiency could only become a reality through deliberate sub-national participation, stressing that states must assume greater responsibility for expanding domestic production.

Nigeria requires approximately 3.6 million tonnes of fish yearly but currently produces about 1.4 million tonnes, leaving a deficit exceeding 2.2 million tonnes.

The shortfall is largely bridged through imports, which cost the country close to US$1 billion yearly in foreign exchange.

To reverse the trend, the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy is pursuing a state-driven aquaculture development framework under which each state will identify priority value chains, assess investment readiness, develop bankable project pipelines and commit to measurable contributions towards national fish production.

Oyetola said the $200 million World Bank support is expected to provide critical financing for states to implement these priorities, expand production capacity and accelerate the country's journey towards fish sufficiency.

Academy urges FG to invest in genomics, precision medicine to tackle chronic diseases

By **Opeyemi Babalola**

ACADEMY of Medical Sciences has called on the Federal Government to integrate precision medicine and clinical genomics into Nigeria's healthcare system, as part of efforts to strengthen healthcare delivery and tackle the growing burden of non-communicable diseases in the country.

The appeal was contained in a communique issued at the end of its 2026 yearly scientific conference held in Lagos, themed "Genetics and Genomics of Non-Communicable Diseases: Integrating Science into Clinical Care," which brought together scientific scholars, clinical specialists, policymakers, global research leaders and healthcare practitioners to explore how advances in genetics, genomics, transcriptomics, pharmacogenomics, multi-omics and precision medicine could be harnessed to develop effective strategies for tackling the growing burden of non-communicable diseases in Nigeria.

In the communiqué, signed by the immediate Past President, Emeritus Prof. Osato Frank Giwa-Osagie, and its Secretary, Prof. Mayowa Owolabi, the Academy observed that while Africa holds the highest human genetic diversity globally, its African-ancestry cohorts account for only 1.1 per cent of global Genome-Wide Association Studies (GWAS).

ANEEJ, stakeholders fault gaps in Nigeria's asset recovery data management

From **Ernest Nzor**, Abuja

AFRICA Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ) and other stakeholders have identified fragmented agency databases, weak reporting compliance and limited public access to asset recovery records as gaps in Nigeria's asset recovery data management system.

Speaking during a stakeholder briefing in Abuja, ANEEJ Executive Director David Ugolor said these gaps could undermine transparency and accountability in managing recovered public resources.

The comparative analysis report, themed "Peer Learning from Different Jurisdictions on Data Management in Asset Recovery," brought together participants from the Federal Ministry of Justice/Asset Recovery and Management Unit, relevant organisations listed in POCA, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, civil society, and the media.

United Nigeria Airlines tasks varsities on entrepreneurship

From **Owede Agbajileke**, Abuja

CHAIRMAN of United Nigeria Airlines, Prof. Obiora Okonkwo, has urged Nigerian universities to make entrepreneurship education compulsory across all disciplines, warning that graduates must be equipped to create jobs rather than depend solely on paid employment.

Okonkwo, who spoke at the 15th convocation ceremony of Veritas University, Abuja, said the country's higher education system must shift from its traditional emphasis on certificates to practical skills, innovation and self-reliance.

Though he acknowledged that entrepreneurship is not necessarily every graduate's career path, he argued that entrepreneurship should be embedded in the curricula of all academic programmes, including medicine, law, engineering and the sciences.

According to him, universities must prepare graduates to identify opportunities, build businesses and create wealth, rather than churn out job seekers into an already choked labour market.

FG targets Dec. 3 inauguration as Kano-Maradi rail project hits 70% completion

From **Adamu Abuh**, Abuja

THE federal government has stepped up efforts to complete major railway projects in Northern Nigeria, with the Kaduna-Kano Standard Gauge Railway scheduled for inauguration on December 3, 2026.

Disclosing this in a statement yesterday, the All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Campaign Council said the 203-kilometre Kaduna-Zaria-Kano railway project had attained approximately 90 per cent completion, up from about 30 per cent when President Bola Tinubu assumed office in May 2023.

Also, the council said the 400-kilometre Kano-Katsina-Maradi railway project had reached 70 per cent completion, rising from barely five per cent at the beginning of the Tinubu administration.

According to the spokesperson of the APC Campaign Council, Dele Alake, the progress on the projects demonstrated the administration's commitment to expanding railway infrastructure, improving regional connectivity and facilitating the movement of passengers and goods.

He explained that the Kaduna-Kano railway, an extension of the existing Abuja-Kaduna Standard Gauge Railway, would establish a continuous rail connection between Abuja, Kaduna, Zaria and Kano.

AP flagbearer urges global intervention over 3.68m displaced Nigerians

By **Seye Olumide**

PRESIDENTIAL candidate of the Accord Party (AP), Gbenga Olawepo-Hashim, has called for greater international intervention in Nigeria's worsening humanitarian and security crises, particularly the estimated 3.68 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) across the country.

Olawepo-Hashim also called for the immediate release of Hausa cultural activist, Maisango, whom he alleged was being unlawfully detained, and further highlighted the reports of attacks and the destruction of 11 villages in Shanga Local Council Area of Kebbi State.

He questioned Maisango's continued detention without trial, even though the Department of State Services (DSS) has dismissed him from its employ.

The AP presidential candidate spoke during an engagement with the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), where he urged the international community to broaden its understanding of religious persecution and ethnic discrimination in Nigeria.

Noting the persecution of Christians in parts of Northern Nigeria, he argued that issues on religious freedom in Nigeria should not be viewed exclusively through the experiences of Christians and Muslims, as the Shia Muslims, minority Islamic sects and Hausa Muslim communities also experience discrimination and exclusion.

According to him, religious intolerance in the country sometimes intersects with ethnic identity and cultural differences, resulting in unequal treatment of people who profess the same faith.

On the humanitarian situation, Hashim cited figures from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),indicating that approximately 3.68 million Nigerians were internally displaced as of October 2026.

He argued that the scale of displacement demonstrated the widespread consequences of insecurity, adding that the plight of affected communities should attract international attention irrespective of their religious or ethnic backgrounds.

Among the incidents, he highlighted the reported attacks on communities in Shanga Local Government Area of Kebbi State, where 11 villages had reportedly been burnt and many residents killed.

He alleged that some armed groups operating in the region were driven less by religious conversion than by violence, territorial control and the destruction of established communities.



Executive Chairman, Presidential Initiative on Compressed Natural Gas and Electric Vehicles (Pi-CNG & EV), Ismaeel Ahmeed (left); Permanent Secretary, State House, Temitope Fashedemi; Senior Special Assistant to the President on Special Duties and Domestic Affairs, Oluwatoyin Subair, and the Chief Executive Officer, Rolling Energy, Mubarak Dambatta, during the inauguration of the CNG Integrated Refuelling Unit in Abuja at the weekend. PHOTO: NAN

Gombe targets over 100,000 learners in education reforms

From **Najib Sanity**, Gombe

GOMBE State has commenced the expansion of its EIDU-supported Digital Personalised Learning (DPL) programme to 764 schools, targeting no fewer than 100,000 learners in the initiative aimed at improving foundational literacy and numeracy across the state.

The expansion was formally flagged off over the weekend at Mu'azu Bolari Primary School, Gombe, with a training programme for teachers and head teachers who will drive the initiative across the participating schools.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Gombe State Commissioner for Education, Prof. Aisha Maigari, described the Gombe State-EIDU basic education reform programme as an important intervention with direct benefits in learners' digital development, and assured stakeholders of the government's commitment to sustaining and expanding the initiative.

Nigerians among most terrorised, poverty-stricken under Tinubu, says Obi

• Kwankwaso says president delaying tax collection due to 2027 election

By **Kehinde Olatunji**

PRESIDENTIAL candidate of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), Mr Peter Obi, has lamented that Nigeria ranks among the most terrorised countries in the world and challenged President Bola Tinubu to disclose how many citizens his administration has pulled out of poverty and hunger.

In a post on X, the former Anambra State governor told the president to account for how well the country has been secured under his watch, noting that Nigerians deserve to know what has been done with the resources entrusted to his government.

Meanwhile, the NDC vice presidential candidate, Dr Rabiu Kwankwaso, has expressed regrets over not forming an alliance with Obi in the 2023 general election, saying that their joint ticket could have defeated the All Progressives Congress (APC) in that election.

Kwankwaso spoke in Dutse, the Jigawa State capital, over the weekend while addressing party supporters, adding that he did not truly understand Obi until now.

ACCORDING to Obi, "Nigerians deserve to know how many were pulled out of poverty within this period, how many out-of-school children were returned to school, and how many functional primary healthcare centres you have built.

"They deserve an explanation of how you have secured the country, which still ranks among the most terrorised countries in the world."

Berating Tinubu's "over 260 days outside Nigeria since coming into office," Obi said Nigerians "also deserve to know how much electricity supply has improved, especially given your promise that if you do not fix power, Nigerians should not vote for you."

NEVERTHELESS, the former Kano State governor described their alliance ahead of the 2027 general election as a turning point for national development.

Moreover, Kwankwaso alleged that President Tinubu's administration delayed the collection of taxes under the newly enacted tax laws for fear of losing the 2027 general election.

NAF redeploys 41 Air Vice Marshals in leadership shake-up

From **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

IN a major leadership shake-up aimed at strengthening command effectiveness, enhancing institutional capacity and sustaining operational readiness for national security objectives, the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) has redeployed 41 Air Vice Marshals (AVMs).

The exercise, approved by the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Marshal Sunday Aneke, affected the Service Headquarters, operational commands, Defence Headquarters (DHQ), military training institutions and other strategic establishments.

Announcing the redeployment in a statement yesterday, the NAF Director of Public Relations and Information, Air Commodore Ehimen Ejodame, said the appointments reflect "a deliberate effort to align leadership competencies and professional experience with the service's evolving operational and institutional priorities."

At the operational command level, AVM NI Ilo has been appointed Air Officer Commanding (AOC), Tactical Air Command, while AVM BR Mamman takes over as AOC, Mobility Command.

Similarly, AVM OS Ogunsina has been appointed AOC, Logistics Command; AVM MN Onyebashi, AOC, Special Operations Command; and AVM FCS Nwakara, AOC, Ground Training Command.

At the NAF Headquarters, AVM AK Ademuwagunis now the Chief of Transformation and Innovation, while AVM IV Ajiboye has been appointed Superintendent of Standards and Evaluation.

Among others, AVM MA Sulaiman was appointed Chief of Communications and Information Systems, while AVM AJ Laoye became Chief of Aircraft Engineering.

The shake-up also affected military training institutions, with AVM PB Philips appointed Commandant of the Armed Forces Command and Staff College (AFCSC), while AVM MC Ekwueme is now Commandant of the Armed Forces Resettlement Centre.

Enugu pensioners commend Mbah for clearing 26-year gratuity arrears

From **Lawrence Njoku**, Enugu

ENUGU State pensioners, under the auspices of the Nigeria Union of Pensioners (NUP), have commended Governor Peter Mbah for clearing the state's legacy arrears, describing their decades of disappointment in retirement as a harrowing experience.

The pensioners spoke as retirees started receiving their gratuities dating back to the year 2000, with some also extending to the military era, saying the development had restored life to their bodies.

Chairman of the Enugu State chapter of NUP, Ikechukwu Ekere, confirmed the payment over the weekend, describing the development as "an emotional moment for pensioners, many of whom had long given up hope of receiving their gratuities in their lifetime."

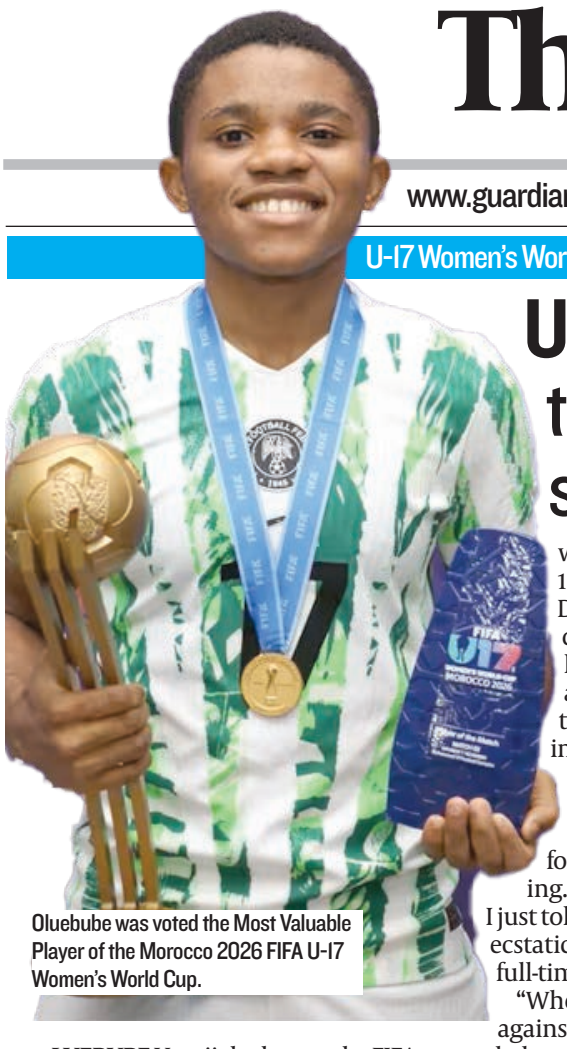
Similarly, Caretaker Chairman of the Nigeria Union of Pensioners, Local Government Staff Pensions Board branch, Kenneth Ugwueze, told newsmen that the development had restored hope and joy in many homes.

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U-17 Women's World Cup Fall-out

Umejiaku: 'Even when we lost to Poland, we knew we could still do something great'



Oluebube was voted the Most Valuable Player of the Morocco 2026 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup.

OLUEBUBE Umejiaku begun the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup Morocco 2026 on the bench. She ended it in the headlines as the final's decisive scorer and the tournament's standout player, writes *fifa.com*.

Her ascent, in many ways, mirrored Nigeria's. She scored as a substitute in their opener with Poland, but that strike was scant consolation in a 2-1 defeat. Further goals against DPR Korea, Mexico and in the decider with Japan, though, helped her nation to wins, and to become the first team to lose their opener before lifting the title.

"Every time I went to training and every time I slept, I told God that I'm praying for all the people that are starting. But when I wanted to start, I just told God that it is my time," an ecstatic Umejiaku said to FIFA at full-time.

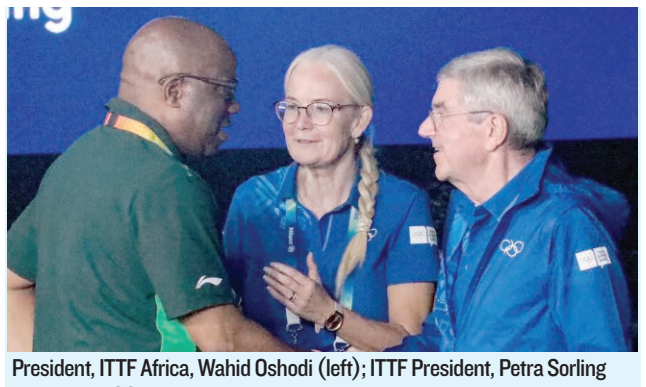
"When we lost the first game against Poland, everybody said we needed to wake up because we didn't come here to look at anybody's face and we have to take every game as a final. We don't downgrade anything; we play and we put all our best into every game."

Awawu Bashiru was another player who didn't immediately fit into coach Akeem Busari's plans, playing just 77 minutes between their opener and the quarterfinal with Venezuela. But she was brought in for her first start versus Brazil and netted twice, before scoring the opening goal in the final.

"I'm so happy, I'm so excited and I'm so grateful," she said. "The teamwork, instructions and listening to our coaches is why we got the goals and why we won the final. We are history-makers. We made Nigeria, and the millions of people there, proud."

Busari's tweaks to the line-up eventually paid dividends, though he doesn't see those changes as a coaching masterstroke, but rewarding players who continued to show up and earned their chance to shine.

"No matter how good you are, I'm a coach that plays on character," Busari said of making those key changes. "It's all about mindset, attitude and merit; if they're there, you get your playing time. If they're not there, you're waiting to come in. As a coach, we want everyone to wire up and play together."



President, ITTF Africa, Wahid Oshodi (left); ITTF President, Petra Sorling and former IOC President, Thomas Bach during the final of the table tennis event of the 2026 Youth Olympic Games at the Dakar Expo Centre, Senegal, over the weekend.

Dakar 2026 Youth Olympics

'Successful outing affirms Africa's readiness for int'l events'

By **Christian Okpara**

ITTF Africa President, Wahid Oshodi, has described the organisation of the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games as proof of Africa's capacity to host world-class sporting competitions.

Oshodi said the event has showcased Africa's hospitality, culture and organisational capabilities to the global community.

Speaking on the sidelines of activities linked to the Games, Oshodi said: "Everything has been fine. Transportation has been excellent, the people have been overwhelmingly nice, and the competition has been very good.

"The opening ceremony was fantastic, truly out of this world. The cultural displays brought everything home to us in Africa and made us proud. Overall, everyone has been warm and welcoming, and the events have been very well organised."

According to the former Lagos State Commissioner for Sports, the Youth Olympic Games presents a unique opportunity for Africa to project its strengths, both on and off the sporting arena.

Oshodi, who began his formal sports administration career at the Lagos State Sports Council in 1999, reflected on a journey that has seen him hold several influential positions across national, continental and international sports bodies.

First Bank/Samuel Okwaraji Cup

Ondo, Ogun, Imo, Abia, others qualify for national finals

By **Eniola Daniel**

TWELVE schools across the country have qualified for the national finals of the inaugural Sam Okwaraji Championship following the conclusion of the zonal qualifiers.

The zonal qualifiers of the competition, sponsored by FirstBank Plc, were held across the country's six geopolitical zones, providing a platform for young talents to showcase their skills, with participating schools delivering impressive performances in their respective centres.

At the Lagos centre, which featured four states, Ondo and Ogun emerged as the two teams to qualify for the national finals after impressing against hosts Lagos and Oyo.

Ondo State emerged champions of the zone with seven points from three matches, finishing as the only unbeaten team. Ogun secured the second ticket despite putting up a strong challenge for the top position.

Ogun had recorded victories over Lagos and Oyo and appeared poised to complete a perfect run before running into an impressive Ondo side in their final encounter.

The Sunshine State boys produced a determined performance to secure a 2-0 victory, finishing top of the standings and pushing Ogun into second place.

Lagos finished third with four points from a win, a draw and a loss, while Oyo ended the campaign at the bottom without a point.

At the South-East centre in Owerri, Imo and Abia states claimed the two available tickets to the national finals.

Ezeachi Secondary School, Orlu, Imo State, completed a perfect campaign after defeating Ebonyi State's Estington Academy International School, Orueke, 1-0 at the Dan Anyiam Stadium, Owerri.

CIO Golf Championship crucial for top players' rankings, says Uganda's Rugumayo

By **Christian Okpara**

UGANDA'S Ronald Rugumayo, who is one of the top foreign players in Nigeria for the CIO Open Golf Championship, has explained that the competition has become attractive to top stars because of its importance to their aspirations in the sport.

Describing the championship as a defining event for Safari Tour players, Rugumayo cited its N100 million purse and significant influence on rankings and qualification for the prestigious Magical Kenya Open.

One of the few East African professionals with repeated appearances at the championship, Rugumayo said its growing prize fund has attracted leading continental players, increasing competition and the ranking points available.

"The CIO is one singular event that has the biggest leverage on the Safari Tour because of the huge points players get when they perform well in it. Most players who falter or have huge gaps have one event that can give them the highest leverage, and that is the CIO," he said.



Rugumayo

Otti reaffirms commitment to sports development

MOUA wins Abia Tertiary Institutions Games

From **Gordi Udeaja**, Umuahia

THE Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAU) has won the second Abia State Tertiary Education Sports Fiesta with an impressive 110 medals. The university clinched 47 gold, 47 silver and 42 bronze medals to secure the top position in the keenly contested sporting fiesta, which brought together tertiary institutions across the state.

At the event sponsored by the Abia State government, the Ogbonnaya Onu Polytechnic finished second with 98 medals, comprising 47 gold, 31 silver and 20 bronze medals, while Abia State University, Uturu (ABSU), came third with 87 medals, made up of 37 gold, 29 silver and 21 bronze medals.

Gregory University, Uturu, occupied the fourth position with 68 medals, including 37 gold, 15 silver and 16 bronze medals.

NBA President confirms attendance for Lagos Women Run

By **Eniola Daniel**

THE organisers of the yearly Lagos Women Run have said that they are putting finishing touches to the preparations for the 2026 edition to make the event scheduled for November 14 the best yet.

According to the organisers, this year's event will continue the race's objective of building women, livelihoods, enterprise in respective sustainable communities.

Looking forward to a memorable event, the coordinator of the race, Tayo Popoola, explained that there are various other activities attached to the Women Run.

"The Lagos Women Run cuts across various aspects of life and so it is not just about the race on the D-Day. There are various training programmes, lectures and all the activities are rich enough change the narrative for participants.

"So far, we have been receiving entries from various parts of the country and we are optimistic this edition will be an upgrade to the last one," Popoola said.

Solution

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Alabi Williams
SMS only: 08116759790;
email: williams.alabi@guardian.ng



Umejiaku: 'Even when we lost to Poland, we knew we could still do something great' /31



2027: Opposition's struggle to campaign

DESPITE immense advantages at its disposal, the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), is not making pretenses that it is haunted by fear of the same opposition it had disarrayed. The government and the party have continued to deploy efforts, obvious and remote, to continue to frustrate opposition campaigns in several locations across the country.

For a party that has governed for nearly 12 years, and is very boastful of its far-fetched macro achievements, what else would make it so insecure, to resort to jankara tactics: bulldoze opposition offices, set thugs against peaceful gatherings, shut down hotels, stadiums and public event centres, just to deny the opposition a free and fair environment to reach voters? What else, apart from the desperation to deny impoverished and disrespected Nigerians the opportunity for a payback.

In Kebbi State, residents woke up last Tuesday; to find earth-moving equipment mowing down a building located along Sanni Abacha Bypass, in a manner that betrayed crude justice and vengeance. Ordinary folks who were moved to record the demolition, which they shared on social media, questioned the motive. Some alleged the building had been designated to serve as youth office for the major opposition political party in the state.

Former Attorney General of the Federation and governorship candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), in Kebbi State, Abubakar Malami, accused the state government of being behind the demolition, to intimidate and provoke his supporters. But the government denied involvement and claimed the action was the result of a private dispute between individuals. Malami has asked his lawyers to go to court to ask whether private individuals can pull down structures. That was not the first time the ADC in Kebbi would suffer what is apparently state sponsored aggression. Not the last either.

In Sokoto State, it was crass high-handedness last week, when the state government did everything to suffocate the opposition. The ADC was billed to flag off its presidential campaign on Saturday, October 31, 2026, in Sokoto, but the event had to be shifted to Wednesday, November 4, when the state government reportedly embargoed bookings into major hotels in the state capital.

As the story was reported in traditionally credible media, the absence of hospitality places to lodge party leaders and guests arriving to witness the campaign flag-off became a logistic hurdle. To overcome that, members of the party who had accommodation in Sokoto had to open them to the guests.

That settled, the next challenge for the party was how to secure a venue for the event. As reported, there were the options of hosting it at the Trade Fair Complex, for which the party had been charged N20 million by the government. The party agreed to pay the fee, but the account for payment was not disclosed on the eve of the event. The other option was the state ecretariat of the party situated at No. 1 Ilorin Road, Sokoto. Even here, there had been uncertainty, as prior to the event, the government had sealed the Secretariat over purported dispute.

In the absence of another venue, the party resolved to stay put at its Secretariat. Apparently, the government had relaxed its position for renovation work to be carried out on the premises by Monday, November 2. However, a detachment of security personnel in five Hilux vehicles had been stationed there. While members of the party feared the state government may have resumed the sealing of the place, the State Police Command interpreted the deployment as part of measures to prevent breakdown of law and order.



The Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Ahmad Rufai told newsmen: "We have done our deployment and gathered intelligence to ensure there is no breakdown of law and order. All hands are on deck to ensure that flag-off takes place without violence, God willing." God could not have willed otherwise.

In the face oppression, the party was compelled to drag Governor Ahmad Aliyu, for refusing to approve a venue, and also interfering in the party's campaign activities. In a statement by Mallam Bolaji Abudullahi, national publicity secretary of the party, the party condemned what it noted as political obstruction and attempt to intimidate the party.

The statement reads in part: "The Sokoto State Government must understand that governing a state does not confer ownership. Public office is a temporary mandate from the people, not a license to suppress political competition. No governor has the power to decide which party can campaign, which candidate can speak, or which political choices the people of Sokoto are allowed to consider…"

The party managed to flag-off the campaigns in Sokoto despite the restrictions. The campaign in Kebbi, the following day, was not different with regards to state-sponsored restrictions. The event was limited to the party secretariat in the state capital.

At the end of the Kebbi campaign, Amnesty International (AI), condemned the violence that was unleashed on the convoy. Amnesty International commented on footages that it analysed, showing armed gangs carrying weapons, and attacking vehicles and party faithful. Apart from the direct attacks, AI said hoodlums suspected to be sponsored, pelted vehicles with bottles, stones and also attacked media crews, destroying cameras and other gadgets.

Amnesty International said: "Clearly, a brutal campaign of repression against the opposition and its supporters is increasingly making it extremely difficult for them to exercise their rights to freedom of association and peaceful political activities. So far, Nigerian authorities have failed to ensure accountability for such atrocities that happened in many states, including Niger, Kaduna, Edo and Enugu. In all the cases investigated by Amnesty International, security agencies failed to do their job of preventing or stopping the attacks to protect the right to freedom of association…"

On November 4, the convoy of the presidential candidate of Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), Peter Obi, along with his wife, Margaret and running mate, Rabiu Kwankwaso, was attacked by suspected thugs around Watt Market Roundabout, Calabar. Obi was said to be returning from a courtesy visit to the Obong of Calabar's palace, on his way to the Metropolitan Hotel, where an event was to be hosted.

The thugs were reported to be armed with machetes, sticks, stones and bottles. They attacked vehicles and smashed windscreens. One arrest was made. For Obi, that was not the first time he will be waylaid in the course of the campaigns. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) opened the space for parties and candidates to reach out to voters on August 22, 2026. It is a statutory part of the electioneering system and is covered by laws.

> "You cannot supervise signing a peace accord and then go to sleep in the face intimidation, violence and open threat to peaceful campaigns, only to return in four years to sign another peace accord. What the organisers should do is, follow the process, document violators of the accord and call them out."

The Presidential candidate of Africa Action Congress (AAC), Omoyele Sowore, and members of his team were violently attacked in Ado Ekiti on October 30, at Tawakalitu Restaurant, Damilore area, after he had finished an interview at MIDAS FM. According to Sowore, armed men stormed the restaurant and descended on them with sticks and machetes. They robbed them of telecom devices, slashed vehicle tyres and destroyed other items. Sowore presented video evidence of the Police Cottage hospital in Okesha, Ado Ekiti, where they were given treatment and discharged.

They left with injuries to the knee, hands, lacerations on the head, swollen eyes and bleeding nose. Sowore said it was an assassination attempt on his life. But the Police described the attack as an altercation, with Sowore and his group sustaining minor injuries. The Police later arraigned 11 suspects before Chief Magistrate Abayomi Adeosun, in Ado Ekiti, for conspiracy and assault occasioning harm. They were charged under Sections 421, 186, 363, 181(1)(d) Criminal Law of Ekiti 2021, and granted bail in the sum of N100,000 each. The case was adjourned to December 4, 2026.

But Sowore has a different story from what the Police have declared. He named 12 suspects based on video evidence and intelligence gathered at the scene of attacks and a GPS tracking of stolen devices. These are government and APC related individuals with some participating in the physical assault. Sowore has called for an independent investigation of the matter because he does not trust the Police.

Sowore was among the presidential candidates who physically signed the peace accord on August 18,2026. Even though he said it was a ritual, he signed because he "wanted to bring faith" into the system. Those who attacked him and their sponsors are the ones who do not believe in this democracy. They go about using force to intimidate opponents. It is high time the organisers of the Peace Accord and their sponsors changed tactics.

You cannot supervise signing a peace accord and then go to sleep in the face intimidation, violence and open threat to peaceful campaigns, only to return in four years to sign another peace accord. What the organisers should do is, follow the process, document violators of the accord and call them out. Let it be on record that those who perpetrate violence do not go scot-free, and that their activities do not go unnoticed. Perhaps, that could challenge law enforcers to be neutral and do the needful.

The NDC also decried what it called the desperate attempt by the APC to muzzle opposition. In a statement signed by the party's national publicity secretary, Osa Director, last Friday, the party reported the desperate attempt to constrict the democratic space through violent attacks and using soft targets. The party said that on two occasions, a popular hotel in Abuja denied it use of their space after payment. Another hotel in Wuse, Abuja, bluntly refused to allow the party unveil its national campaign council. The flimsy reasons are always "orders from above." NDC believes APC is responsible for issuing such anti-democratic orders just to frustrate the opposition.

The party said: "This is not democracy. The APC should allow all parties to campaign without let or hindrance, and give Nigerians the opportunity to make their choices on who governs them."

If it is democracy we want, we must play by the rules. Let those in power today not forget history.

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