The Guardian

Conscience, Nurtured by Truth

www.guardian.ng

Vol. 43, No. 18,260 ■ Tuesday, November 17, 2026 Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria N300



Atiku, Obi, Makinde, others meet in Abuja to sign pact

NEWS PAGE 3

No one can remotely log out BVAS before voting ends, INEC clarifies

NEWS PAGE 3

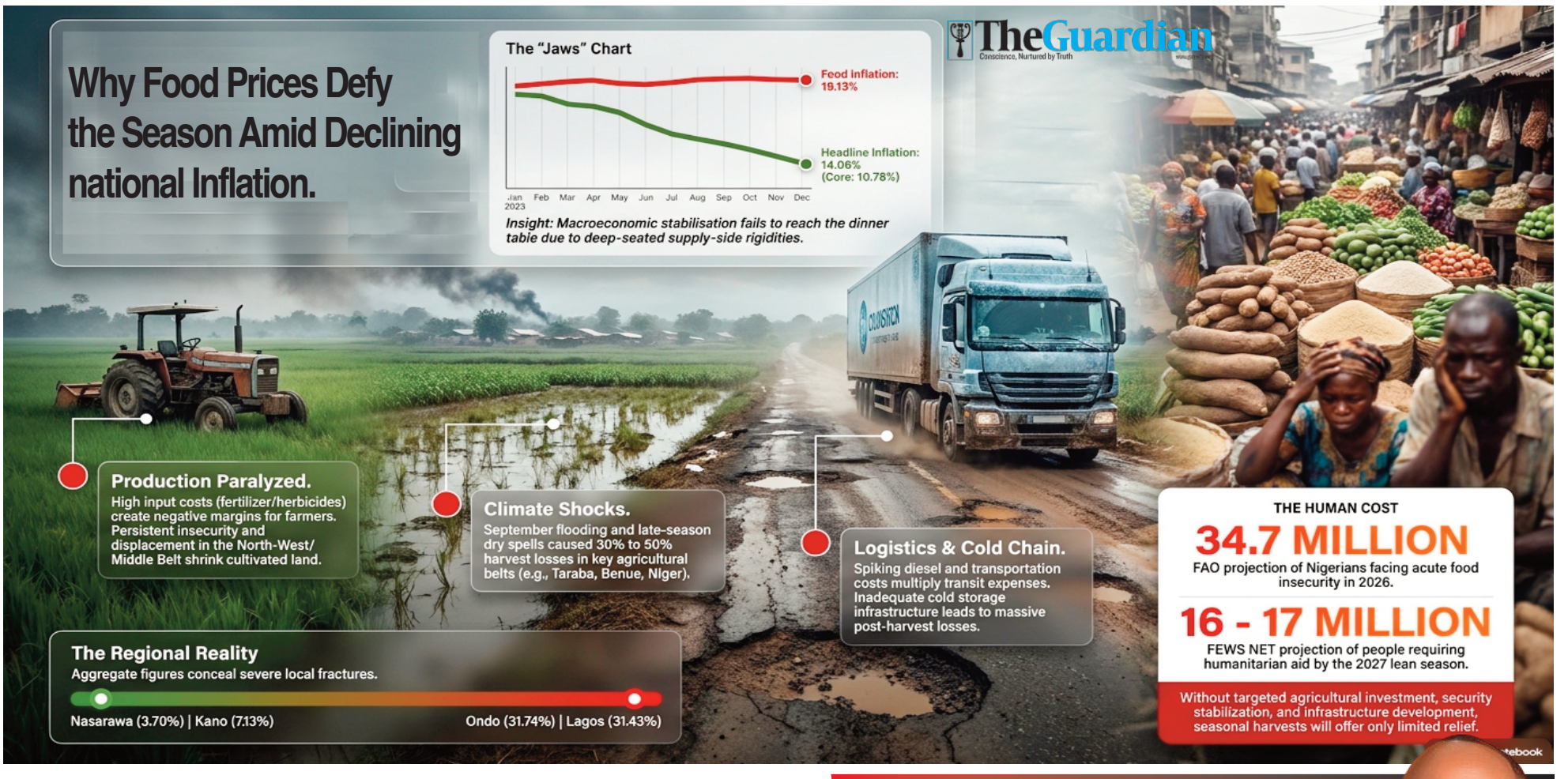
CJN cautions magistrates against hasty judgments, courtroom delays

NEWS PAGE 3



Food prices defy harvest, easing inflation amid supply constraints

P6



'Ponzi schemes, digital fraud threaten Nigeria's financial stability'

NEWS PAGE 4

B20 USA: BPP DG champions Nigeria First Procurement Agenda in Washington

NEWS PAGE 4



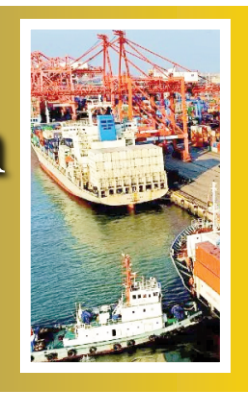


State police bill clears hurdle as Tinubu pushes intelligence-led security

NEWS PAGE 6

After 50 years, FG begins Apapa, Tin Can ports rehabilitation Nov. 25

BUSINESS PAGE 18



FCT Police release 78 suspects in Tinubu mosque attack

NEWS PAGE 30

States fall short of pension obligations, undermine 10-year MPG plan

BUSINESS PAGE 15

Panorama

www.guardian.ng
Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

SPOTLIGHT

Bandits kill Chinese miner, police inspector in Bauchi

SUSPECTED bandits have killed a Chinese national, Wang Tingjian, and a Police Inspector, Yau Abba, in an ambush on a company vehicle conveying the expatriate in Alkaleri Local Government Area of Bauchi State.

The incident occurred on Saturday, at Ruga Village in Gwana District, where the Chinese was engaged in core drilling activities as part of a mining site survey.

The Bauchi State Police Command confirmed the attack yesterday, saying the company vehicle conveying the expatriate was ambushed while security personnel were escorting him.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Nafiu Habib, while confirming the incident on Monday, explained that the attack resulted in an exchange of gunfire between the security operatives and the assailants.

"Yes, it is true that the incident occurred on Saturday. The team was ambushed, and following an exchange of gunfire between the security personnel escorting the miner and the assailants, the miner and one police officer lost their lives," he said.

"During the survey, they were ambushed by unknown gunmen. The Chinese national had even run towards the vehicle conveying them for safety, but they were overwhelmed," Habib said.

FG targets 91% increase in CNG-enabled vehicles by 2027

THE Federal Government says it is targeting an increase in CNG-enabled vehicles from 143,000 to 273,000 by February 2027, representing a 91 per cent growth.

Mrs Tari Mayor-Bright, Head of Gas Supply Integration, Compressed Natural Gas and Electric Vehicles (Pi-CNG & EV), disclosed this on Monday in Abuja at its Regional Town Hall and Stakeholders' Dialogue.

Mayor-Bright said the target was part of efforts by the Pi-CNG & EV to accelerate the adoption of CNG as an alternative fuel for motorists.

She said the initiative had recorded significant progress, with the number of converted vehicles increasing from 11,500 in 2023 to 143,000 by September 2026.

She added that the number of conversion centres had increased from about seven in 2023 to 415 by September, while CNG refuelling stations grew from seven to 116 within the period.

According to her, private sector investment in the programme has risen from 500 million dollars in 2023 to more than $2.6 billion in 2026.



Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), Kenechukwu Onwuemelie (left); newly promoted DIG, Olaolu Adegbite and Inspector General of Police, Olatunji Disu during the decoration of the new DIG at the Force Headquarters in Abuja,yesterday. PHOTO: LUCY LADIDI ATEKO

Youth Olympics gold medallists get $20,000 each

By **Gowon Akpodonor**

CHAIRMAN of the National Sports Commission (NSC), Shehu Dikko, has confirmed that Nigeria's Youth Olympics gold medallists will each receive $20,000 from the commission, with payment currently being processed and coaches also included in the reward package.

Dikko disclosed this on Monday while responding to enquiries about the outstanding $3,000 instant reward promised to athletes for winning gold at the Youth Olympics and whether their coaches would also benefit.

"The payment is being processed. Coaches are also giving to share," Dikko said.

He subsequently revealed that the athletes had already been promised a substantially bigger reward under the Presidential Rewards framework, with each gold medallist entitled to $20,000.

Tinubu's education reforms yielding results, Alausa insists

From **Owede Agbajileke** (Abuja)

MINISTER of Education, Dr Tunji Alausa, has defended the education reforms of President Bola Tinubu, insisting that the administration is recording measurable gains in student financing, infrastructure development, university funding and access to education.

Alausa, who dismissed criticisms of the government's policies by opposition figures, particularly by former Anambra State Governor, Peter Obi, said the reforms were already delivering tangible benefits to millions of Nigerian students.

The minister spoke yesterday during a briefing at the All Progressives Congress Presidential Campaign Council headquarters in Abuja, where he highlighted the administration's interventions in the education sector, challenged critics to acquaint themselves with existing laws before condemning government policies.

Taking on Obi over his criticism of the Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND), Alausa said Obi's criticism of the funding arrangement for the Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) reflected a misunderstanding of the relevant provisions of the Nigeria Tax Act.

... DAY 4587

OUR GIRLS STILL MISSING

Tope Templer Olaiya, News Editor

@TopeTempler



RANDOM FACTS

• Nigeria now has the most TikTok users in Africa with 61.4 million. Egypt comes in second place with 57.5 million.

• Lypophrenia - A vague feeling of sadness seemingly without cause. This often occurs when a person misses someone.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

• A consumer is entitled to be given information in plain and understandable language where such is required to be given by an undertaking ("this includes a seller, supplier, distributor, importer and a manufacturer"). The test of whether information is in plain language is the reasonable man's test of the standard of persons which the information is disseminated to.

TODAY'S QUOTE

"If insurgency lasts for more than 24 hours, the government has a hand in it.

A coup is not a tea party. It is a revolution.

SANI ABACHA

Life is continuously being hungry. The meaning of life is not simply to exist, to survive, but to move ahead, to go up, to achieve.

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER"

TODAY IN HISTORY

• 2024 - Nigeria
The Independent National Electoral Commission declared Governor Lucky Ayedatiwa winner of governorship election in Ondo State.
• Pres. Bola Tinubu conferred Nigeria's second-highest national honour of Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON) on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was on a state visit to the country.

• 2023 - Nigeria
Police released Azeez Fashola aka Naira Marley and Balogun Samson aka Sam Larry after meeting their bail conditions. Justice Adeola Olatunbosun of Lagos Magistrates Court, Yaba, on Nov 6 granted them bail in the sum of N20 million with three sureties in like sum. The magistrate also ordered the defendants to surrender their passports and make weekly appearances at the State Criminal Investigation Department in Panti, Yaba. They were arrested in connection with the death of Ilerioluwa Aloba aka Mohbad who died in a mysterious circumstance on September 12. The police arrested Sam Larry on September 29 and Marley on October 4.

• 2021 - Nigeria
United States removed Nigeria from the list of countries blacklisted for promoting religious extremism.

• 2019 - China
The first known case of COVID-19 was traced to a 55-year-old man who had visited a market in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.

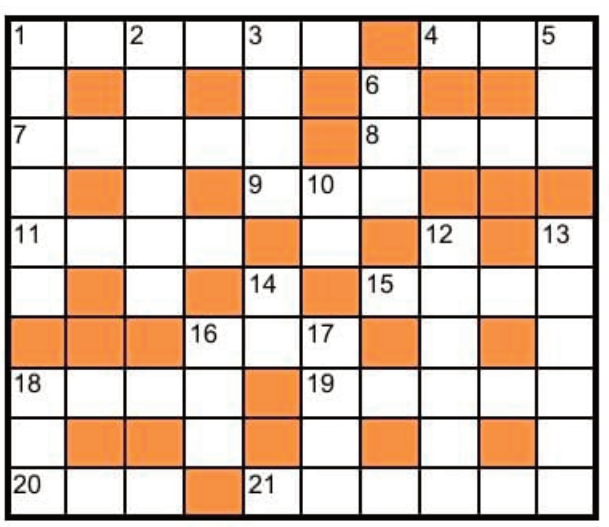
• 2003 - USA
Actor Arnold Schwarzenegger's tenure as governor of California began. He served as governor till 2011.

• 1993 - Nigeria
General Sani Abacha overthrew the interim administration of Ernest Shonekan in a military coup. He served as the interim head of state from August 26, 1993 to November 17, 1993 after Gen. Ibrahim Babangida stepped aside over crisis the anullment of June 12 election created.

• 1986 - USA
Flight crew of Japan Airline Flight 1628 were involved in a UFO sighting incident while flying over Alaska.

• 1948 - Nigeria
The University of Ibadan's Founder's Day is celebrated on November 17, anniversary of the day the first sod was cut at the permanent site in 1948. This date marks the university's official beginning. The first sod was cut by Arthur Creech Jones at the permanent site of the University College. The university's first buildings were designed by modernist architects Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew.

CROSS WORD PUZZLE



• ACROSS
I. Terror, (6).
4. Poke sharply, (3).
7. Confused mixture of voices, (5).
8. Menacing, (4).
9. Japanese currency unit, (3).
II. Guitar-like musical instrument, (4).
I5. Sportswear manufacturer, (4).
I6. 'Come' in Igbo language, (3).
I8. Horrific, (4).
I9. Male reproductive cell, (5).
20. Drag by a rope, (3).
2I. Horse's gait, (6).

• DOWN
I. Skillful, (6).
2. Discount, (6).
3. Exclusively, (4).
5. Recess in a wall, (3).
6. Weapon that fires bullets, (3).
I0. For example, abbr., (2).
I2. Not making noise, (6).
I3. To whine, (6).
I4. Artificial insemination, abbr, (2).
I6. Goodbye, (3).
I7. World's largest continent, (4).
I8. Intestine, (3).

© Olulana Olukayode

Check page 31 for solution to the puzzle

News

www.guardian.ng
Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

CJN cautions magistrates against hasty judgments, courtroom delays

•PCA warns elections tribunal staff against bribery
•Describes Registry as every tribunal's engine room

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

CHIEF Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Kudirat Kekere-Ekun, has warned magistrates and other lower court judges against yielding to pressure to deliver hurried judgments, insisting that judicial officers must balance speedy justice with fairness and thorough consideration of cases.

Also, President of the Court of Appeal (PCA), Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, warned secretaries and registry staff of election petition tribunals against accepting bribes or compromising judicial processes ahead of the 2027 general elections.

While opening a two-day Capacity Building Workshop for Registry and Support Staff of the 2027 Election Petition Tribunals in Abuja, yesterday, the PCA warned them not to allow themselves to be used as weapons to truncate the electoral process.

Kekere-Ekun said judicial officers must resist attempts to stampede them into making hasty decisions, even as they work to address delays that continue to undermine public confidence in Nigeria's justice system.

She gave the warning on Monday at the opening of the 2026 All Nigeria Judges' Conference of the Lower Courts, organised by the National Judicial Institute (NJI) in Abuja.

At the conference themed 'Enhancing Effective Justice Delivery Through Innovation and Institutional Efficiency', the CJN stressed that magistrates, Sharia Court judges, Area Court judges and Customary Court judges occupy a critical position in the country's judicial system because they handle disputes that directly affect the daily lives of ordinary Nigerians.

According to her, these courts adjudicate cases involving family relationships, inheritance, land disputes, commercial transactions and personal liberty, making them the first and, in some cases, only point of contact between citizens and the judiciary.

Earlier, the Administrator of NJI, Justice Babatunde Adejumo, warned judicial officers against allowing technological innovation to compromise judicial ethics and institutional discipline.

DONGBAN-MENSEM, in her opening remarks, warned that any staff found engaging in corrupt practices would be sanctioned, stressing that the assignment was a call to national service and not an opportunity for personal aggrandisement.

The PCA said the exercise was designed to prepare tribunal staff for the administrative demands of handling electoral disputes.

She described the registry as the engine room of every tribunal, noting that its efficiency, integrity and transparency were critical to the timely administration of electoral justice.

Last week, the CJN had inaugurated 375 judicial officers from different jurisdictions across the country to serve on election petition tribunals ahead of the 2027 general elections.

According to the PCA, the responsibilities of registry staff include receiving and filing petitions, serving processes on parties, issuing hearing notices, preparing records of proceedings and orders, preserving tribunal documents and compiling records, adding that the registry's performance directly affects the efficiency of tribunals and public confidence in the judicial process.

Citing Sections 285(1) and (2) of the 1999 Constitution, Dongban-Mensem said the PCA was empowered to constitute election petition tribunals in every state of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), among other roles.

She charged the tribunal secretaries to familiarise themselves with the Electoral Act 2026 and the Election Petition Tribunal Proceedings Practice Direction 2026, warning that ignorance of the relevant provisions could expose them to manipulation and costly administrative errors.



Former Chief Justice of Nigeria, Mahmud Mohammed (left); Chief Justice of Nigeria, Kudirat Kekere-Ekun and former CJN, Walter Onnoghen during the opening ceremony of the 2026 All Nigeria Judges Conference of the lower court in Abuja. Yesterday. PHOTO: LUCY LADIDI ATEKO

NDC drags Tinubu as debt interest exceeds federal revenue

FCT contractors urge Wike to approve payment for completed, verified projects

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

THE National Campaign Council (NCC) of Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) has accused President Bola Tinubu's administration of mismanaging public finances, citing World Bank figures showing federal debt interest payments exceeding revenue in the first half of 2026.

Meanwhile, the Association of Indigenous Contractors of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) has appealed to the FCT Minister, Nyesom Wike, to approve payment for completed and certified projects in the territory.

Spokesperson for the NDC-NCC, Dr Chiogo Ikokwu, in a statement yesterday, indicated that Nigeria paid N7.7 trillion in interest on debt between January and June, while federal revenue was N6.2 trillion.

It said interest payments amounted to 124.19 per cent of revenue.

The figures, which the council attributed to the World Bank's 2026 Nigeria Development Update, formed the basis of its criticism of the government's borrowing and spending priorities.

The NDC said interest payments rose from N5.6 trillion in the first half of 2025 to N7.7 trillion in the corresponding period this year.

Over the same period, it said, capital expenditure fell to N700 billion, or 0.3 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), from one per cent of GDP a year earlier.

The party argued that the gap between debt servicing and capital investment left fewer public resources for infrastructure and social services.

NDC campaign council called for an immediate halt to reckless domestic borrowing, a comprehensive debt audit and restructuring plan, and a shift in public spending towards capital investment and human development.

Atiku, Obi, Makinde, others meet in Abuja to sign pact

Why opposition may struggle to unseat Tinubu in 2027, by ex-Gov Fayose

From **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

PRESIDENTIAL candidates of opposition parties, including Atiku Abubakar of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Peter Obi of Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) and Seyi Makinde of Allied Peoples Movement (APM) are expected to meet again in Abuja on Monday, November 23, to sign a Covenant for Democratic Renewal.

But former governor of Ekiti State, Ayodele Fayose, doubts opposition parties' ability to defeat President Bola Tinubu in the 2027 general election, arguing that an incumbent administration could not be easily removed from power.

The Coalition for Democracy, in a statement signed by Salihu Lukman, disclosed that the Second Summit of Nigeria's Opposition Political Parties would see participating parties "formally adopt and sign a historic Covenant for Democratic Renewal, marking a decisive step towards a united, credible and purposeful democratic opposition."

The summit follows the First Summit of Opposition Leaders, convened by the G100, in collaboration with the House of Representatives Minority Caucus, at the Yar'Adua Centre, Abuja, on August 31, 2026.

The coalition said working groups drawn from the participating parties had since "worked diligently to translate our shared convictions into three foundational documents: the National Covenant for Democratic Renewal, the Framework for Opposition Unity, and the National Reform Programme".

No one can remotely log out BVAS before voting ends, INEC clarifies

• Experts accuse commission of failing data transparency test
• Demands disclosure of vendors handling voters' data

From **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

INDEPENDENT National Electoral Commission (INEC) has said no individual or authority can remotely log out the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) before the conclusion of voting.

The commission dismissed a viral social media video alleging that the devices could be shut down before the end of polling.

This came as digital rights experts accused INEC of failing to meet transparency requirements in handling voters' personal data.

INEC, in a post on its X handle yesterday, described the claim as false, fabricated and misleading, insisting that only the Presiding Officer (PO) operating a BVAS device has the authority to log in or log out during voter accreditation and the subsequent result upload process.

The clarification comes amid concerns over the transparency and reliability of election technology ahead of next year's general elections.

In a statement issued in response to the circulating video on Instagram, the commission explained that each polling unit was assigned unique log-in credentials, which were issued to POs on the eve of an election.

It said the credentials enabled polling officials to access the BVAS for voter accreditation on election day and subsequently upload Polling Unit (PU) result sheets at the close of polls.

"The claim that the BVAS can be remotely logged out before the conclusion of accreditation and voting is false," the commission said, adding that there was no provision for remote log-out by any external individual or authority.

INEC also dismissed claims that election results uploaded offline could be lost, explaining that it had upgraded the INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV) application to accommodate offline uploads.

The upgrade, it explained, followed experiences from the 2023 general election, when some POs were held hostage at their PUs because poor or non-existent network connectivity prevented them from uploading results.

"The uploaded result sheet remains securely stored on the BVAS pending successful transmission," INEC said.

WHILE raising concerns over the security of its digital election platforms ahead of the 2027 general elections, the digital rights experts said the commission had not provided adequate information on how it collects, processes, stores, and shares sensitive voter information.

They spoke in Abuja yesterday at a roundtable on data transparency by electoral umpires during electioneering, organised by the Digital Rights Lawyers Initiative (DRLI).

The transparency surrounding the deployment of the BVAS and the IReV was specifically questioned by the lawyers.

Co-founder of DRLI, Olumide Babalola, said INEC and the 36 State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) handled critical national and sensitive personal data but failed to provide Nigerians with adequate information about their data management practices.

TheGuardian
For Advert Enquiry, Call:
GUARDIAN COMMERCIAL/PRINT
0803 348 9497
0802 301 5115
0803 193 0899
GUARDIAN DIGITAL
0808 597 3490
ABUJA OFFICE
0802 319 5673
GUARDIAN LIFE
0803 056 7059

‘Ponzi schemes, digital fraud threaten Nigeria’s financial stability’

By **Bankole Orimisan**

GROWING activities of Ponzi scheme operators and digital financial fraudsters pose fresh threats to Nigerians’ savings, small business investments and confidence in the financial system, the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) has warned.

The Corporation said the proliferation of unregulated investment platforms, alongside emerging cyber threats associated with digital banking, could expose individuals and businesses to substantial financial losses, particularly where funds were committed to institutions outside the regulatory framework.

The warning comes as more Nigerians and businesses embrace digital financial services, raising concerns over the security of financial transactions and the need to strengthen public awareness about the risks of dealing with unlicensed operators.

The Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of NDIC, Thompson Oludare Sunday, raised the concerns at the corporation’s Special Day at the 2026 Lagos International Trade Fair, organised by the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI).

Sunday, represented by the Director of Assets Management Department, Oluyinka Ogungbemi, said the increasing spread of Ponzi schemes and fraudulent investment platforms remained a major concern because funds placed with such operators were not protected under the NDIC deposit insurance scheme.

He explained that operators of the schemes were neither licensed by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) nor recognised as insured financial institutions, leaving unsuspecting investors without the protection available to depositors of licensed banks and other insured institutions.

He urged Nigerians to prioritise the safety of their funds over unrealistic investment returns by verifying the regulatory status of financial institutions before making deposits.

The NDIC chief identified small businesses as particularly vulnerable to financial risks, stressing that access to safe and reliable financial services remained critical to enterprise development, employment generation and sustainable economic growth.

He added that although digital banking and financial technology had expanded access to financial services, the development had also created new opportunities for cybercriminals to exploit unsuspecting customers through online fraud and other forms of financial manipulation.



Executive Director, Business Development, Stanbic IBTC Pension Managers, Nike Bajomo (left); Chief Executive Officer, ChapelHill Denham, Bolaji Balogun; Founder and Chairman, Anap Jets FZE, Atedo Peterside; Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu; Founder and Director, ART X Lagos, Tokini Peterside-Schwebig; Executive Director, Zenith Bank Plc, Anthony Akindele Ogunranti, during the IIth edition of ART X Lagos, co-sponsored by Stanbic IBTC Pension Managers, in Lagos.

17 MDAs fail FG’s benchmark in 2026 Fiscal Responsibility Index

From **Patience Salifu**, Abuja

IT has been reported that 17 of the 21 federal Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) that participated in the 2026 Fiscal Responsibility Index assessment scored below the 50 per cent benchmark, exposing significant gaps in fiscal discipline, budget transparency and public financial management across government institutions.

The assessment, conducted by the Fiscal Responsibility Commission (FRC), showed that only four institutions scored above the benchmark, despite efforts to strengthen compliance with statutory financial management requirements.

According to the report, 30 federal ministries initially expressed interest in the exercise, but only 21 participated.

UN warns aid cuts leave refugees exposed to trafficking

Stakeholders seek action against cross-border exploitation at ECOWAS meeting

By **Gbenga Salau**

STUDIES released yesterday revealed that cuts to development aid are increasing refugees’ risk of exploitation, abuse and human trafficking.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the University of Oxford’s Nuffield College reported that detected cases of human trafficking rose by 28 per cent between 2024 and 2025, a period when UNHCR’s operational budget fell by more than eight per cent.

The U.S. and many other countries have reduced development aid funding.

At the same time, child labour rose to alarming levels, with more minors found working in agriculture and informal mining, according to the studies.

Girls faced a growing risk of sexual exploitation, early marriage and forced labour.

Protection measures include safe accommodation, schooling and psychosocial support.

MEANWHILE, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its international partners have called for stronger regional cooperation.



High-Level B20 USA Engagement: Ralph Charles (USAFRICAHUB) (left); Dr Adebowale A. Adedokun (DG, Bureau of Public Procurement); Reta Jo Lewis (former President & Chair, Export-Import Bank of the United States; Gbenga Omotayo (Managing Advisor, Pacetas Agency) at the B20 USA 2026.

B20 USA: BPP DG champions Nigeria First Procurement Agenda in Washington

INSTITUTIONAL partners, business owners and investors in Washington got a first-hand look this month at how quickly Nigeria is transforming Nigeria’s public procurement and government purchasing, as Dr Adebowale A. Adedokun, Director-General of the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP), presented the “Nigeria First” procurement agenda during a working visit to the U.S. capital for the B20 USA.

USAFRICA HUB facilitated the visit with support from Pacetas Agency. The visit focused on BPP’s reforms under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu’s Renewed Hope Agenda. At an independently organised side event, Dr Adedokun presented to business owners, investors, and diaspora professionals, many of whom were struck by how far the reforms have already come.

Nigeria First is a federal economic initiative that uses government procurement to boost local production, create employment and reduce import dependence. Federal agencies must give priority to Nigerian-made goods and services while preserving competition and value for money. The Federal Government is leading by example with its purchasing power, and BPP is the engine of change.

Dr Adedokun also met separately with the World Bank’s regional procurement and Business Ready (B-READY) teams on modernising public procurement and how the Bank assesses procurement systems. World Bank officials and side-event attendees alike were unaware of the rapid pace of improvement and warmly welcomed the changes.

The outreach also extended to the U.S. government representatives, private-sector leaders and the Nigerian diaspora.

The results are striking: BPP reports more than N1.1 trillion in government savings in 2025 alone. By leading the drive for transparency and accountability, BPP is building the investor confidence that will attract more foreign direct investment.

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

ITU Council re-elects Nigeria for 2027 to 2030, NCC hails

From **Adeyemi Adepetun** (Lagos) and **Joel Oladele** (Abuja)

NIGERIA has secured re-election to the Council of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for the 2027–2030 term, reaffirming the country’s standing and influence in global telecommunications governance.

The victory was announced at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-26) in Doha, Qatar, yesterday, where member states elected representatives to the union’s governing Council. Nigeria earn another four-year mandate to represent the interests of Nigeria and contribute to the advancement of Africa’s digital development priorities.

The ITU Council plays a central role in the governance of the union. It oversees the implementation of the ITU’s strategic and financial plans, guides its activities at Plenipotentiary Conferences.

Court of Appeal reserves judgment in N100m SERAP defamation suit

From **Ameh Ochojila** and **Andrew Oota**, Abuja

COURT of Appeal, Abuja Division, yesterday reserved judgment in two related appeals challenging a N100 million defamation judgment against the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP).

The appeals, marked CA/ABJ/CV/1114/2026 and CA/ABJ/CV/1105/2026, arose from a judgment delivered by the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory on May 26, 2025.

A three-member panel led by Justice Danlami Senchi heard the appeals before reserving judgment to dates to be communicated to the parties.

At the hearing of Appeal No. CA/ABJ/CV/1114/2026, counsel to the appellant, Paul Mgbeoma, adopted the appellant’s brief of argument and reply brief, urging the court to allow the appeal and set aside the decision of the lower court.

However, A.T. Kehinde, counsel for the first and second respondents, adopted his brief and urged the appellate court to dismiss the appeal.

Lagos rallies commitment to unlock maritime potential, economy

By **Gbenga Salau** and **Sunday Aikulola**

Expert urges African leaders to focus on short-sea shipping, regional ferry

LAGOS State Government has said that no single country can unlock the full economic potential of the West and Central African coastline in isolation, stating that it requires stronger institutional relationships, practical cooperation between regulators and operators, and a shared commitment to making cross-border ferry services predictable, safe and commercially sustainable.

Special Adviser to Lagos State Governor on Blue Economy, who doubles as General Manager of Lagos State Waterways Authority, Oluwadamilola Emmanuel, stated this yesterday during the opening of the inaugural 2026 West and Central Africa Ferry Conference and Exhibition in Lagos, themed, "Connecting Nations, Empowering Trade," with the compelling focus, "From Dakar to Luanda: New Trade Routes.

Emmanuel stated that Lagos State experience reinforces an important lesson: waterways development must be approached as an integrated economic and mobility system.

He said that infrastructure must be matched with effective regulation, professional operators, dependable services, passengers' confidence and sustainable financing, adding that innovation, including cleaner propulsion technologies and digital systems, can help to improve performance while reducing environmental impacts.

"Above all, safety must remain non-negotiable. The regional focus of this conference is therefore significant. No single country can unlock the full economic potential of the West and Central African coastline in isolation. We need stronger institutional relationships, practical cooperation between regulators and operators, and a shared commitment to making cross-border ferry services predictable, safe and commercially sustainable," he said.

MEANWHILE, as part of efforts to build a resilient maritime ecosystem, Captain Ade Olopoenia has urged African leaders to focus on short-sea shipping and regional cross-border ferries rather than attempting to launch capital-intensive deep-sea fleets to compete with established global cartels.

In his keynote address at the conference and exhibition, he further highlighted a four-pillar benchmarking framework that policymakers should adopt to prevent operational traps that destroyed historic African shipping lines.



Minister of State for Education, Prof. Suwaiba Ahmad (left); Minister of Education, Dr Tunji Alausa; former Governor of Edo State, Adams Oshiomhole, and Assistant Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Campaign Council, Hadiza Bala Usman, during the unveiling and world media briefing of the Renewed Hope Education A-Z scorecard organised by Alausa in Abuja, yesterday. PHOTO: NAN

Adeleke, Osun traditional rulers bicker over demotion in ranks

From **Oluwole Ige**, Osogbo

OSUN State Governor, Ademola Adeleke, yesterday, described as untrue reports of allegedly demoting two traditional rulers in the state, saying that the development was not politically motivated.

In a statement yesterday, the state government maintained that the governor could not have demoted any local chief under the direct control of the Ataoja of Osogbo, Oba Jimoh Olanipekun Oyetunji.

The statement read in part: "Detailed checks on the report revealed that the Ataoja -in-Council had exercised disciplinary action against two "Baales" due to their involvement in land grabbing, insubordination and other forms of activities inimical to the good health of Osogbo land."

But in protest against the demotion, Alagunbelewo insisted that neither he nor the Olu of Irepodun had been accused of any offence or infraction by the state government.

Poly students seek Abiodun's intervention to end ASUP strike in Ogun

ASUU KASU suspends industrial action, ASUP begins indefinite strike in Kaduna

From **Segun Ayinde**, Abeokuta

THE National Association of Polytechnic Students (NAPS), Ogun State Liaison Council, has demanded immediate intervention of Governor Dapo Abiodun to end the ongoing strike by the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP) in the state.

The Association, while expressing concern over the continued industrial action, called for urgent dialogue between the lecturers and the state government, warning that students could no longer bear the impact of the strike on their academic calendar.

Chairman of NAPS, Ogun State Liaison Council, Opatunmibi Joshua, who spoke yesterday at a media briefing, announced the renewal of the 48-hour notice to the state government and other relevant stakeholders.

Joshua said that the renewed notice took effect at noon on Monday and would lapse at noon tomorrow, November 18, 2026, stressing that the Association expected concrete measures from the government within the period to resolve the lingering disagreement with ASUP.

'Nigeria, Sierra Leone must deepen economic ties for shared prosperity'

From **Rotimi Agboluaje**, Ibadan

THE Vice-President of Sierra Leone, Dr Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, has called for stronger economic cooperation between Nigeria and Sierra Leone, urging both countries to leverage their historical ties to promote trade, investment, technological development and shared prosperity.

Jalloh said the two countries must move beyond their shared historical origins to build practical economic partnership capable of creating jobs, expanding business opportunities and accelerating regional integration in West Africa.

He spoke while delivering his lecture, titled, "The Enduring Promise of Nigeria-Sierra Leone Relations: From Shared Origins to Shared Prosperity," at the 78th Foundation Day anniversary and 2026 convocation of the University of Ibadan (UI).

The Sierra Leonean Vice-President advocated deeper cooperation among telecommunications operators, regulators, payment systems, and digital service providers in both countries to enable businesses to operate across borders without unnecessary barriers.

He identified lower roaming costs, stronger fibre and subsea connectivity, reliable broadband, interoperable digital payment systems and increased competition in data services as critical requirements for expanding 21st-century commerce.

Jalloh also called for more efficient ports, viable coastal shipping services and simplified Customs procedures to reduce the cost of trading within West Africa.

He said rail transportation should also form part of the region's long-term infrastructure development plans, particularly where freight volumes justify the investment and the financing and maintenance arrangements are sustainable.

The Sierra Leonean Vice-President, while drawing inspiration from Nigeria's Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway project, proposed a similar ambition for a Lagos-Freetown coastal corridor to strengthen connectivity and trade between the two countries.

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

Afe Babalola to send education reform proposals to FG

From **Joke Falaju** (Abuja) and **Ayodele Afolabi** (Ado-Ekiti)

EKSU emerges winner at NAPE competition

FOUNDER and Chancellor of Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD), Aare Afe Babalola, has announced plans to forward proposals for his vision of quality, functional, and impactful education to President Bola Tinubu and other key government officials.

He disclosed this yesterday in his letter of appreciation to the Chairman of United Nigeria Airlines, Prof. Obiora Okonkwo, who was a guest lecturer at the 14th convocation ceremony of ABUAD held at the university's campus in Ado-Ekiti.

The legal icon said he had constituted a committee of distinguished academics at ABUAD to examine the contents of the lecture and other related documents, particularly their functionality and relevance to Nigeria's development.

The committee, according to him, would study Okonkwo's 14th convocation lecture titled, "Functional Education and the Nigerian Project: Strategic Human Capital Development for National Renewal."

The findings, he said, would be transmitted to appropriate authorities, including the President, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Agriculture and the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC), for consideration.

MEANWHILE, Ekiti State University (EKSU), Ado-Ekiti, has emerged overall champion of the Nigerian Association of Petroleum Explorationists (NAPE) Basin Evaluation Competition, defeating other participating institutions, including the University of Lagos (UNILAG) and the University of Ibadan (UI) in its maiden appearance.

The achievement was disclosed in a statement by the Head of the Directorate of Information and Corporate Affairs of the institution, Omotayo Peter Olatunde.

According to the statement, the university's Department of Geology is working towards a five-year target set by its Chancellor, Dr Tunji Olowolafe, to position the department among the best in Africa.

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

Showunmi urges NSA to check inflammatory political statements

From **Segun Ayinde**, Abeokuta

THE Convener of the Alternative Movement, Segun Showunmi, has urged the National Security Adviser (NSA), Nuhu Ribadu, to establish clear boundaries for political conduct and ensure that individuals whose actions threaten national security are held accountable, irrespective of their political status.

Showunmi stated this in an open letter addressed to Ribadu, expressing concern over what he described as the growing toxicity of political conduct, reckless political communication and provocative statements by politicians, their supporters and other influential individuals.

He warned that such conduct could undermine national stability, particularly at a time when Nigeria was grappling with multiple security challenges.

According to him, political competition, personal ambition and partisan disagreements should not be allowed to constitute additional threats to the country's peace and stability.

He stressed the need to distinguish between legitimate political engagement and actions capable of inciting violence, promoting ethnic or religious hostility and undermining public order.

Showunmi, who described the situation as troubling, said some politicians and influential individuals appeared to believe that their political positions and connections gave them the freedom to make inflammatory statements, mobilise supporters irresponsibly and escape the consequences of their actions.

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

YABATECH to graduate 10,886 students at 38th convocation

By **Omowunmi Sanni**

YABA College of Technology (YABATECH) has announced plans to graduate 10,886 students at its 38th convocation ceremony, with 361 graduands earning distinctions.

Rector of the institution, Dr Ibrahim Adedotun Abdul, disclosed this during a pre-convocation media briefing held at the Council Chamber of the College.

Abdul said the graduating students, who completed their academic programmes during the 2024/2025 academic session, comprised students from the institution's full-time, part-time and Centre for Open, Distance and Flexible e-Learning (CODFeL) programmes.

The Rector described the convocation as an opportunity to celebrate academic excellence, institutional resilience, innovation and human capital development.

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

Food prices defy harvest, easing inflation amid supply constraints

From **Joseph Chibueze** (Abuja) and **Isaac Chibuife** (Lagos)

- Headline inflation slows to 14% as core, food segments continue to diverge
- Poor logistics sustain high retail prices
- 34.7m Nigerians would face acute food insecurity this year
- Farmers' effort poorly compensated by market, economist insists

NIGERIA'S declining inflation rate is yet to translate into meaningful relief for households as food prices remain stubbornly high even as harvest seasonal impacts have failed to lead to significant market price reductions.

With millions of farmers yet to return to their communities, the sustained price pressure continues to expose deep-seated weaknesses in domestic agricultural production.

Despite the ongoing harvest, which ordinarily increases the availability of staples and moderates prices, food inflation remains elevated, reflecting lingering insecurity in major food-producing communities, rising farm input costs, high transportation costs and inadequate storage infrastructure.

The development is a stark contrast to the easing of headline inflation, which declined for the fourth consecutive month to 14.06 per cent in October 2026, as per the latest consumer price index (CPI) reading released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) yesterday.

At 19.13 per cent, food inflation remained significantly higher than the headline figure, underscoring the difficulty of bringing down the cost of necessities, a challenge many economists attribute to supply-side rigidities.

Food inflation, which started the year at 8.89 per cent, climbed to 20.31 per cent in July before moderating to 19.57 per cent in August. It rose marginally to 19.59 per cent in September but eased to 19.13 per cent last month, underpinning the typical volatility associated with food and energy prices in recent times.

Although the October reading represents moderation from the July peak, food inflation remains substantially above the general inflation rate, indicating continued pressure on households and the cost of living.

The month-on-month figures, which show the current intensity of inflation, offer limited relief from the harvest.

Food inflation declined by 1.55 per cent in September. But the pace of decline weakened to 0.75 per cent in October.

This suggests that the seasonal improvement in food availability has not been strong enough to trigger sustained price reductions of food items.

The contrast is more pronounced when compared with core inflation, which excludes volatile agricultural produce and energy prices, and explains the proportion of inflation traceable to an increase in general aggregate consumption.

Core inflation declined by 0.53 per cent month-on-month in October from an increase of 1.11 per cent in September, giving a more improved pattern than the food segment. Yearly, the core inflation fell sharply to 10.78 per cent from 21.25 per cent in October 2025.

The divergence of food and headline or core inflation mimics the structural character of the country's food inflation problem. While broader macroeconomic stabilisation seems to be moderating underlying price pressures, food crises remain constrained by supply-side challenges, including insecurity, poor access to funds, input constraints, inadequate fiscal support, among others.

ECONOMISTS said the failure of the harvest season to deliver more substantial relief reflects a fundamental problem – that the country is struggling to produce sufficient food at affordable costs, while insecurity and rising production expenses continue to undermine farmers' capacity or willingness to expand cultivation.

Head of Research at Iron Capital, Abiodun Ogunniyi, identified rising energy and transportation costs, insecurity, inadequate storage infrastructure, seasonal supply shortages and expensive agricultural inputs as major factors sustaining food price pressures.

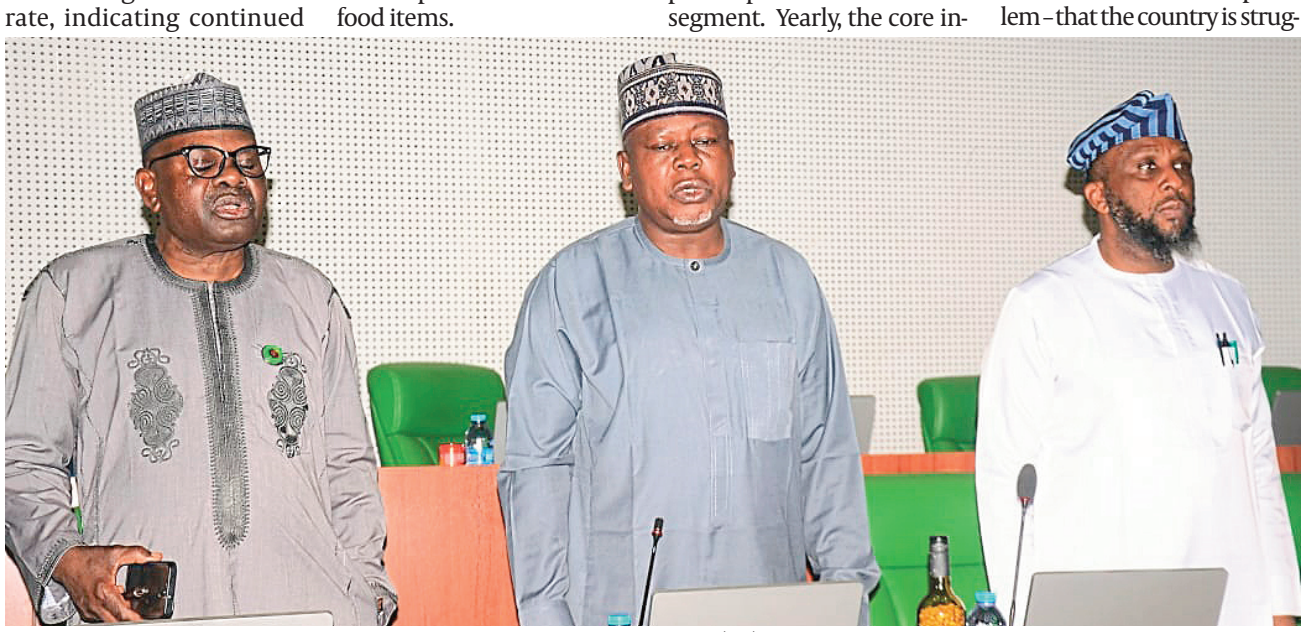
He explained that energy costs affected virtually every stage of agricultural production, from operating tractors and other farm machinery to processing and transporting harvested produce.

According to him, higher fuel and diesel prices caused by the Middle East conflict have increased the cost of moving food from farms and rural markets to urban centres, limiting the extent to which seasonal increases in supply can translate into lower retail prices.

"Energy costs fit into everything. Tractors, farm machinery and other equipment used in agriculture run on diesel. When the prices of these energy sources increase, farmers incur higher production costs, which eventually feed into the prices of food," he said.

Ogunniyi also identified insecurity as a structural con-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29



Members, House of Representatives Committee on Solid Minerals, Isah Ambarura (left); Abdulmaleek Danga, and Chairman of the Committee, Jonathan Gbefwi, during the committee's investigative hearing on allegations surrounding the activities, funding, legal status and operations of mining marshals across the country at the National Assembly Complex, Abuja yesterday.

State police bill clears hurdle as Tinubu pushes intelligence-led security

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

- 36 assemblies approve police bill, clearing constitutional hurdle
- President seeks technology, intelligence-sharing to tackle security threats
- U.S. satellite support boosts military operations against militants, says Musa
- Nigeria agrees cross-border pursuit arrangement with neighbours
- Disu redeploys senior officers to strategic police commands

NIGERIA'S proposed state police system has received unanimous backing from all 36 State Houses of Assembly, exceeding the constitutional requirement for the amendment and setting the stage for its transmission to President Bola Tinubu for assent.

The legislative breakthrough coincides with fresh moves to strengthen the country's security architecture, including Tinubu's call for technology-driven intelligence operations, expanded military cooperation with the United States and the redeployment of senior police officers to strategic commands.

The unanimous endorsement represents a breakthrough in efforts to decentralise Nigeria's policing system, with all 36 state legislatures approving the constitutional amendment seeking to establish State Police Services alongside the Federal Police Service.

The Clerk to the National Assembly, Kamoru Ogunlana, announced the development yesterday in a statement, confirming that his office had completed the verification of the approvals and established that the Bill had satisfied all constitutional and administrative requirements for transmission to the President.

The endorsement exceeds the constitutional requirement of 24 state assemblies under Section 9(2) of the 1999 Constitution, as amended, which provides for approval by at least two-thirds of the 36 State Houses of Assembly before an alteration can proceed.

The latest development represents an increase from the 28 approvals reported last week, with eight additional state assemblies joining their counterparts in endorsing the proposal. Ogunlana, however, did not identify the eight states.

He explained that although the Bill had earlier satisfied the requirements for transmission, the leadership of the National Assembly directed a brief delay to allow further engagement with the states and build broader consensus.

According to him, the unanimous endorsement demonstrates cooperation between the National Assembly and state legislatures, as well as constructive collaboration between the federal and state governments.

The Bill, titled *A Bill for an Act to Alter the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 to Provide for the Establishment of State Police Services and for Related Matters*, was passed by the Senate on June 24 and the House of Representatives on July 23, 2026.

The National Assembly subsequently transmitted it to the 36 state legislatures on September 16 for consideration and communication of their decisions.

Ogunlana described the development as a significant milestone in the country's constitutional reform process, adding that it would provide a foundation for the consideration of other proposed amendments under the ongoing Sixth Constitution Alteration exercise.

He commended the state governors, Speakers and members of the State Houses of Assembly, as well as other stakeholders, for their cooperation in advancing the reform.

Under the proposed arrangement, state governments will establish and operate their own police services alongside the Federal Police Service, with the two structures sharing responsibility for policing across the country.

Governors will appoint commissioners of police on the recommendation of the National Police Council, subject to confirmation by their respective State Houses of Assembly.

While the federal police will retain responsibility for national security matters, state police formations will handle law enforcement, crime prevention and security challenges within their respective jurisdictions.

Proponents argue that decentralised policing will improve intelligence gathering, strengthen community policing and enable security agencies to respond more quickly to threats peculiar to different communities.

They also maintain that placing policing closer to the people will improve local intelligence and make security operations more responsive to emerging threats.

However, concerns remain over possible political interference, abuse of authority, inadequate funding and the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms.

Critics have particularly cautioned that governors could deploy state police formations against political opponents unless the proposed structure incorporates strong safeguards against executive interference.

Tinubu seeks stronger intelligence collaboration

THE legislative breakthrough comes as President Tinubu intensifies efforts to strengthen the country's security architecture through intelligence sharing, technological innovation and strategic partnerships.

Speaking yesterday at the opening of the Chief of Defence Intelligence Annual Conference 2026 in Abuja, Tinubu urged security agencies to improve operational coordination and embrace emerging technologies in tackling the country's increasingly complex security challenges.

Represented by the National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, the President also called for stronger partnerships with global technology companies and research institutions to improve Nigeria's intelligence-gathering and national security capabilities.

He urged Nigerian Defence Advisers serving abroad to maximise bilateral and multilateral engagements to strengthen international cooperation and support the country's security objectives.

The conference, held at the Armed Forces Officers' Mess, Asokoro, Abuja, was themed Optimising Intelligence Through Technological Innovations and Strategic Partnerships in a Complex Security Environment.

It brought together the Minister of Defence, General Christopher Musa (rtd); Chief of Defence Staff, General Olufemi Oluyede; Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Waidi Shaibu; Chief of Defence Intelligence, Lieutenant General Emmanuel Undiandeye; service chiefs and other senior security officials.

Tinubu said Nigeria had recorded significant gains in counter-terrorism operations through sustained military action and improved collaboration among security and intelligence agencies.

He also said the country had emerged as a leading nation globally in the prosecution and conviction of terrorism suspects, demonstrating its commitment to confronting terrorism through military operations and judicial action.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

NIPR, Izunaso urge ethical communication, checks on AI, social media abuse

From **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

CHAIRMAN of the Senate Committee on Capital Market, Senator Osita Izunaso, has raised concerns over the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) and social media to bully politicians and spread falsehoods in Nigeria.

Calling for urgent regulation of the emerging technology, he said AI-generated images and other digital content had become increasingly difficult to distinguish from authentic materials, making it easier for individuals to manipulate information and mislead the public.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) yesterday commenced the main activities of the 13th World Public Relations Forum (WPRF), stressing the imperative of ethical communication, as it also highlighted the growing representation of Africa in the organisation's leadership.

IZUNASO, speaking yesterday in Abuja at the World Public Relations Forum themed "Responsible Communication: The Voice of the World," warned that without appropriate regulatory measures, the benefits of AI could be overshadowed by its potential dangers.

According to him, "AI is a medical issue right now, and globally, AI is not regulated in most countries."

The senator noted that AI-generated images had become so realistic that people could hardly determine whether some materials circulating online were genuine or artificially created.

He lamented the growing incidence of cyberbullying against politicians, alleging that some social media users resort to online attacks when political office holders fail to meet their demands.

According to him, politicians were often subjected to negative online campaigns, particularly when they declined requests from individuals seeking favours. The lawmaker said the development underscored the need for greater responsibility and accountability in the use of digital communication platforms.

In contrast, he identified truth, empathy and accountability as essential principles that should guide online interactions, urging social media users to verify information before sharing it.

For his part, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tajudeen Abbas, said the economic difficulties confronting Nigerians could no longer be ignored or dismissed.

The speaker, who was represented by the House Majority Leader, Prof. Julius Ihonvbere, said the relationship between communication and democracy has become one of the defining issues of the digital age.

Abbas said communication professionals had a responsibility to promote public understanding, encourage informed participation and strengthen confidence in democratic institutions.

He also stressed that political actors should engage one another through ideas, policies and evidence rather than insults, intimidation and deliberate falsehoods.

Earlier, Vice-Chancellor of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra State, Prof. Kate Omenugha, called for the introduction of communication ethics into university curricula across disciplines.

Omenugha said the widespread use of social media and AI without adequate training or ethical guidelines had heightened the risks of misinformation and irresponsible communication.



Delta State Governor, Sheriff Oborevwori, presenting the 2027 Appropriation Bill to the House of Assembly during plenary, yesterday.

Women in energy urged to combine merit, inclusion

By **Moyosore Salami**

WOMEN in Nigeria's energy sector have been urged to uphold professional standards while pushing for fairness and equal opportunities in leadership positions.

This was as ExxonMobil affiliate, Esso Nigeria, reaffirmed its commitment to advancing workplace diversity and increasing women's participation in the energy sector through targeted inclusion initiatives, mentorship programmes and expanded access to business opportunities.

The call was made during the 2026 Women in Energy Network (WIEN) Gala and Awards held at the Metropolitan Club in Lagos.

Chairman of The Sage Centre for Leadership Excellence, Dr Mutiu Sunmonu, while delivering the keynote, urged WIEN to consolidate its achievements by promoting professional excellence and ensuring that qualified women had a level playing field to demonstrate their capabilities and compete for leadership positions.

He maintained that the pursuit of gender inclusion should not come at the expense of merit, stressing that competence and fairness must remain central to efforts to improve women's representation in the industry.

The address came amid concerns over the low representation of women in Nigeria's energy sector, particularly in technical and leadership po sitions.

NHRC seeks Dutch support in advancing democracy, rights protection

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

NATIONAL Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought the support of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in strengthening religious freedom, election monitoring and the protection of vulnerable groups as Nigeria prepares for the 2027 general elections.

The commission also called for Dutch support for its human rights monitoring and documentation activities, including its monthly human rights dashboard and capacity-building programmes.

The NHRC made the requests yesterday when a delegation led by the Deputy Director General for Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Ms Guusje Korthals Altes, visited the commission in Abuja.

Speaking during the meeting, Korthals Altes said the Netherlands was interested in strengthening cooperation with Nigeria in areas of democratic development, the rule of law and human rights.

She said both countries had maintained discussions on human rights and expressed the Netherlands' readiness to explore further areas of collaboration through bilateral and multilateral platforms.

"We will see how we can cooperate in some areas, whether it is here or through your ambassador in the Netherlands. We will work closely together," she said.

She added that both countries could continue to work together through international platforms, including the United Nations and African Union-European Union relations.

Also speaking, the NHRC's Senior Human Rights Adviser, Dr Hilary Ogbonna, said the visit was aimed at understanding the commission's mandate and obtaining an overview of the human rights situation in Nigeria.

2027: Nwifuru assures Tinubu of Ebonyi support, targets over 80% of votes

From **Seye Olumide** (Lagos) and **Nnamdi Akpa** (Abakaliki)

EBONYI State Governor, Francis Nwifuru, has assured President Bola Tinubu of the state's support in the 2027 general elections, expressing confidence that the All Progressives Congress (APC) would secure more than 80 per cent of the votes.

Nwifuru gave the assurance during the inauguration of the Ebonyi State chapter of the PBAT Door-to-Door Movement, where its Grand Patron, High Chief Government Ekpemupolo, popularly known as Tompolo, donated 25 campaign vehicles to facilitate grassroots mobilisation for Tinubu's re-election.

"Ebonyi is an APC state, and it is APC from top to bottom. We are ready to vote for him," the governor declared.

He, however, commended Tompolo for supporting the state and providing the vehicles, describing him as a selfless leader and committed supporter of the President.

The governor also commended Tinubu for appointing an indigene of Ebonyi State as Minister of Works, describing the appointment as a significant demonstration of confidence in the South-East.

According to him, the minister's performance and ongoing federal infrastructure projects in the state have provided tangible evidence of the Federal Government's commitment to the region.

Meanwhile, Tompolo, who was represented at the event by the Managing Director of Tantita Security Services Limited, Kestin Pondi, urged residents to support Tinubu for a second term to consolidate his administration's reforms.

He described the President as a courageous leader who had taken difficult decisions to restructure the economy, particularly through the removal of fuel subsidy.

Reps probe NSCDC boss over alleged financial impropriety, unlawful arrests

From **Joel Oladele**, Abuja

THE House of Representatives has given the Commandant-General of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) 24 hours to explain an alleged N2 billion transaction linked to a former state commander of the Corps.

The lawmakers also demanded answers over allegations of extortion, unlawful arrest and harassment of licensed mining operators by personnel of the mining marshals.

The House Committee on Solid Minerals issued the ultimatum yesterday during an investigative hearing into the activities, funding and operations of the special security unit.

The committee's action followed a motion by Ali Amburura, representing Sokoto State, seconded by Majidi from Katsina State.

The chairman of the committee, Gaza Gbefwi, said the investigation would examine allegations of financial impropriety, abuse of power and possible compromise among mining marshals operating across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

He said the lawmakers would also scrutinise the unit's vehicle procurement, funding arrangements and expenditure.

Gbefwi said the committee was exercising its oversight powers under Sections 88 and 89 of the 1999 Constitution, as amended.

He recalled that the government inaugurated more than 2,200 mining marshals in March 2024 to tackle illegal mining and protect the country's mineral resources.

However, he warned that the unit must operate within the law and respect citizens' fundamental rights.

The committee also expressed concern over the death of Deputy Superintendent Agada Levi Agada, an NSCDC officer and member of the mining marshals, who allegedly died following a shooting incident involving fellow officers at a mining site.

Optometrists urged to embrace innovation, tackle quackery

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

OPTOMETRISTS in Nigeria have been urged to embrace business diversification, technology, strategic partnerships and collective investments to expand access to eye care and sustain their practices amid rising operational costs, economic uncertainty and growing threats from unqualified practitioners.

Stakeholders made the call at the fifth Annual National Conference and Business Expo of the Guild of Optometric Directors of Nigeria (GOODON), held at the MUSON Centre, Lagos, where they identified opportunities in digital eye care, local manufacturing, specialised services, equipment financing and expansion into underserved communities.

The Chief Executive Officer and Registrar of the Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Registration Board of Nigeria (ODORBN), Dr Obinna Awaiaka, said clinical excellence must be matched with economic sustainability, warning that foreign exchange fluctuations, inflation and rising equipment costs were putting pressure on eye care businesses.

Delta proposes N1.237tr 2027 budget, cuts spending by 28.5%

From **Monday Osayande**, Asaba

GOVERNOR Sheriff Oborevwori has presented a proposed budget of N1.2368 trillion for Delta State's 2027 fiscal year to the state House of Assembly, consisting of N806.8 billion (65 per cent) capital expenditure and N430 billion (35 per cent) for recurrent spending.

He described it as a deliberate effort to strengthen fiscal discipline, sustain infrastructure development and promote economic growth.

Tagged "Budget of Sustained Prosperity and Enhanced Growth," the proposal represents a reduction of N493.01 billion or 28.5 per cent from the N1.729 trillion approved for the 2026 fiscal year.

Presenting the estimates to the lawmakers in Asaba, the governor explained that the reduction was informed by his administration's decision to adopt a more realistic revenue framework, strengthen internally generated revenue and ensure that government expenditure remains within its financial capacity.

Oborevwori said the government deliberately designed the 2027 fiscal estimates around fiscal sustainability rather than relying on ambitious revenue projections or excessive borrowing.

TheMetroSection

www.guardian.ng
Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

Gas explosion damages filling station, school in Lagos

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

RESIDENTS of Command, Ejigbo, Lagos, were thrown into panic yesterday, following a gas explosion at an NNPC filling station near Savannah Bus Stop, which triggered a fire that spread to the adjoining St. Lawrence Greater Height School, destroying parts of the facility.

Although the incident raised fears of a possible disaster, particularly because of the filling station's proximity to a school, the swift intervention of emergency responders prevented the fire from spreading further. No casualty was recorded.

The explosion occurred at about 12:50 p.m., prompting an emergency response from the Lagos State Fire and Rescue Service, the Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA) and other relevant agencies.

Firefighters from Ejigbo, Ikeja and Bolade stations arrived at the scene at about 1:13 p.m. and worked to contain the inferno before it could engulf other sections of the school and nearby properties.

According to LASEMA, preliminary findings indicated that the fire started from a petrol tanker discharging diesel at the filling station.

The flames reportedly spread to the dispensing pumps before extending to the adjoining school building.

The incident left considerable damage in its wake. A DAF truck involved in the operation was completely burnt, alongside three dispensing machines at the filling station. Seven classrooms, including their electrical appliances, were also destroyed, while a Toyota Camry with registration number EKY 430 JS was burnt.

Despite the scale of the damage, emergency responders successfully extinguished the fire and carried out damping-down operations to prevent a recurrence.



Scene of the explosion

Other agencies involved in the operation included the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Lagos State Ambulance Service, Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA), Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps and the Nigeria Police.

The Lagos State Fire and Rescue Service said investigations into the circumstances surrounding the explosion were ongoing.

The incident was one of three emergencies handled by LASEMA across the state yesterday.

Earlier in the day, the agency's response team from Epe attended to an overturned tanker conveying 45,000 litres of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) at Alaro City, along the Epe Expressway.

The tanker, with registration number AKD-387YK, reportedly lost control and veered into a gutter after a Dangote truck allegedly attempted to overtake it at close range and high speed.

Although no casualty or injury was recorded, the presence of the highly inflammable product posed a serious danger to motorists and other road users.

Firefighters from the Okeoso station had already applied firefighting foam around the overturned tanker before LASEMA's arrival to minimise the risk of ignition.

The responders subsequently supervised the transfer of the petrol into an empty tanker, while a private recovery truck pulled the overturned vehicle out of the gutter. It was later moved to a lay-by.

Alleged $1.5m oil fraud: LASUTH disowns defendant's medical report, EFCC tells court

By **Yetunde Ayobami Ojo**

THE Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has told an Ikeja Special Offences Court that the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) disowned a medical report presented by a defendant, Ufoma Joseph, in support of his bail application, describing it as forged.

Joseph, who is standing trial alongside his company, Intermediate Investment Holdings Limited, over an alleged $1.5 million oil investment fraud, is facing a two-count charge of obtaining money by false pretence and forgery before Justice Mojisola Dada.



EFCC lead counsel, Ekene Iheanacho (SAN), disclosed this during proceedings, saying the commission had written to LASUTH to verify the authenticity of the medical report attached to the defendant's bail application.

According to Iheanacho, the hospital, in a response dated July 22, 2026, confirmed that the medical report dated June 2, 2026, purportedly issued in the name of Immanuel Joseph Ufoma, did not originate from the institution.

He said the prosecution subsequently filed a further counter-affidavit on November 11, 2026, attaching the hospital's response to bring the development to the court's attention. He added that the defence was served with the process on the same day.

"We have written a letter to the management of LASUTH to confirm the authenticity or otherwise of the medical report attached to the applicant's bail application.

NDLEA raises alarm as drug dealers recruit children as young as 12 in Rivers

From **Obinna Nwaoku,** Port Harcourt

THE National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in Rivers State has raised the alarm over the alleged recruitment of children as young as 12 by drug dealers to carry out illicit activities and evade prosecution.

The agency said some drug traffickers were exploiting minors, particularly those aged between 12 and 16, to distribute drugs and engage in other criminal activities because they believed the children would not face the same legal consequences as adults.

The Rivers State Commander of the NDLEA, Offor Onyeso, disclosed this during a media briefing in Port Harcourt, where he expressed concern over the growing involvement of minors in drug-related offences.

He urged parents and guardians to pay closer attention to their children's activities, movements and associations, warning that drug dealers could take advantage of poor parental supervision to lure them into criminal networks.

Onyeso said protecting children from drug traffickers required greater vigilance at the family and community levels, stressing that young people must not be allowed to become tools in the hands of criminal elements.

The commander also disclosed that the command had intensified raids on identified drug black spots across the state ahead of the forthcoming general elections to prevent drug abuse and the use of illicit substances to fuel electoral violence.

Giving an account of the command's activities between July and October 2026, Onyeso said operatives arrested 281 suspects and seized more than 316 kilogrammes of illicit drugs across the state.

He added that the command secured 54 convictions out of 74 cases filed in court during the period.

UNIBEN student dies after collapsing during football match

From **Joseph Kanjo**, Benin

THE University of Benin (UNIBEN) community has been thrown into mourning following the death of a 100-level Engineering student, Omorodion Japheth, who reportedly collapsed while playing football at the university's Sports Complex.

Japheth was said to have slumped during a football match on Friday, November 13, 2026, prompting fellow students and others at the facility to rush to his aid.

Despite efforts to revive him, he reportedly failed to respond. First aid was administered before he was taken to the university's health centre, where he was subsequently confirmed dead.

Although heatstroke, possibly triggered by intense heat and physical exertion, has been suggested as a possible explanation for the incident, the exact circumstances surrounding his death remain unclear.

As of the time of filing this report, there had been no official medical confirmation of the cause of death.

His death has left his family, friends, fellow students and other members of the university community in mourning.

The university's Public Relations Officer, Dr Benedicta Ehanire, had yet to respond to inquiries as of press time.



Uniben

Visually impaired persons protest exclusion from Ondo govt programmes

From **Adewale Momoh**, Akure

VISUALLY impaired persons in Ondo State have protested their alleged exclusion from government intervention programmes, demanding official recognition and equal access to opportunities and benefits.

Members of the Association of Technology Inclined Visually Impaired Persons of Nigeria (ATIVIPN), Ondo State chapter, staged the protest at the Ministry of Women Affairs in Akure, accusing the ministry of ignoring their applications for recognition despite submitting relevant registration documents and several letters.

The protesters alleged that the state government had recognised only the Nigeria Association of the Blind (NAB), leaving members of other associations of visually impaired persons out of its support programmes.

Speaking during the demonstration, the state chairman of ATIVIPN, Comrade Omiyale Babatunde, said members had been denied access to government interventions since the beginning of the year.

He said the association had submitted its Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) certificate and other registration documents to the ministry but had yet to receive official recognition.

Babatunde appealed to the state government to create employment opportunities and extend its welfare programmes to visually impaired persons, particularly educated members who were willing and able to contribute to society.

Zamfara mosque attack: HURIWA demands rescue of abducted worshippers, offensive against bandits

By **Ayonote Clement**

THE Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has condemned the killing of a worshipper and abduction of several others by armed bandits who invaded a mosque during early morning prayers in Kaura town, Kaura Namoda Local Council of Zamfara State.

The association called on President Bola Tinubu to order an intelligence-led military offensive to dismantle terrorist networks operating across Zamfara and other North-West states, warning that armed groups were increasingly taking control of communities and dictating how residents live.

The attackers reportedly stormed the mosque during the early morning Subhi prayer on Sunday, opened fire on worshippers and killed one Nasiru Sani Kaura, before abducting several others to an unknown destination.

In a statement signed by its National Coordinator, Emmanuel Nnadozie Onwubiko, HURIWA described the attack as a disturbing demonstration of the growing audacity of bandits, who have continued to target innocent citizens without regard for human life or the sanctity of religious places.

The association said the invasion of a mosque during congregational prayers was not only an assault on the right to life and freedom of worship but also evidence of the worsening security situation in the North-West.

www.guardian.ng

The Metro Section

Industrial court nullifies NIS officer's suspension, orders reinstatement

By **Eniola Daniel**

THE National Industrial Court (NIC), Abuja has nullified the suspension of a Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) officer, Dr Badiru Adeyemi Oluwafemi, describing the action as illegal, unlawful and unconstitutional.

The court also ordered his immediate reinstatement, promotion to the rank of his colleagues, payment of outstanding salaries and entitlements, and awarded him N1 million in general damages.

Justice Buhari Sani gave the judgment following an originating summons filed by Oluwafemi against the NIS, seeking an interpretation of relevant provisions of the 1999 Constitution (as altered) and the Public Service Rules, 2021.

The claimant had approached the court to challenge his suspension through a letter dated August 10, 2026, with reference number NIS/S/23633/VOL.1/123, which he alleged was issued in defiance of an interim court order delivered on July 2, 2026.

He also sought an order restraining the NIS, its agents and other security agencies from enforcing the suspension, as well as his reinstatement and payment of outstanding salaries, allowances and other entitlements.

In his affidavit, Oluwafemi, a Superintendent of Immigration formerly attached to the Lagos State Command, said he had earlier filed suit marked NICN/ABJ/253/2025 to challenge his posting from Lagos to Kebbi State.

He alleged that while the case was pending, the service initiated disciplinary proceedings against him over the same subject matter, prompting him to file a fresh suit marked NICN/ABJ/235/2026.



According to him, the court, on July 2, 2026, granted an interim injunction restraining the NIS from taking further disciplinary action against him in connection with the subject matter of the earlier suit.

He alleged that despite being served with the order, the service proceeded to suspend him through a letter dated August 10, 2026.

He also claimed that he was prevented from participating in the 2026 promotion examination and was notified of his suspension through a WhatsApp message from the Kebbi State Command.

The claimant argued that the suspension was intended to punish him for exercising his constitutional right of access to the courts.

He further contended that the disciplinary proceedings initiated through a query dated January 16, 2026, exceeded the 60-day period prescribed by the Public Service Rules, 2021.

However, the NIS, in its counter-affidavit filed on September 10, 2026, and deposed to by a Chief Superintendent of Immigration, Vivien Ifejokwu, maintained that the claimant was lawfully posted to the Kebbi State Command but refused to comply with the directive.

Aliyu approves new Sokoto road, commissions Offa road

From **Muhammad Gazali Garba**, Sokoto

SOKOTO State Governor, Ahmed Aliyu, has approved the immediate construction of the Trade Fair–Pinnacle Hotel Road to improve connectivity and ease movement within the Sokoto metropolis.

The governor announced the approval on Sunday while commissioning the newly constructed and asphalted Offa Road.

Aliyu said the proposed road would improve access to schools, markets and other public facilities, while opening up the area for greater commercial activities.

He disclosed that his administration had constructed and commissioned more than 200 township roads since assuming office, attributing the achievement to its commitment to the Urban Renewal Programme.

The governor said the Offa Road project was also the fulfilment of a promise he made to residents during his electioneering campaign.

He described it as the third road constructed by his administration in communities predominantly inhabited by non-indigenes, following the completion of the Sahara and J. Allen township roads.

According to him, the projects reflect his administration's commitment to equitable development and service delivery to all residents, irrespective of their places of origin or political affiliations.

In his remarks, the Sarkin Igbo of Sokoto State, Eze Tobias Gbahara, commended the governor for extending infrastructural development, particularly road construction, to areas where members of his community live and conduct business.

He pledged the community's continued support for the administration.

Also speaking, the representative of the Sultan of Sokoto and Magajin Rafin Sokoto, Alhaji Rilwanu Bello, urged residents to take responsibility for maintaining the road to ensure its durability.

Other dignitaries at the ceremony included a former PDP governorship candidate, Malam Sa'idu Umar Ubandoma; Commissioner for Lands and Housing, Nasiru Aliyu Dantsoho; Chairman of Sokoto South Local Council, Alhaji Ya'u Muhammad Dandada; and Sarkin Yarbawa of Sokoto, Alhaji Abdullahi Choka.

Court to hear activist's suit against Jankara market leadership over suspension, eviction threat

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

A Magistrate's Court sitting in Ogba, Ikeja, Lagos, is expected to hear a suit today, November 17, filed by a human rights activist, Comrade Ola Agboola Jnr., challenging his alleged unlawful suspension by the leadership of Jankara Motors and Spare Parts Market, Ijaiye-Ojokoro, and a threat to evict him from two shops he has occupied since 2009.

Agboola, Coordinator of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR), Jankara Unit, filed the suit against the Babaloja General of Ojokoro, Mr Akin Fagbola, the market association and others, seeking judicial intervention over a suspension notice allegedly issued on May 15, 2025, and a quit notice dated February 23, 2026.

The suit, marked MCIK/625/CIV/2026, centres on the activist's claim that he was unfairly suspended from the market and subsequently threatened with the loss of his two shops, which he said he had rented from the market association for about 17 years.

In his account of the dispute, Agboola traced the disagreement to issues surrounding electricity connections and safety concerns within the market.

He alleged that some founding members of the market connected electricity from his power supply to their offices using cables he considered substandard.

He said he subsequently issued a letter of undertaking to the individuals concerned, warning that they would be held responsible for any fire outbreak resulting from the connections.

However, he claimed that his efforts to address the safety concerns created hostility between him and the market leadership, eventually resulting in his suspension.

The activist further alleged that Fagbola accused him of establishing a CDHR unit within the market without his approval and complained that he failed to observe the customary greetings expected of him as market leader.

Agboola maintained that his human rights activities and efforts to speak against perceived injustices among traders should not be grounds for victimisation or threats to his livelihood.

The dispute reportedly attracted the intervention of the immediate past Chairman of Ojokoro Local Council Development Area, Ahmed Tijani Idowu, who allegedly summoned the market leadership and directed that Agboola be allowed to resume his business.



Jankara market, Lagos.

Lagos drivers face daily harassment over illegal roadside levies

By **Glory Sunday**

COMMERCIAL bus drivers in Lagos face daily demands for money from groups of men operating around bus stops and loading points, with disputes over the payments sometimes resulting in dangerous confrontations involving motorists, commuters and collectors.

A near-fatal incident witnessed along the Oshodi axis recently has renewed concerns about the activities of roadside touts and the risks they pose to road users.

The incident occurred when a commercial bus travelling from Secretariat, Alausa, to Oshodi, Toyota, and onward to Mile 2 stopped to drop off and pick up passengers.

As the vehicle stopped, some men approached the driver to demand money. Commercial drivers plying the route reportedly pay between N200 and N500 to about four different collectors at successive points in Oshodi, including when stopping to pick up or drop off passengers.

Trouble started when one of the touts demanded N500. The bus assistant requested N200 change but refused to release the money until he receives the change.

The disagreement escalated when the man held onto the bus as the driver attempted to move. The driver accelerated despite the extortionists grip, forcing him to run alongside the moving vehicle.

Moments later, another car nearly collided with the bus, leaving the man dangerously close to being crushed.

A commercial driver, Osinawata Onyeka, who operates along the Alausa Secretariat, Oshodi, Cele and Mile 2 routes, said roadside touts had persisted for more than 10 years, dating back to when he first arrived in Lagos.

He said drivers could hardly refuse to pay or challenge the collectors because the practice had become entrenched in the transport system.

According to him, drivers have learnt to comply to avoid confrontations, although the number of people demanding money along some routes has become excessive.

Onyeka said touts sometimes harassed drivers even when they had barely made any money, particularly during their first trips of the day or when they had insufficient fuel or passengers.

Nembe community sues oil firm, alleges trespass on 46.5 hectares of land

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

THE Nembe community in Nembe Local Council of Bayelsa State has filed a suit against Nembe Exploration & Production Company Limited (NEPCL), formerly Aiteo Eastern E&P Company Limited, over alleged trespass on a 46.5-hectare parcel of land at Nembe Creek.

The community, represented by Chief Inie Loko Maduabebe and Chief Diepreye Owugha, is seeking a declaration of its customary right of occupancy over the disputed land, alongside several billions of naira in compensation and damages.

In the suit marked BYHC/BHC/CV/16/2026, filed on November 10, 2026, at the High Court in Yenagoa, the claimants alleged that the company entered the land in September 2020 without their consent, cleared crops, fishing camps and economic trees, destroyed shrines and subsequently fenced off the property.

They also accused the company of continuing to occupy and use the land without compensating the community.

Through their counsel, Chief Rumson Victor Baribote of Debeez Chambers, the claimants are asking the court to declare the company's alleged entry, occupation and activities on the property a continuing trespass.

They are also seeking a declaration that the community is entitled to a customary right of occupancy over the 46.5 hectares, delineated in white on Survey Plan No. IA/BYS/LD010/2026, dated October 27, 2026.

In their claims, the community is demanding N11.969 billion, representing the assessed open-market value of the land, based on a valuation report prepared by eF KENI Associates on November 5, 2026.

It is also claiming N240.986 million as compensation for the loss of surface rights, including economic trees and forestry resources on the disputed property.

For the alleged deprivation of the land's economic use over approximately six years, from September 2020 to the date of the valuation report, the community is demanding N10.5 billion in mesne profits and damages.

Adamawa CP tasks newly promoted officers on discipline, accountability

From **Joy Dennis**, Yola

THE Adamawa State Commissioner of Police, Kabir Hassan Umar, has urged newly promoted officers of the command to uphold discipline, integrity and professionalism, reminding them that their elevation comes with greater responsibilities.

Umar gave the charge yesterday in Yola during the decoration ceremony for officers promoted to various ranks in the Adamawa State Police Command.

He urged them to justify their promotions through exemplary conduct, dedication and effective service delivery.

The commissioner said the officers' years of experience in the Nigeria Police Force should have equipped them to discharge their duties without constant supervision, stressing that self-discipline was essential to effective policing.

He advised them to constantly examine their actions, uphold what was right and allow the fear of God to guide their conduct both within and outside the workplace.

"You are being elevated to a higher rank. Likewise, the responsibility is now going to be higher. You are all experienced officers, so I need not tell you what to do and what not to do. Be good managers wherever you find yourselves and perform your duties without supervision," he said.

Speaking on behalf of the promoted officers, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DCP Suleiman Yahaya Nguroje, pledged that they would justify the confidence reposed in them through punctuality, obedience, loyalty, integrity, courtesy and efficiency.

Nguroje assured the commissioner of their support for his leadership and initiatives aimed at strengthening security and ensuring the protection of lives and property across the state.

He also urged officers of the command to promote teamwork and strengthen cooperation, while assuring residents of their commitment to friendly, professional and effective policing.

"We assure you that we are not going to let you down. We are going to support you absolutely to ensure that Adamawa State is effectively policed," he said.

The ceremony featured the decoration of officers promoted to various ranks, including Deputy Commissioners of Police, Chief Superintendents of Police, Superintendents of Police and Deputy Superintendents of Police.

It was attended by representatives of the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC), traditional and community leaders, senior police officers, family members of the promoted officers and other invited guests.

44th NAPE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
8-12 NOV. 2026
EKO HOTEL AND SUITES LAGOS

Theme: Unlocking More Barrels: Driving Reserves Growth through Exploration, Local Capabilities, & Adaptive Technology

NIGERIAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM EXPLORATIONISTS SINCE 1975

UNLOCKING BARRELS · EXPLORATION GROWTH · LOCAL CAPABILITIES · ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Congratulations

to the Recipients of the 2026 Distinguished Honours and Awards



THE ARET ADAMS AWARD

The Highest Honour of the Association

George Abiodun Osahon, FNAPE

For four decades of distinguished service to Nigeria's petroleum industry, rising to become its chief regulator, and for unbroken devotion to this Association, as Past President and current Chairman of our Board of Trustees.

NEW FELLOWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Conferred with the Fellowship of the Nigerian Association of Petroleum Explorationists



Prof. Olabisi Adeleye Adekeye, FNAPE



Adeniyi Temitope Adelaja, FNAPE



Dr. Eunice Omozusi Ajayi, FNAPE



Dr. Ekere Akpan, FNAPE



Clement Chukwuka, FNAPE



Emotonghan Dayetuawei, FNAPE



Dr. Olatunbosun Olatunji Olagundoye, FNAPE

Your service to the geoscience profession, to the industry and to this Association lights the path for the next generation. NAPE celebrates you and is grateful.

Olajumoke Cecilia Ajayi, FNAPE
NAPE President

Emmanuel Egbele, FNAPE
Vice President and Chair, Distinguished Honours and Awards Committee

Mrs. Somime Oguntola
NAPE Publicity Secretary

Mastercard And SMEDAN Convene MSME Growth Forum And Sign MoU To Advance SME Digitization In Nigeria

• Government leaders, financial institutions and entrepreneurs gather to explore payments, credit and digital capabilities for Nigerian SMEs as Mastercard and SMEDAN sign an MoU to explore opportunities to support MSME digitization and growth.

Mastercard and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) convened entrepreneurs, financial institutions, policymakers and ecosystem partners at the SMEDAN MSME Growth Forum to explore the practical tools, collaborations and capabilities Nigerian small businesses need to grow in the digital age.

The collaboration builds on the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment's support for the design and piloting of a national MSME Digitization Programme, which aligns with the Government's priorities for advancing Nigeria's digital economy and supporting SME development.

Through the MoU, Mastercard and SMEDAN will explore opportunities to collaborate on initiatives that support MSME digitization and growth. Together, the organizations aim to support Nigerian SMEs adopt digital tools, improve operational efficiency and participate more fully in the formal economy.

Tara Nathan, executive vice president, Growth Segments, Mastercard, said: "Small businesses are the engine of economic growth, job creation and innovation, but many entrepreneurs continue to face barriers to digitization, skills development and access to finance. Through the framework established by this MoU, Mastercard and SMEDAN will explore opportunities to support Nigerian entrepreneurs as they build stronger and more resilient businesses. By equipping SMEs with the tools, capabilities and connections they need to participate in the digital economy, we are unlocking new opportunities for growth, productivity and long-term success"

Charles Odii, director general, SMEDAN, said: "Nigerian entrepreneurs need more than encouragement to digitize. They need practical tools, skills and support that fit the realities of running a small business. Our collaboration with Mastercard creates a framework for bringing these capabilities closer to the businesses that need them, while coordinating engagement with government and ecosystem partners."

Kari Tukur, country manager, West Africa, Mastercard, said: "SMEs are central to Nigeria's economic future, and supporting their growth requires more than access to funding alone. Business owners increasingly need digital payment capabilities, practical skills, market access and trusted partners to help them grow sustainably. The MSME Growth Forum was designed to bring these conversations and solutions together, while our collaboration with SMEDAN reinforces our long-term commitment to helping Nigerian entrepreneurs participate and succeed in an increasingly digital economy."



• From L-R: Benedict Itegbe, Regional Coordinator South-West Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC); Kari Tukur, Country Manager, West Africa, Mastercard; Charles Odii, Director General, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN); Tara Nathan, Executive Vice President, Growth Segments, Mastercard; Daniella Jarikre - Ikazoboh, Assistant General Manager and Head of the Lagos Regional Office, Nigerian Export-Import Bank (NEXIM); Princess Zahrah Mustapha Audu, Director-General, Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) at the SMEDAN MSME Growth Forum in Lagos

The forum featured a keynote address from Nathan, who also joined Aisha Rimi, Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) for a fireside discussion titled "Informal to Inclusive: Payments, Policy and the Path for Nigeria's Small Businesses."

This was followed by a panel discussion titled "Beyond Credit: The Solutions Nigerian SMEs Need to Grow and Scale" featuring representatives from Access Bank, Wema Bank, AFEX and SMEDAN, moderated by Kari Tukur, country manager, West Africa, Mastercard.

The two engagements explored how public-private collaboration, digital payments and enabling policy frameworks can help informal businesses transition into the formal economy, improve resilience and access new growth opportunities; while also examining the practical barriers facing Nigerian entrepreneurs, highlighting the need for a broader support ecosystem that extends beyond access to credit.

Small business attendees also took part in practical masterclasses designed to build business and digital capabilities. Sessions covered digital marketing strategies to help SMEs attract and retain customers online, as well as solutions supporting entrepreneurs across key sectors, including agriculture, enabling them to improve productivity, expand market access and build more sustainable businesses.

The collaboration comes as Nigerian entrepreneurs increasingly identify digital capabilities, skills and finance as essential to growth. According to Mastercard's 2026 SME Confidence Index, 100% of Nigerian SMEs surveyed consider digital and online payments vital to growing their businesses, while 78% identify digitizing their business as a key priority, 79% prioritize training and upskilling staff, and 69% are seeking credit to expand.

The forum reflects Mastercard and SMEDAN's shared interest in exploring opportunities to support the competitiveness of Nigerian SMEs through innovation, capability building and collaboration. By aiming to bring together policymakers, financial institutions, business leaders and entrepreneurs, the initiative seeks to create practical pathways for small businesses to participate more fully in Nigeria's digital economy.

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

Editorial

www.guardian.ng Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

2027: Why INEC must restore confidence in voters' register

PROTESTS by opposition political parties and some civil society organisations over technologically induced irregularities in the voters' register, ahead of next year's election, are far from misplaced. The complaints go to the root of the credibility of the general elections slated for January 2027, especially as the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has acknowledged AI-generated photographs, questionable registrations and other irregularities in its preliminary register.

While these do not, by themselves, establish the existence of fictitious voters or a deliberate plot to manipulate the 2027 elections, they raise concerns about the integrity of the register. The credibility of the elections will depend largely on whether Nigerians trust the register. The Commission should therefore undertake a comprehensive audit of the register, strengthen its technological safeguards, ensure compliance with electoral laws and make the process of registering and obtaining Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) considerably easier for eligible Nigerians.

The Commission's Director of Information and Communication Technology, Dr Lawrence Bayode, attributed the anomalies to some registration officers who allegedly exploited their authorised access to the system. This admission is self-incriminating and raises questions about how such entries could have passed through the Commission's verification processes. Elections are often charged with unscrupulous intentions, and the 2027 exercise seems poised to take such deviousness a notch higher. If the watchdog cannot keep its house in order, it leaves little room for the public to trust its acclaimed statutory interventions.

Moves by INEC Chairman, Prof. Joash Amupitan, to clean the stables are instructive. He has since announced that the Commission removed 1,608,660 confirmed invalid registrations following its review of the 2025/2026 Continuous Voter Registration exercise. The exercise generated 11,088,238 records, of which 1,545,052 were initially flagged by the Automated Biometric Identification System for further examination. Following verification and public complaints, the Commission also identified additional invalid records. It further reported that 54 officials across 10 states had been identified in connection with registration irregularities.

INEC should publish a detailed account of the irregularities, the categories of records removed and the corrective measures adopted. Nigerians deserve to understand the condition of the register on which the next general election will depend. The identification of the 54 officials should be followed by thorough investigations and appropriate sanctions where wrongdoing is established. Disciplinary action should also be accompanied by an examination of the supervisory failures that allowed the irregularities to occur.

The controversy is more troubling because it exposes a problem extending beyond the latest registration exercise. The Commission's admission that many of the questionable photographs and multiple-registration complaints circulating publicly relate to records captured between 2011 and 2023 raises questions about the effectiveness of previous clean-up exercises and how far the inherited register has been reconciled with subsequent additions, transfers, corrections and deletions. Having had almost an entire electoral cycle to address these shortcomings, the continuous registration exercise should have provided an opportunity to update the database, remove invalid entries and ensure that eligible citizens were properly captured.

If INEC expects political parties and other stakeholders to comply with the rules, it must show respect for them, especially with regard to electoral deadlines. Its handling of the requirement under Section 19 of the Electoral Act 2026 for the display of the preliminary voters' register has added another dimension to the credibility concerns. The physical display took place between October 9 and 15, while the online display did not take place until October 26, effectively driving a wedge of distrust between the Commission and opposition parties. INEC should be seen to be addressing concerns without casting shadows of doubt or leaving room for insinuations that it is favouring a particular party against the others, or pandering to the government of the day.

The right to vote is a fundamental civic entitlement, and the process of securing the document required for accreditation needs not be fraught with obstacles for eligible citizens. The electoral commission's 2023 General Election Report shows that approximately 6.26 million PVCs remained uncollected. This represents a substantial number of registered voters. INEC should take greater responsibility for notifying registrants when their cards are ready and making collection arrangements less frustrating. Citizens should not have to make repeated visits to electoral offices, incur unnecessary expenses or, in worse-case scenarios, be compelled to tip electoral officials to obtain documents required to exercise their constitutional rights.

How electoral authorities can make voter services more accessible in the 21st century is not rocket science. It only assumes the airs of mysticism when the political will to prioritise citizens' convenience is absent or when bureaucratic bottlenecks and institutional inertia are allowed to frustrate simple, straightforward solutions. Elections Canada maintains a National Register of Electors and updates it through several administrative data sources. As of November 2025, it reported coverage of 96.1 per cent of qualified electors and address accuracy of 91.6 per cent. It also sends voter information cards to registered electors, providing details of where and when they can vote. It might be argued that this is a marked departure from Nigeria's PVC system. It nevertheless demonstrates what is possible when proactive administration and effective communication are given the right of way.

As the countdown to the 2027 general elections gathers momentum, all eyes will be on INEC to deliver a comprehensive and independently verifiable audit of the national register. The Commission must resist the faulty interpretation that its role as umpire precludes independent examination by technical experts, civil society organisations and political parties. These bodies deserve appropriate opportunities to examine the processes, subject to safeguards for personal data. INEC is independent, but that independence must be exercised in a manner that earns the confidence of Nigerians and demonstrates that the Commission deserves their trust in the conduct of political contests.

Equally, it must maintain tamper-resistant records of changes to registration information and conduct regular security assessments of its systems. Its proposed measures, including the use of approved applications for photograph capture and an AI governance framework, should be accompanied by clear implementation guidelines and effective supervision.

The December 15 deadline for publication of the final register is around the corner. It will be an important opportunity for the Commission to demonstrate that it has made good progress. Nigerians deserve a voters' register that accurately reflects the eligible electorate and protects their civic rights. Every genuine voter must be accounted for. Fictitious and invalid entries should be identified and removed through verifiable procedures.

The credibility of the 2027 general elections will depend substantially on what INEC does now. The Commission needs to put its house in order and restore public confidence in the register. The ballot begins with the name on the register; if that foundation is unreliable, the credibility of the election itself will remain in question.

LETTER

Omotoso: A purposeful life at 65

SIR: Since the day I first met him in the newsroom of The Rutam House headquarters of *The Guardian* newspapers 32 years ago, Lagos State Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr Gbenga Omotoso, who turned 65 on November 11, 2026, remains the same person in every department of life.

Such a man who has positively impacted the lives of thousands of people whose paths crossed his deserves to be celebrated on his special day.

My attempt to change my job then had brought me face to face with the man I would later get to know at close range as an angel in human form. Within days of our first meeting, I realised the start of the fulfilment of my dream of gaining some journalistic experience at *The Guardian* where he was the then Editor of *The Guardian Express,* the evening tabloid of the stable. He hired me as a staff reporter in the flagship newspapers.

Over 32 years after, and in character, Omotoso remains consistent like the northern star; no chameleonic behaviour.

With time, our relationship developed from being a mere reporter and his boss/editor to brothers from different mothers. Even when we were not working together after we both left *The Guardian*, the relationship remained unshaken. At another time when destiny brought me to work with him again at *The Nation* newspapers where he personally invited me to join him as an assistant editor, our relationship remained solid.

His purposeful life that has been a masterpiece of compassion, love, laughter and wisdom has heavily robbed off on the lives of people like us and others. It has been decades of leaving indelible marks on all who have had the privilege of knowing him, either professionally, politically or socially.

Omotoso is a thorough-bred journalist, an editor of editors, a consistent, award-winning columnist and a mentor and trainer per excellence. His approach to journalism, which we gained from, while learning under him, has greatly shaped the way we think and write today.

Besides, his trials and triumphs have shown us what it means to live with purpose, passion and perseverance. His is a life worthy of emulation because of the uncommon traits that have brought uncommon grace to him.

To those of us who know him very well, his life has also been a testament to the power of kindness, generosity, and a heart that has always been in the right place. He keeps touching the lives of others unconditionally.

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

Steve Omolale, a journalist, wrote from Lagos.



Opinion

www.guardian.ng Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

Wike's N10 million price tag: Impunity going overboard

By **Ebuka Ukoh**

IN popular parlance, "this Naija na cruise" is a Nigerian phrase meaning anything goes. Sometimes, I am tempted to laugh at the absurdities, shake my head, and move on. Other times, the sheer volume of nonsense threatens to overwhelm one into silence. After all, how many issues can one person address?

Increasingly, I wonder whether some of our public officials still consider these possibilities before they speak or act. When a serving minister, former governor, and lawyer publicly promises millions of naira to state actors on the condition of delivering a particular electoral outcome, and subsequently defends the promise as political mobilisation, I am compelled to ask: where is the fear of consequences?

Political mobilisation or something else?

Wike has defended his statement, maintaining that the proposed payments are rewards for political mobilisation and hard work rather than vote-buying. He argues that he has not instructed councillors to distribute money to voters in exchange for their ballots.

He has compared the proposed rewards to incentives offered to athletes for winning competitions and to promises parents make to children for outstanding academic performance. The National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress, Nentawe Yilwatda, has also defended the arrangement, arguing that payment would follow the election.

Let us examine these arguments fairly. Political mobilisation is a legitimate component of democratic competition. Political parties spend money organising rallies, training agents, communicating policies, advertising, and encouraging citizen participation.

There is nothing inherently improper about paying individuals for lawful campaign work. However, a key distinction must be made: paying someone to carry out legitimate campaign activities differs fundamentally from promising personal financial rewards on the condition of securing a specific electoral outcome.

One compensates labour; the other creates a direct financial stake in the outcome. A councillor might organise meetings, engage residents, distribute campaign materials, and persuade thousands of citizens to vote. Yet under the arrangement Wike announced, if the ward votes for another candidate, the councillor receives nothing.

What, then, is being rewarded? The work or the result? And if the result is the determining factor, what safeguards exist to ensure that the pursuit of the reward does not compromise the freedom of voters? These are legitimate questions. They deserve answers beyond assurances of political mobilisation.

The law does not stop at the voter

Regarding the legal framework, another aspect of this controversy is particularly noteworthy. Much of the public defence relies on the assertion that Wike did not offer money directly to individual voters. But is direct payment to a voter the only form of electoral inducement recognised under Nigerian law?

It is not. Section 125(1)(a) of the Electoral Act 2026 addresses corrupt offers or promises intended to induce a person to procure votes or secure a candidate's election. Subsection (3) provides an exception for bona fide lawful election expenses. The distinction matters. The law recognises that electoral corruption need not always involve someone standing outside a polling unit handing cash to voters; it also covers conduct involving intermediaries and promises intended to secure electoral outcomes through corrupt means.

Does Wike's announcement satisfy the legal elements of an electoral offence? That requires a proper examination of the facts, the intended purpose of the payments, the proposed funding arrangements, and the applicable law. I am not suggesting that a newspaper article should substitute for an investigation or a court judgement. But describing a payment as political mobilisation should not automatically place it beyond scrutiny.

A politician's explanation is relevant evidence, but it is not a judicial determination of legality. The argument that payment after an election removes the possibility of inducement is equally flawed. A promise made before an election can influence conduct before voting, even if the funds arrive afterwards.

Indeed, the promise itself creates the incentive. If I promise someone N10 million today on the condition that a specific outcome occurs tomorrow, the fact that payment follows the event does not erase the promise's influence.

The relevant question is not simply when the money changes hands. It is what the promise seeks to achieve and whether the means of achieving it comply with the law.

Whose N620 million?

Then there is the question of money. Where would the promised funds come from? Would Wike finance the rewards personally? Would the APC fund them? Would private political supporters contribute? Would any public resources be involved? The announcement and subsequent explanations have not established the source of the proposed payments. We should not assume, without evidence, that public funds would finance them.

Yet citizens have every right to ask. Wike occupies an office entrusted with substantial public responsibilities and resources. His position makes transparency surrounding the funding of such a commitment vital. If the funds are private, citizens deserve clarity about their source and compliance with campaign finance regulations. If party funds are involved, relevant accounting and disclosure obligations must be examined. If public resources are involved, entirely different legal and constitutional issues arise.

The Code of Conduct for Public Officers restricts conflicts between personal interests and official duties. An arrangement offering personal financial rewards to elected councillors warrants scrutiny regarding how those incentives intersect with public responsibilities. Public office is a trust, not a private mechanism for distributing political favours. And where public authority intersects with substantial financial promises, transparency should precede payment, not follow public outrage.

A councillor represents a ward. a councillor does not own their votes.

The phrase "deliver your ward" deserves closer examination. It has become standard political lingo in Nigeria. Governors deliver states; political leaders deliver local governments, and councillors deliver wards. But what exactly are they delivering? A ward is a community of citizens with independent minds, interests, and political preferences.

Some residents will support President Bola Tinubu. Others will prefer another candidate. Some will remain undecided until election day. A councillor's responsibility to those residents does not depend on their political allegiance.

Yet when a councillor stands to receive 10 million for securing a particular outcome, an obvious tension arises. What happens when the councillor's personal financial interest conflicts with the freely expressed preferences of the people represented?

What happens when a ward refuses to be delivered? Will the residents' decision be respected? The concern is not that every councillor who offered a reward would engage in wrongdoing. We have no basis for such an accusation. Rather, the concern lies in the incentive structure this arrangement creates. Citizens are entitled to choose their leaders; representatives do not choose for them.

Where are the institutions?

Nigeria has an electoral commission, law enforcement agencies, anti-corruption institutions, courts, and professional bodies. Laws govern elections, public conduct, campaign financing, and public officers' responsibilities. We need to society governed by institutions; it is an argument questions involving people with considerable political influence. INEC should examine the announcement against the applicable electoral provisions and clarify its position.

Relevant investigative authorities should assess whether the facts warrant further inquiry, including into the proposed funding arrangements. The legal community, bar associations, and public officers who are lawyers also share a responsibility to uphold electoral legality.

None of these steps requires a predetermined finding of guilt. They require institutions willing to ask questions. Indeed, an investigation aims to establish whether there is a case to answer.

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

Ukoh, a PhD student at Columbia University, New York, and co-author of Built By The Ancestors, wrote from the United States.

Turning research into nation-building: Strengthening innovation ecosystem

By **Samuel Kehinde Okunade**

A QUESTION ought to trouble every serious observer of African development: why do our universities produce so much research, yet our societies continue to struggle with the problems research is meant to solve? Journals fill yearly with rigorous studies on insecurity, poverty, poor service delivery, climate vulnerability and public health, yet policy shelves in many ministries remain untouched. The problem is not a shortage of ideas. It is a broken bridge between knowledge production, funding and policy uptake, and closing that gap may be among the most underrated development interventions available to African governments.

This is the terrain explored by Teboho Moja and Samuel Okunade in their book, *African Science Granting Councils: Towards Sustainable Development in Africa*. Drawing on case studies from Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya and Zambia, with South Africa as a possible model, the authors examine how African countries govern and fund research, and how that architecture shapes policy uptake. Their central observation is sobering: most African governments still spend far less than the one per cent of GDP on research and development envisaged by commitments such as the Lagos Plan of Action. Because domestic funding remains limited, African research relies heavily on external donors, whose priorities do not always align with African needs.

Science Granting Councils can help address this problem by managing public research funds responsibly, holding institutions accountable for outcomes, and ensuring investment translates into tangible benefits for society. Funding produces knowledge, knowledge informs policy, and policy improves lives, justifying further investment in research.

South Africa offers one of the clearest illustrations of that cycle through the South African Research Chairs Initiative, known as SARChI. Launched in 2006 by South Africa's National Research Foundation and Department of Science and Innovation, SARChI addressed a specific problem: how does a country retain excellent researchers amid persistent academic migration? Rather than relying on small, short-term grants, the NRF and DSI established well-resourced research chairs at public universities, each built around a senior researcher of demonstrated excellence and funded for periods extending up to 15 years, with renewal possible.

Fifteen years matters. It allows a professor to move beyond grant-cycle survival and build sustained inquiry around a difficult national problem. A chair holder is not simply expected to publish papers. The funding supports salary, postdoctoral fellowships, equipment, operating costs and institutional overheads, underwriting an entire research enterprise rather than a single project. This enables chair holders to assemble research groups, postdoctoral fellows, doctoral candidates and master's students working over several years on shared agendas. Chairs are distributed across issues important to South Africa, including marine ecosystems, food security, clean energy, gender inclusivity, national security and service delivery. The model connects research investment to national priorities. As a junior researcher, I took part in this scheme for five years, producing research output that was taken directly to policymakers in five African states.

The development dividends may not make headlines, but they are significant. When a research group has long-term funding, scholars can pursue questions requiring sustained fieldwork, longitudinal data and iterative testing that short grants rarely support. They can mentor postgraduate researchers through coherent, policy-relevant programmes rather than scattered work. Over time, this builds institutional depth, laboratories, research units and centres of excellence that persist beyond individual tenures. It also gives policymakers a stable source of expertise. Many important advances in South Africa's public health, natural resource management and security research have benefited from such sustained research capacity.

This also complicates the assumption that this is simply a South African success story. A striking number of professors who hold or have held SARChI and related chairs are Nigerian by birth and training. Nigerian academics feature prominently among South Africa's researchers, leading work across the social sciences, engineering and natural sciences, and producing scholarship that informs policy. Many were trained in Nigeria but found in South Africa an environment that rewards long-term, well-resourced inquiry. Their success elsewhere should prompt urgency about our institutions.

Herein lies the case for Nigeria. Our universities have capable scholars working on urgent problems: insecurity, weak service delivery, health-system fragility, agricultural productivity, climate risks and more. What they lack is a funding architecture that allows sustained commitment to these problems. TETFund, NRF and the Federal Ministry of Education and allied agencies already possess parts of the machinery needed for a Nigerian equivalent of SARChI: a mechanism for identifying strong researchers and funding chairs to build groups around national priorities.

Imagine a Nigerian professor of security studies funded for a decade to build a research group on counter-insurgency and community resilience in the North East, with postgraduate students producing policy-ready findings. Imagine similar chairs on flood management, primary healthcare delivery, agricultural productivity or border governance. The point is not simply to fund more research, but research that the state can use.

There is also a quieter benefit: creating incentives for academics to stay. One driver of Nigeria's academic brain drain is not salary alone but the frustration of talented researchers who lack a reliable platform for serious, long-term work. A well-designed chairs programme would tell Nigerian scholars they need not leave to pursue research that matters, is properly resourced and can shape national priorities. It could transform the academy from a holding pen for underfunded ambition into an active partner in governance.

Such a programme would also strengthen the relationship between universities, government and industry. It could create durable channels through which evidence moves into ministries, agencies and communities, while giving researchers clearer incentives to pursue questions whose answers can improve public institutions and everyday lives.

Nigeria does not need to copy South Africa wholesale. Local circumstances, funding realities and institutional capacities differ. Any Nigerian version would require careful design, transparent governance and accountability for outcomes, principles Moja and Okunade emphasise. A Science Granting Council, or equivalent body, would need to ensure chairs are awarded on merit, outcomes are measured against priorities, and the public can see what long-term investment produced. Without such discipline, a chairs programme could become another avenue for prestige without accountability.

Nigerian institutions would need supporting infrastructure: transparent review processes, functioning postgraduate pipelines and capacity to manage multi-year grants. A carefully evaluated pilot could precede national expansion.

The underlying insight is clear: research becomes development when it is funded long enough, resourced well and connected to national priorities to command policymakers' attention. Nigeria has the scholars, at home and abroad, building capacity elsewhere. What Nigeria needs now is an architecture that allows more talent to build its life's work here, strengthening our capacity in security, health, agriculture and governance, and enabling the next generation of Nigerian researchers to build its expertise and legacy at home.

Okunade is of the Department of Border and Migration Studies, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos.

Opinion

www.guardian.ng Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

Nigeria's borrowed prosperity (2)

By Saheed Fuhad

Continued from yesterday

THERE are also programmes such as the Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment and the Nigeria for Women Programme Scale-Up. These are not necessarily meaningless projects. Healthcare, education, irrigation, electricity and women's economic empowerment are legitimate development priorities. Some have identifiable beneficiaries and measurable objectives.

The concern, however, is whether the government is demonstrating sufficiently clear, publicly accessible evidence of implementation, measurable results, independent evaluation and long-term financial returns commensurate with the debt commitments.

For example, when a government borrows hundreds of millions of dollars for human capital development, Nigerians should be able to identify the number of schools improved, the number of healthcare facilities strengthened, the quality of services delivered and the measurable improvement in educational and health outcomes.

When hundreds of millions are borrowed for power and irrigation, the public should know the specific infrastructure delivered, the additional electricity generated, the hectares of land brought under irrigation and the economic value created. When loans are tied to broad policy objectives such as economic stabilisation, revenue mobilisation, governance improvement and social protection, the government must explain precisely what has changed as a result of the financing and how those changes will generate lasting economic benefits.

The issue is not that these objectives are inherently vague or unnecessary. The issue is that broad policy objectives must not become substitutes for transparent accounting and measurable development outcomes. Nigeria cannot afford to borrow billions of dollars and leave citizens struggling to establish what tangible economic value the country has received in return.

There is an additional concern with policy-based financing: some loans support reforms and budgetary programmes rather than directly financing a revenue-generating physical asset. Such financing may be justified, but it requires particularly strong evidence that the reforms will improve fiscal capacity and deliver lasting public benefits. The ultimate test is simple: will these loans leave Nigeria with a stronger economy capable of repaying them, or will they simply increase the country's future obligations?

The lessons from countries that borrowed beyond their capacity

Nigeria is certainly not the first country to face the consequences of excessive borrowing, weak revenue mobilisation and poor debt management. The experiences of Sri Lanka, Ghana and Zambia provide important lessons.

In April 2022, Sri Lanka defaulted on its external debt obligations for the first time in its history. The crisis did not happen overnight. Years of fiscal deficits, a narrow revenue base, heavy reliance on external borrowing and weaknesses in economic management had left the country vulnerable. The COVID-19 pandemic devastated tourism receipts, while falling foreign-exchange earnings and rising import costs intensified the country's difficulties.

Sri Lanka eventually experienced severe shortages of essential goods, fuel and medicines, inflation and widespread public protests. It had to seek IMF assistance and negotiate debt restructuring with its creditors. The lesson for Nigeria is that foreign borrowing becomes particularly dangerous when a country lacks sufficient foreign-exchange reserves and a diversified export base to withstand external shocks.

Ghana offers an even more relevant African example. For years, Ghana accessed international capital markets, accumulated public debt and struggled with fiscal deficits. The COVID-19 pandemic and the global economic shocks that followed further weakened its finances. By December 2022, the Ghanaian government announced a suspension of payments on certain external debts and embarked on a major debt restructuring programme.

According to IMF assessments, Ghana's debt-service-to-revenue ratio reached approximately 127 per cent in 2020. This meant that its debt-service obligations were equivalent to more than the government's revenue for that year, although the indicator includes debt-service components and must be understood in its fiscal context. The consequences were severe. Ghana restructured domestic debt, negotiated with external creditors and entered an IMF-supported programme. The experience demonstrates that a country can reach a point where its government revenue is insufficient to comfortably meet debt obligations and finance essential public expenditure.

Zambia's experience is another important warning. The country embarked on an ambitious public investment programme, financed substantially through external borrowing, including non-concessional loans. However, according to the IMF, the resulting investments did not produce sufficient economic growth and government revenue to sustain the rising debt burden.

By the end of 2019, Zambia's public and publicly guaranteed debt had risen to approximately 105 per cent of GDP, according to the IMF's subsequent assessment. In November 2020, Zambia defaulted on its Eurobond obligations, becoming the first African country to default during the COVID-19 crisis. The country subsequently entered a prolonged debt restructuring process.

The lesson is clear: borrowing for infrastructure is not automatically productive borrowing. Roads, bridges, power projects and other infrastructure must be properly selected, economically viable, efficiently executed and capable of generating benefits that justify their cost. A country can borrow billions to build infrastructure and still end up in financial distress if the investments fail to produce sufficient economic returns.

These examples are not predictions of Nigeria's inevitable future. They demonstrate the risks that arise when debt accumulation, weak fiscal capacity, foreign-exchange vulnerability and poor investment returns combine.

The danger of borrowing to repay borrowing

One of the most disturbing developments in debt management is the possibility of entering a cycle in which new loans are contracted to meet obligations arising from previous loans. Borrowing to refinance maturing debt is not automatically irresponsible. Governments routinely refinance debt to manage maturities and reduce financing costs.

However, when refinancing becomes a permanent substitute for revenue generation, economic productivity and fiscal discipline, the country becomes increasingly exposed to creditor confidence and international financial conditions. The danger is that a government may find itself borrowing not to build new economic capacity, but simply to remain financially afloat. This is particularly worrying for Nigeria because of its enormous development needs.

We have millions of children who require quality education, hospitals that need modern equipment, roads that require rehabilitation, farmers who need irrigation and processing facilities, and industries that need reliable electricity. Every naira committed to debt servicing is a naira that cannot simultaneously be spent on these priorities. The opportunity cost is enormous. What happens when the creditors begin to dictate the pace?

There is also a political and economic dimension to foreign indebtedness that Nigerians must understand. When a country becomes heavily dependent on external financing, its economic policy choices can become increasingly constrained by the conditions attached to financing and the need to maintain creditor confidence.

This does not mean every World Bank or IMF loan automatically comes with harmful conditions. Different facilities have different terms, and some are designed to support reforms that governments have independently chosen. However, policy-based loans can involve agreed reform commitments, performance conditions and institutional changes. Nigeria's own experience with subsidy removal and exchange-rate liberalisation has demonstrated how major economic policy decisions can have far-reaching social consequences.

The government must therefore be transparent about the conditions attached to loans, the obligations being undertaken and the long-term implications for the Nigerian economy. Financial independence is not simply about having a sovereign flag and an elected government.

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

Fuhad is a broadcast journalist and public affairs analyst. He is currently the head of station at Mainland 98.3fm.

Politicians should stop threatening Nigeria

By Rasheed Ojikutu

LET politicians know that Nigeria is not their personal estate and that the country is bigger than any individual, political party or election.

There is a dangerous habit in Nigerian politics that must stop. It is the tendency of politicians, their supporters and political associates to threaten the peace, stability and continued existence of Nigeria whenever an election approaches or the prospect of electoral defeat confronts them or their party.

We have heard it repeatedly: *If this candidate loses, Nigeria will be in trouble. If our party is denied victory, the country will boil. This election will determine whether Nigeria continues to exist. If our preferred candidate does not win, there may be no Nigeria to govern.*

These statements are often presented as expressions of concern for the country. Sometimes, they are defended as warnings against electoral malpractice, injustice, exclusion or political marginalisation. Yet, whatever the circumstances in which they are made, such declarations can become instruments of intimidation, deepen ethnic and religious divisions, undermine public confidence in democracy and suggest that the survival of our country depends on the fortunes of particular political personalities.

Nigeria must never be reduced to a bargaining instrument in the hands of politicians. No individual owns Nigeria. No political party is the proprietor of the Nigerian state. No ethnic group has an exclusive right to determine who governs the country. No presidential candidate, governor, senator or political godfather possesses the authority to hold the nation hostage because the outcome of an election may not favour him.

Nigeria belongs to its citizens. It belongs to the farmer in Benue who rises before dawn to cultivate the land. It belongs to the fisherman in Bayelsa who ventures onto the waters to earn a living. It belongs to the trader in Lagos who struggles to pay rent and school fees. It belongs to the civil servant in Kano, the teacher in Enugu, the engineer in Kaduna, the artisan in Aba and the young graduate in Ibadan searching desperately for employment.

It belongs to the millions of Nigerians who have never met a president, never sat at a political dinner and never received a government appointment but whose taxes, labour, sacrifices and hopes sustain the politicians and our country.

These citizens do not deserve to have their future threatened whenever politicians disagree over who should occupy the highest offices in the land. As preparations for the 2027 general elections gather momentum, Nigerian politicians must reflect seriously on the language they use, the emotions they stir and the consequences of their words.

The question is straightforward: If you are seeking political office because you love Nigeria and genuinely want to serve its people, why should your ambition become a threat to the country? If your desire is to improve the lives of Nigerians, why should the possibility of losing an election lead you or your supporters to suggest that the nation may cease to exist?

If you believe your policies are superior, why not persuade voters with evidence, a credible programme and a record of achievement? And if you believe an election has been manipulated, why not pursue lawful remedies, present verifiable evidence and demand accountability through constitutional institutions? Why threaten the country? Why should the future of more than 200 million people be placed at risk because one politician may not become president?

Keep Nigeria out of your game. Your ambition is personal, but the consequences of destroying national peace are collective. This is not a defence of electoral malpractice. It is not an endorsement of injustice. It is not an argument against legitimate protests or the right to challenge fraudulent elections. It is an appeal for political maturity, patriotism and respect for the country that gives every politician the opportunity to seek public office. Nigeria is and must remain bigger than everybody.

Politicians seem to be institutionalising a dangerous politics of national existence. Since the restoration of democratic government in 1999, Nigerians have witnessed intense electoral contests, political defections, disputed results, legal battles, ethnic mobilisation, religious rhetoric and occasional violence.

Democracy has survived many of these challenges, but the political language surrounding elections has sometimes suggested that a particular contest is more than an exercise in choosing leaders. It has been portrayed as a struggle for national survival.

There is a distinction between recognising that elections can affect national stability and deliberately suggesting that the country itself may be endangered if a particular candidate loses.

The first can be a responsible warning. The second can become a dangerous political weapon.

Elections matter. They determine who controls public resources, appoints officials, sets policy priorities and directs the affairs of government. Their consequences can be profound.

But elections are not the same as the existence of a country. Nigeria existed before the political parties competing today. It existed before many of the politicians seeking office today were born. It will, with responsible leadership and the commitment of its citizens, continue beyond the political careers of those who currently dominate public debate.

Political parties come and go. Governments change. Presidents leave office. Governors complete their tenures. Senators lose elections. Political alliances collapse. New movements emerge. The country must endure. This principle should be obvious, yet Nigerian political discourse has repeatedly blurred the distinction between the fortunes of a candidate and the survival of the Nigerian state. The danger is that when an election is presented as a battle for national existence, political competition can begin to resemble warfare.

Opponents cease to be fellow citizens with different political preferences. They become enemies who must be defeated at all costs. Supporters begin to believe that losing is not merely disappointing but intolerable. Political actors may feel justified in using any means necessary to prevent defeat. Their followers may interpret inflammatory language as permission to intimidate opponents, attack communities or reject legitimate institutions.

Once politics reaches this point, democracy becomes vulnerable. The winner is no longer regarded as a temporary custodian of public authority but as the victor in an existential struggle. The loser is no longer expected to accept defeat peacefully or seek lawful redress but is encouraged to believe that the entire country has been placed in jeopardy.

That is not the foundation of a stable democracy. A democratic society must allow its citizens to disagree passionately without threatening the existence of their common homeland. It must allow a candidate to lose without the country becoming a casualty.

It must allow a party to be defeated without its supporters being persuaded that violence is the only remaining option. Nigeria is a federation of diverse peoples, languages, religions and cultural traditions. Its diversity makes responsible political communication particularly important.

Leaders who understand this responsibility should be careful not to turn electoral competition into a contest between ethnic nationalities, religious communities or geographical regions. The president belongs to the entire country, not merely to the region where he enjoys his strongest support. The same principle applies to governors, legislators and other elected officials.

A political leader who wins an election must govern beyond his electoral base. A political leader who loses must remain a citizen of the same country. The country cannot be held hostage by either outcome.

Ojikutu is a Professor of Statistics (rtd), at the University of Lagos.

TheGuardian Business

www.guardian.ng Tuesday, November 17, 2026 Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

CRUDE OIL PRICE UPDATE Brent crude: $110.2| WTI crude: $103.5 **FOREX MARKET UPDATE** I&E window: N1,330.47

States fall short of pension obligations, undermine 10-year MPG plan

By **Gloria Nwafor** and **Bankole Orimisan**

NIGERIA's efforts to guarantee decent retirement income for pensioners face a fresh test as the Federal Government and pension industry operators have committed N400 billion to support a N52,500 monthly minimum pension, even as most state governments continue to fall short of their pension obligations.

The Director-General of the National Pension Commission (PenCom), Omolola Oloworaran, disclosed that the fund, comprising N350 billion from the Federal Government and N50 billion from pension industry operators, was projected to sustain the Minimum Pension Guarantee (MPG) for at least 10 years on a conservative basis.

She, however, warned that the long-term success of the initiative would depend on a sustainable funding structure, broader private sector participation and improved compliance with pension obligations across the country.

Speaking during a television programme, monitored by *The Guardian,* yesterday, Oloworaran acknowledged that while pension administration had recorded progress at the federal level and in the private sector, significant gaps persisted among state governments, with most failing to meet their obligations to retirees.

"At the state level, there are some gaps, and most states have not fulfilled their pension obligations," she said.

The disclosure highlighted the uneven implementation of Nigeria's pension reforms, raising concerns about the retirement security of public servants, particularly those employed by state governments, despite renewed federal efforts to strengthen social protection for retirees.

Oloworaran disclosed that only 14 of the 36 states had made significant progress in meeting their pension obligations, underscoring the financial and institutional challenges confronting pension administration outside the federal system.

The development also raised questions about the ability of the country's pension system to provide adequate retirement protection when compliance with statutory obligations remains uneven across the different tiers of government.

Under the Minimum Pension Guarantee, retirees whose Retirement Savings Accounts (RSAs) cannot generate the stipulated minimum monthly income are expected to receive support from the Pension Protection Fund.

The N52,500 threshold represents 75 per cent of Nigeria's current N70,000 national minimum wage and is designed to provide a basic income floor for low-income retirees under the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS).

Oloworaran said PenCom engaged an actuary to determine the appropriate benchmark and assess the financial implications of the initiative before arriving at the figure.

She explained that the commission would periodically review the minimum pension threshold to accommodate inflationary pressures and the fund's financial capacity, stressing that the priority was to avoid introducing a benefit that could become difficult to sustain.

"The first thing is to ensure that there's sustainability. The plan is that we would continue to review and make sure that we never get into a place where we can't pay. So, sustainability is very key," she said.

The PenCom chief revealed that the Pension Protection Fund had accumulated only N38 billion before the current administration, with contributions largely coming from pension fund administrators, closed pension fund administrators and pension fund custodians, while the expected Federal Government contribution had not materialised.

She said the current administration had addressed the funding gap through its N350 billion intervention, alongside the N50 billion contributed by industry operators.



Representative of Ga Mantse, Tackie Teiko Tsuru II (left); Managing Director, Ghana Airports Company Limited (GACL), Mrs. Yvonne Nana Afriyie Opare; Vice President of Ghana, Prof. Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang; Managing Director/Chief Executive of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Mrs. Olubunmi Onabanjo-Kuku and Minister of Transport/Member of Parliament for Saboba, Northern Region, Joseph Bukari Nikpe at the Ghana Airports Company Limited the 20th Anniversary Lecture and Awards in Accra, Ghana.

Domestic airlines get December deadline to adopt V-Pass system

By **Olusegun Koiki**

THE Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, has given domestic airlines till December 31, 2026, to integrate their operations with the newly introduced V-Pass passenger identification system.

The minister threatened that non-compliant operators would not be allowed to board passengers from January 1, 2027.

Keyamo, who gave the directive during the official launch of the V-Pass infrastructure at the Murtala Muhammed Airport (MMA), Lagos yesterday, said the technology was designed to strengthen aviation security, eliminate identity fraud and improve passenger processing at domestic airports.

The minister explained that the system, which is linked to the National Identification Number (NIN) database, would ensure that passengers travelling on domestic flights could be properly identified before boarding aircraft.

According to him, the introduction of V-Pass would also eliminate the activities of touts, touting and individuals who gain unauthorised access to airport departure lounges, as well as the practice of purchasing and reselling flight tickets under different identities.

He said the technology would provide accurate passenger manifests for airlines, making it easier for relevant authorities to establish the identities of people travelling on every flight.

Keyamo, however, clarified that the directive applied to scheduled domestic airlines only, explaining that international passenger identification was already being handled through a separate arrangement involving the Ministry of Interior.

The minister emphasised that the Federal Government was commencing the implementation at Lagos and Abuja airports, with plans to extend the infrastructure to every domestic airport across the country very soon.

He said: "It is the domestic airlines' time to do this. Basically, the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) is in control and in charge of the equipment. But I'm directing the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), as of today, to give the airlines till the end of December.

"I am giving the airlines till the end of December. From January 1st, 2027, no airline will be allowed to board passengers if they don't key into the V-Pass. All airlines, irrespective of who, irrespective of whatever, must key into, for scheduled flights, I mean, scheduled flights, must key into the V-Pass."

IMF warns M'East conflict threatens global supply chains, price stability

By **Isaac Chibuife**

THE International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned that the ongoing war in the Middle East could worsen inflationary pressures and disrupt global trade as damage to energy production, shipping routes and supply chains pushes up food and energy prices.

In its October 2026 Regional Economic Outlook for the Middle East and Central Asia, titled "Steering Through Uncertainty: Strengthening Resilience in Challenging Times", the Fund said the economic impact of the conflict has been uneven, with oil-exporting countries directly affected by the war facing the greatest pressure.

The conflict, which began on February 28, 2026, involving the United States, Israel and Iran, has disrupted energy production and shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a major route for global oil trade.

The IMF projected that the economies of the Middle East, North Africa and Pakistan would contract by 1.3 per cent in 2026, before recovering to 6.6 per cent growth in 2027, assuming the conflict eases. However, growth in the Caucasus and Central Asia is expected to reach 5.2 per cent this year.

The Fund said businesses and households had adapted to the disruptions, while resilient financial markets, government support and the rerouting of supplies had helped limit the economic damage.

It noted that the ability of countries to withstand the shocks depended largely on their exposure to the conflict, economic structures and the strength of policy frameworks.

On inflation, the IMF warned that supply disruptions could drive prices higher and sustain inflationary pressures for longer in some countries, depending on the effectiveness of their policy responses.

It urged governments to strengthen their policy frameworks to prevent external supply shocks from translating into persistent domestic price increases.

The report also identified trade diversification as an important safeguard against future disruptions, noting that countries with a wider range of products, trading partners, transport options and shipping routes were better positioned to withstand supply shocks.

To strengthen resilience, the IMF advised governments to rebuild fiscal and external buffers, improve policy frameworks and expand trade links to reduce exposure to future disruptions.

NICA summit to address mounting unpaid receivables in energy sector

By **Benjamin Alade**

THE National Institute of Credit Administration (NICA), Chartered, has identified poor credit management, prolonged payment cycles and mounting receivables across Nigeria's oil, gas and broader energy industry as major threats to investment, project execution and sustainable growth in the sector.

The Institute warned that Nigeria's energy development ambitions would remain constrained unless the country addressed the financial and commercial challenges preventing the effective flow of credit and capital across the energy value chain.

NICA's Founding Registrar and Chief Executive Officer, Prof. Chris Onalo, stated this on Monday during a press Conference with Energy Journalists in Lagos to unveil the objectives and significance of the forthcoming National Credit Managers Conference 2026.

The 2026 conference is scheduled to be held at the Civic Centre, Victoria Island, Lagos on November 18 with the theme: 'The Energy, Oil & Gas Credit Revolution: Unlocking the Cash, Credit and Confidence to Power Nigeria's Energy Future.'

According to him, Nigeria's energy industry does not face only an infrastructure and production challenge but also a serious credit and receivables management problem that requires urgent attention.

He explained that contractors frequently finance operations and wait for months to receive payments, while service providers and vendors operate under extended payment arrangements that sometimes stretch to 180 days.

NIPCO, NNPC unlock cheaper energy for Ogun factories with new pipeline

By **Waliat Musa**

INDUSTRIES along the Sagamu-Abeokuta corridor in Ogun State can now access natural gas following the commissioning of a gas distribution pipeline network by NIPCO Gas Limited and NNPC Gas Marketing Limited (NGML), in a development expected to reduce energy costs and improve industrial competitiveness.

The project marked a significant expansion of gas infrastructure in Ogun State, providing industries along the corridor with access to a more economical, reliable and environmentally friendly energy source.

With access to natural gas, manufacturers and other industrial operators in the area have an opportunity to reduce their energy costs, improve production efficiency and strengthen their competitiveness.

The gas distribution area was licensed by the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) to the NGML-NIPCO Gas Joint Venture under the provisions of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA).

The 25-year exclusivity granted under the Gas Distribution Licence provides regulatory certainty and investment protection required to encourage long-term infrastructure development.

Beyond the Abeokuta project, the joint venture is advancing the Sagamu-Ibadan pipeline project, which is also licensed to the partnership and expected to be completed by mid-2027.

The joint venture is also developing and expanding gas distribution infrastructure in the Lekki Free Trade Zone and Benin City, as both companies seek to extend natural gas access to more industrial and commercial centres.

The expansion is aligned with the Federal Government's initiative to deepen domestic gas utilisation and leverage the country's abundant gas resources to drive industrialisation and economic growth.

JAMES HOPE COLLEGE



JAMES HOPE COLLEGE

knowledge•Character•Truth

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

AT JAMES HOPE COLLEGE, LEKKI, LAGOS

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

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



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

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

LAGOS

Dates: **Saturday, 30th January and 13th February, 2027**

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

Time: 10AM

ABUJA & PORT HARCOURT

Date: **Saturday, 13th February, 2027**

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

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

Time: 10AM



APPLICATION CLOSES: FRIDAY, 22ND JANUARY 2027

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

OPEN DAYS

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

TIME: 9AM TO 12:30PM

DOWNLOAD APPLICATION FORMS

Follow us on all our social media handles:

@jameshopecollege James Hope @JHCLekki

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

Email: admission@jameshope.edu.ng

Web: www.jameshopecollege.edu.ng

CHAMP
GLOBAL LEADERSHIP CONSULTING | THE PEAK PERFORMER

The measure of a Chairman is not the length of his tenure but in the institution he leaves behind.

The Peak Performer Africa, a media platform by CHAMP Global Leadership Consulting, celebrates Otunba Bimbo Ashiru's tenure as Chairman of Odu'a Investment Company Limited at The Peak Performance Awards 2026 with a Special Legacy Edition of The Peak Performer Magazine.





The Odu'a Renaissance

Otunba Bimbo Ashiru

Chairman, Odu'a Investment Company Limited (June 2022 – June 2026)

PUBLIC UNVEILING AT THE PEAK PERFORMER AWARDS 2026

ATTENDANCE IS STRICTLY BY INVITATION

DATE	TIME	VENUE	RSVP
Friday, 20th November, 2026	6:00 PM	Shell Hall, MUSON Centre, Lagos	team@tppafrica.com +234 702 666 8008

Investors gain N352b as NGX Group acquires 10% stake in Nairobi Securities Exchange

By **Helen Oji**

INVESTORS in the Nigerian equities market gained N351.06 billion yesterday as renewed buying interest in Nigerian Exchange Group (NGX Group) and 33 stocks lifted market capitalisation by N352 billion.

Specifically, the market capitalisation of listed equities appreciated by N351.06 billion, representing a 0.21 per cent increase, to close at N164.147 trillion from N163.796 trillion recorded at the end of trading last Friday.

Similarly, the benchmark All-Share Index (ASI) advanced by 540.62 points to close at 252,809.78 points, compared with 252,269.16 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The rally was led by NGX Group, which emerged as the best-performing stock, appreciating by 10 per cent to close at N182.60 per share.

LivingTrust Mortgage Bank followed with a 9.87 per cent gain to N2.56, while Champion Breweries appreciated by 9.82 per cent to N12.30 per share.

Fortis Global Insurance and International Breweries also recorded strong buying interest, gaining 9.64 per cent and 9.52 per cent respectively.

Meanwhile, NGX Group has acquired a 10 per cent equity stake in the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), a strategic investment that extends the Group's participation in East Africa and advances its pan-African growth strategy. This strategic investment aligns with NGX Group's priority of building regional leadership through partnerships and African market integration, strengthening its investment presence across West and East Africa.

This latest development builds on NGX Group's strategic investment in the Ethiopian Securities Exchange (ESX), further demonstrating the Group's long-term commitment to participating in the development and growth of African capital market infrastructure.

The acquisition provided NGX Group with exposure to one of East Africa's most established capital markets, broadening its investment portfolio beyond Nigeria and positioning the Group to benefit from the long-term growth of the region's capital markets and increasing financial integration across the continent.

It also reflected NGX Group's disciplined approach to capital allocation, balancing strategic growth opportunities with its commitment to sustainable shareholder returns.

The investment supports three key strategic priorities: Regional Integration: Strengthening connections between African capital markets and supporting cross-border investment opportunities, Portfolio Diversification: Expanding NGX Group's investment exposure beyond Nigeria, complementing its existing investments and shareholder value in the areas of pursuing long-term growth opportunities through disciplined capital allocation, while maintaining a commitment to sustainable shareholder returns.

After 50 years, FG begins Apapa, Tin Can ports rehabilitation Nov. 25

By **Adaku Onyenucheya**

THE Federal Government has said it will commence the comprehensive modernisation and upgrade of the Apapa and the Tin Can Island Ports with a groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for November 25, 2026.

The Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, Dr Adegboyega Oyetola, said this will mark a major milestone in the Federal Government's renewed efforts to reposition the country's maritime sector, strengthen port infrastructure, improve operational efficiency and enhance Nigeria's competitiveness in regional and international trade.

According to a statement issued yesterday by the Special Adviser to the Minister, Dr Bolaji Akinola, the two strategic seaports, which jointly handle over 70 per cent of Nigeria's non-oil export cargo, occupy a central position in the nation's maritime and economic landscape.

The Minister said modernisation of both ports is critical to expanding trade capacity, facilitating exports, improving cargo delivery and consolidating Nigeria's position as a major maritime and commercial hub in West and Central Africa.

Oyetola said the approval for the comprehensive rehabilitation, modernisation and upgrade of the two ports represents a historic intervention in Nigeria's maritime infrastructure, being the first major, comprehensive modernisation initiative of its scale at the facilities in about 50 years.

He said the project is designed to address decades of infrastructure deficits, ageing facilities, operational constraints and growing demands on the nation's busiest port corridors.

According to him, the intervention will provide an opportunity to transform the ports into more efficient, technologically advanced and commercially competitive facilities capable of responding to the changing dynamics of global shipping and international trade.

"It is also expected to improve cargo-handling capacity, reduce vessel turnaround time and cargo dwell time, enhance port access and logistics, strengthen safety and security, and create a more conducive environment for port users, investors and other maritime stakeholders," Oyetola stated.

OneDosh unveils seamless cross-border payment solutions

By **Sunday Aikulola**

AS global commerce becomes increasingly interconnected, outdated payment rails remain one of the biggest bottlenecks to international growth. To this end, OneDosh is bridging that gap with its new cross-border payment suite, giving businesses a faster, more cost-effective way to pay global suppliers, manage multi-currency operations, and scale without financial borders.

Chief Product Officer, OneDosh, Austin Cornell, disclosed that the solution is a digital platform for sending, spending and receiving money across borders. He stated this while unveiling the solution in Lagos.

Saying OneDosh is not a bank, he added that users can hold dollars and stablecoins in one wallet, convert between them instantly and spend with a OneDosh Visa card.

To him, "our mission is to make money move as freely as humans. Under a year, OneDosh has tackled three problems that hold people back: high cross-border fees, international card declines caused by FX shortages, and how hard it is for non-US citizens to get a US dollar account."

Concerning the impact so far, he revealed that over 260,000 people have joined OneDosh to move their money freely; over $14 million has moved through OneDosh and over 70,000 people got instant access to a USD bank account.

Cornell further revealed that OneDosh would expand to other African markets soon.

A key highlight was a live product demonstration and unveiling of the OneDosh Elite metal card, designed for high-net-worth users. There was also a panel on rebuilding money for a borderless generation.

The panellists included Chief Executive Officer, Paga, Opeyemi Oyinloye; Consul General of Nigeria, New York, Ambassador Abubakar Jidda; Head, Gender section, First City Monument Bank, Nnenna Jacob-Ogogo; Managing Partner, 234Finance, Ezinne Nwazulu and Osaro Jackson of Yellow Card Nigeria.

'Stablecoins could ease Nigeria's cross-border payment bottlenecks'

By **Benjamin Alade**

NIGERIA's growing use of stablecoins for cross-border transactions reflects more than cryptocurrency speculation, with businesses increasingly turning to digital dollars to overcome delays in accessing foreign exchange and paying overseas suppliers, the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Global Settlement Network (GSN), Ryan Kirkley, has said.

Kirkley said stablecoins could provide businesses with a faster and more predictable way of moving dollar value across borders, particularly for importers that face difficulties securing foreign exchange through conventional banking channels.

He, however, cautioned that stablecoins could improve the movement of available foreign exchange but could not create dollars that were not already available in the economy.

"For a business, the strongest driver is being able to pay someone when the payment is due, at a cost it can calculate before committing to the transaction," Kirkley said.

According to him, an importer could have customers, confirmed orders and sufficient naira in its account, yet still be unable to pay an overseas supplier on time.

He said such delays could affect inventory availability, supplier relationships and working capital, making dollar-backed stablecoins attractive as an alternative channel for sourcing and transferring dollar value.

Kirkley, whose company is building infrastructure for stablecoin issuance, tokenisation, digital identity and cross-border settlement, said businesses using digital assets to settle invoices should be distinguished from speculative cryptocurrency trading.



A difficult question persists in Nigeria -how much do we actually know about the leadership capabilities, organisational systems and human capacity behind the results we see? We measure revenue, profit, market share, employee numbers, customer acquisition and economic growth. These indicators matter, but they do not always reveal whether organisations are building the capabilities required to sustain performance, or making the best use of their people.

This gap demands a new performance conversation in Nigeria. We need not just more successful organisations, but better ways of understanding why some perform, why others struggle and what distinguishes institutions that sustain results over time.

We cannot improve what we do not measure, Why Nigeria needs a new performance conversation

THE PROBLEM WITH MEASURING ONLY WHAT IS CONVENIENT

ORGANISATIONS gravitate towards readily available indicators: revenue and returns from financial statements, headcount and training hours from HR systems, acquisition and satisfaction from customer systems. These are useful but incomplete.

An organisation may grow revenue without strengthening its operating capabilities, train extensively without improving managerial effectiveness, recruit talented people without enabling them to contribute fully, or maintain governance committees without demonstrating the quality of their decisions. The existence of a system is not evidence that it works.

Likewise, the presence of people is not evidence that their capacity is being used. A company may employ highly capable women while maintaining structures that constrain their advancement, or have succession policies without a credible pipeline of leaders.

If we measure only what is convenient, we risk rewarding activity rather than outcomes, and visibility rather than effectiveness.

WHY WE NEED TO MEASURE WOMEN'S FULL CAPACITY

One of the most important questions facing Nigerian organisations is whether they are fully benefiting from their female workforce. Women's labour-market participation is substantial, but participation alone cannot show whether women have equal access to progression, strategic responsibilities, decision-making authority and influence over outcomes.

McKinsey's 2025 Women in the Workplace analysis found women occupying approximately 51 per cent of entry-level positions in Nigeria but 38 per cent of senior-level positions. What happens to women's careers as they progress? Which practices facilitate advancement? Which barriers remain invisible in conventional workforce reporting? How do leadership attitudes and workplace behaviours shape opportunity?

Annual celebrations of women's achievements and broad commitments to gender inclusion cannot answer these questions. They require evidence.

This is the rationale behind the No More Shrinking® Full Capacity Report, which investigates women's career progression, workplace conditions, organisational practices and the factors that influence their ability to contribute fully. Its purpose is not simply to document challenges but to help organisations understand how women's capacity, leadership opportunity and institutional performance connect, moving the conversation from representation to utilisation, from visibility to influence, and from general commitments to evidence that informs action.

WHY WE NEED THE PERFORMANCE LEADERSHIP INDEX

The second question is broader - how do we know whether our institutions have the leadership capabilities and systems required for enduring performance? Financial results tell us something important, but not everything. Institutional performance is rarely the product of one successful year; it is built through decisions and systems that deliver results consistently.

The Performance Leadership Index (PLI) provides a structured framework for examining institutional leadership and performance across ten dimensions -Strategic Coherence; Execution Discipline; Performance Ownership & Accountability; Leadership Capability & Readiness; Leadership Continuity & Succession; Governance, Decision Quality & Behavioural Integrity; People, Culture & Organisational Alignment; Innovation & Organisational Adaptability; Stakeholder Confidence & Market Signals; and Enduring Performance.

WHY THE PEAK PERFORMANCE SUMMIT & HONOURS MATTERS

The Peak Performance Summit & Honours 2026, taking place on 20 November 2026 at MUSON Centre, Lagos, brings these questions into the boardroom and the wider marketplace. The No More Shrinking® Full Capacity Experience will advance the conversation about women's capacity and professional influence, and the Full Capacity Report and the Performance Leadership Index will be unveiled.

The Peak Performance Awards also have a role. Recognition should encourage standards of excellence that can withstand scrutiny, not merely celebrate reputation or visibility. The ambition is to strengthen the link between recognition and evidence.

This requires humility. Measurement does not claim to capture every dimension of performance perfectly. It is a commitment to ask better questions, set credible standards, examine evidence and acknowledge limitations. No index can replace leadership judgement, no report can capture every experience and no award can represent an institution's entire contribution. But credible measurement can improve decisions and make conversations about performance better informed.

Visit www.tppafrica.com for the full article

About Dr. Abiola Salami

Dr. Abiola Salami is a World-Class Performance Strategist, leadership authority and founder of CHAMP Global Leadership Consulting. He is the originator of Performance Leadership™ and the driving force behind No More Shrinking®, platforms dedicated to advancing leadership excellence, human potential and transformative impact. Through his work, he equips leaders and organisations to bridge the gap between investment, capability, execution and measurable outcomes, building the leadership capacity required to achieve extraordinary and sustainable performance. Reach him on hello@abiolachamp.com

WE ARE HIRING
JOIN OUR TEAM

THE NIGERIAN ASSOCIATION OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY, MINES AND AGRICULTURE (NACCIMA)

A national non-profit Business/Trade Membership Organization with membership spread across all states in Nigeria is looking for qualified applicants to fill the following positions:

Job Type: Full Time
Location: Lagos, Nigeria

1.Director of Administration and Human Resources.

Responsibilities
The Director of Administration will:

1. Manage the day-to-day administrative functions across departments.
2. Compliance, Infrastructure and Facilities, operational oversight, Resource Management, Human Resources, Policy and Governance, Strategic Support.
3. Service statutory organs of the governance of the Association (General Assembly, Council and Executive Committee) and other identified committees, Organizing statutory meetings of the Association.
4. Assist the Director General to run the affairs of the Association and coordinating other aspects as may be requested, in addition, assist to implement decisions and policies.
5. Pursue projects and activities that will enhance administration of the Association in line with good governance principles.
6. Assist to build a cohesive team spirit and culture among staff and responsibilities to promote better working atmosphere conducive for professional growth and development of excellence at all levels. Supervise, provide leadership, mentorship to building the capacity of staff, Assist to maintain both internal and external relationships pertaining to the administration of the Association.
7. Assist to ensure compliance and transparent use of resources and equipment of the Association. Participating in business development activities to identify opportunities for business expansion amongst others.

KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND SKILL.
A good Honors' Degree from a recognized University with a minimum of 7 years cognate experience. A Postgraduate qualification in Administration, Arts, Social Science discipline. Other relevant professional qualifications will be an added advantage. Age: 40+years. Must be IT compliant with excellent knowledge of Microsoft office.

Excellent interpersonal relationship
- Ability to manage a team
- .Able to work in a multi-cultural environment
- Ability to deliver under pressure
- Excellent communication (written and oral) for a range of audiences
- Highly organised and professional with code of ethics
- Able to meet deadline and set targets

2. Director of Research, Publications and Advocacy

The Director of Research:

1. Provide Research Strategy leadership,
2. Champion Funding and Partnerships,
3. Compliance to standards, Visibility and Reputation amongst other duties.
4. Should be able to represent the organization externally to enhance its research profile and promote interdisciplinary and translational research for societal impact. The candidate must be versed in economic and advocacy research that will project the mission and vision of the Association both locally and internationally.
5. Analyzing and producing high quality research to support organization's vision and mission.
6. Working closely with other departments to identify research needs and develop strategies, and implement projects that support and enhances organizational branding and business growth.

KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND SKILL.
A good Honors degree in economics from a recognized university with a minimum of 7 years cognate experience in research. A post graduate qualification in economics or policy related areas will be an added advantage. Age: 40+years.
- Ability to drive the strategic vision, funding and compliance of research enterprise to ensure smooth internal functioning and external research excellence.
- Able to meet deadline and set targets
- Ability to manage a team (team work)
- Able to work in a multi-cultural environment

3. Director of Programmes, Marketing and Communications

The Director of Programmes, Marketing and Communications.

1. The Director of Programmes will lead the organizational portfolio of projects.
2. Be responsible for membership programmes, recruitment, retention and development.
3. Planning and implementing programmes in line with the strategic objectives and mission of the Association.
4. Determine the operations, structure for each project and make choices about funding, staffing, reporting and marketing.
5. Propose and implement fund raising for projects.
6. Manage budgets, supervise staff and evaluate impacts with reference to programmes and projects.
7. Identify potential risks, assessing their impact and developing strategies to mitigate them.
8. Set a clear path forward and inspire the team to care about shared goals.
9. Align initiatives by planning strategic goals through teamwork to achieve big-picture goals.
10. Ensure that programs and projects run efficiently, meet funding requirements and fulfill the core mission.
11. Present progress reports and share status updates with the leadership.

KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND SKILL.
A good Honour's Degree in Business Administration, Arts or social sciences from a recognized University with a minimum of 5-7 years management/leadership work. A Postgraduate qualification and or professional certification in projects' management, on a related field will be an added advantage.

- Strong communication / strong leadership and organizational skill
- Excellent interpersonal relationship
- Ability to manage a team (team work)
- Able to work in a multi-cultural environment
- Ability to deliver under pressure
- Excellent communication (written and oral) for a range of audiences
- Highly organised and professional
- Able to meet deadlines and set targets
- Ability to adapt to changes.
- Ability to identify risks
- Preferably not less than 40 years old

COMPENSATION:
Salaries are negotiable depending on suitability and experience. Other benefits are stated in the Staff Handbook currently including HMO, Pension Contributions, 13th month salaries, leave of 30 calendar days and leave allowances, etc.

METHODS OF APPLICATION
Applications should be forwarded with copies of the certificates and curriculum vitae. The application envelope should indicate the position applied to the address below. Soft copies can be mailed to:
naccima30@yahoo.co.uk.

All applications should be delivered on or before
15th December 2026.

TO:
The Director General,
NACCIMA,
NACCIMA House,
8A, Oba Akinjobi Way, Ikeja, GRA, Lagos.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Interim Forfeiture

IN THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIGERIA
IN THE LAGOS JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT LAGOS

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

SUIT NO:FHC/LAG/MISC/710/2026

APPLICATION BY THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRIMES COMMISSION FOR AN ORDER OF INTERIM FORFEITURE OF THE ACCOUNTS SET IN SCHEDULE A REASONABLY SUSPECTED TO BE ACQUIRED WITH PROCEED OF UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES BROUGHT PURSUANT TO SECTION 17 OF THE ADVANCE FEE FRAUD AND OTHER FRAUD RELATED OFFENCES ACT NO. 14, 2006 AND SECTION 44(2) B OF THE 1999 CONSTITUTION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA.

ORDER

UPON THIS MOTION EX-PARTE FOR AN ORDER OF INTERIM FORFEITURE dated 22nd day of May, 2026 and filed on the 26th day of May, 2026 coming before the Court and praying as follows:

1. AN INTERIM FORFEITURE ORDER of this Honourable Court forfeiting to the Federal Government of SCHEDULE A
SCHEDULE A

S/NO	NAME	PROPERTY
1.	ALABI CHRISTIANAH	2 LEXUS 300 1 FORD SUV 2000CC 1 SCOOTER 2 HOUSES 1 CARCASS
2.	ABAYOMI OLUWASEUN	1 INCOMPLETE BUILDING AND 1 PLOT OF LAND
3.	ESO AKINLOLA	3 PLOTS OF LAND, 1 IPHONE 16 PROMAX, HISENSE WASHING MACHINE,

HON JUSTICE A. O. OWOEYE
PRESIDING JUDGE

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
Sign. Date 17/6/26
OKORO C. N. (MRS)
PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER
FEDERAL HIGH COURT,
IKOYI, LAGOS

2. AN ORDER of this Honourable Court directing the publication in any National Newspaper, the interim order under relief 1 above, for anyone who is interested in the properties sought to be forfeited to appear before this Honourable Court to show cause within 14 days why the final order of forfeiture of the said properties should not be made in favour of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
Sign. Date

HON JUSTICE A. O. OWOEYE
PRESIDING JUDGE

3. AND for such further or other Order as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make in the circumstances of this case.

UPON READING through the Affidavit in Support of the Motion Ex-parte with the Exhibits attached therein, deposed to by Favour Orilade, Female, Adult, Nigerian Citizen of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC/The Commission), of 15A, Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, Lagos State and filed at this Court Registry.

AND AFTER HEARING the submissions D. C. Ernest, Esq., Learned Counsel for the Applicant, who moved in terms of the Motion paper.

AND THE COURT after careful consideration of the application and submissions of Counsel.

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
Sign. Date 17/6/26
OKORO C. N. (MRS)
PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER
FEDERAL HIGH COURT,
IKOYI, LAGOS

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

1. That an interim forfeiture order of this Honourable Court is hereby granted to the Applicant forfeiting to the Federal Government of SCHEDULE A.

SCHEDULE A

S/NO	NAME	PROPERTY
1.	ALABI CHRISTIANAH	2 LEXUS 300 1 FORD SUV 2000CC 1 SCOOTER 2 HOUSES 1 CARCASS
2.	ABAYOMI OLUWASEUN	1 INCOMPLETE BUILDING AND 1 PLOT OF LAND
3.	ESO AKINLOLA	3 PLOTS OF LAND, 1 IPHONE 16 PROMAX, HISENSE WASHING MACHINE, SCANFROST GAS COOKER AND 1 INFINIX 401

2. That an Order of this Honourable Court is hereby granted to the Applicant directing the publication in any National Newspaper, the interim order under relief 1 above, for anyone who is interested in the properties sought to be forfeited to appear before this Honourable Court to show cause within 14 days why the final order of forfeiture of the said properties should not be made in favour of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

3. That this case is adjourned to 28/9/2026, for report of compliance.

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
Sign. Date 17/6/26
OKORO C. N. (MRS)
PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER
FEDERAL HIGH COURT,
IKOYI, LAGOS

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

ISSUED AT LAGOS, UNDER THE

Presiding Judge this 3rd day of June, 2026

HON JUSTICE A. O. OWOEYE
PRESIDING JUDGE

ALOKPESI C. N.(MRS)
REGISTRAR

FEDERAL HIGH COURT
17/6/26

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
Sign. Date 17/6/26
OKORO C. N. (MRS)
PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER
FEDERAL HIGH COURT,
IKOYI, LAGOS

17/6/26

ITUC-Africa warns clean energy shift could trigger mass job losses

From **Collins Olayinka**, Abuja

THE African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) has demanded employment guarantees, retraining programmes and social protection for workers affected by the transition to clean energy.

In a statement, ITUC-Africa's General Secretary, Joel Odigie, warned that Africa's decarbonisation drive must not trigger widespread job losses or deepen economic hardship.

It said African governments must ensure the shift from fossil fuels to cleaner energy sources creates decent jobs, protects existing livelihoods, and strengthens domestic industries, rather than shifting the economic costs of climate action to workers and vulnerable communities.

The demand has significant implications for Nigeria, where the oil and gas industry remains a major source of employment, government revenue, foreign exchange and industrial activity, while electricity-sector reforms and investments in renewable energy are reshaping the country's energy landscape.

In its demands for the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31), ITUC-Africa, which represented about 18 million workers in 52 African countries, insisted that workers must play a central role in designing and implementing the energy transition.

The organisation maintained that decarbonisation must be accompanied by decent work, social protection, workers' participation, gender equity and investment in green jobs. It called on African governments, developed countries and international financial institutions to establish employment-impact assessments, skills forecasting, retraining and redeployment programmes, job or income guarantees and universal social protection as essential components of national climate and energy plans.

For Nigeria, these demands raise questions about how workers in the petroleum industry, electricity utilities, manufacturing, and other energy-dependent sectors will be protected as investments shift toward renewable energy and low-carbon technologies.

ITUC-Africa specifically warned that the closure of industries and energy facilities must not proceed without funded arrangements for replacement employment, worker protection and economic diversification in affected communities.

Health workers reject NSIWC exclusion circular, threaten action

By **Gloria Nwafor**

HEALTHCARE professionals working in Nigeria's federal universities have rejected a new circular by the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission that excludes the group from the Consolidated Non-Teaching Tools Allowance (CONTTA).

The workers are threatening legal action if the decision is not reversed.

The affected medical doctors, nurses, pharmacists, medical laboratory scientists and allied health professionals, under the Coalition of Healthcare Professionals in Tertiary Education Institutions of Nigeria, described the November 11 circular as discriminatory and inconsistent with earlier government directives on the allowance.

The coalition also accused the leadership of the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities and the Non-Academic Staff Union of failing to protect their interests, despite collecting monthly check-off dues from the affected workers.

A statement signed by its National Chairman and Coordinator, Musa Shehu, CHPTEIN said the disputed circular, with reference number SWC/S/04/S.149/T/187, restricted CONTTA payment to employees on the Consolidated Tertiary Institutions Salary Structure, excluding those on the Consolidated Medical Salary Structure and Consolidated Health Salary Structure.

FG sets N52,500 minimum pension for 173,209 retirees

By **Gloria Nwafor**

THE Federal Government has introduced a minimum monthly pension of N52,500 for 173,209 eligible retirees under the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS), alongside a healthcare intervention backed by more than N7b to improve access to medical services for low-income pensioners.

The two initiatives, Minimum Pension Guarantee (MPG) and PenCare, aimed to address financial insecurity and healthcare challenges among retirees, particularly those whose pension earnings are insufficient to meet basic living expenses and medical needs.

Under the PenCare initiative, the government planned to commence healthcare support for an initial 30,000 low-income retirees, while the minimum pension guarantee is expected to provide a higher income floor for 173,209 eligible beneficiaries.

The initiatives were unveiled at the Presidential Pension Security Initiatives launch held recently in Abuja.

President Bola Tinubu, represented by the President of the Senate, Godswill Akpabio, performed the launch, which brought together representatives of the National Assembly, government institutions, the private sector and pensioners.

Speaking at the event, the Director-General of the National Pension Commission (PenCom), Omolola Oloworaran, said the initiatives represented an important intervention to restore dignity and improve the welfare of retirees.

The introduction of the minimum pension guarantee comes amid concerns about the adequacy of retirement income in an economy where rising living costs continue to put pressure on households, particularly older citizens who depend largely on fixed monthly pensions.

NSITF pushes informal sector coverage after enrolling 250,144 workers in 10 months

By **Gloria Nwafor**

THE Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) has brought an additional 250,144 employees under its Employees' Compensation Scheme between January and October 2026, surpassing the 160,971 workers covered throughout 2025, as the agency intensifies efforts to extend workplace protection to more Nigerian workers.

The expansion comes against the backdrop of the country's labour market structure, where informal employment accounts for approximately 93 per cent of total employment, leaving a significant proportion of workers outside conventional social protection arrangements.

NSITF Managing Director and Chief Executive, Oluwaseun Faleye, disclosed this in his address at the 40th Lagos International Trade Fair in Lagos, noting that extending workers' protection beyond large corporations to small businesses and the informal economy had become critical to national economic development.

According to him, the Fund registered 17,435 additional employers between January and October 2026, bringing its cumulative employer registration to 214,519 since the Employees' Compensation Scheme began in July 2011.

He said the Fund had also covered a cumulative 8,005,027 employees across the public and private sectors, while integrating 73 Ministries, Departments and Agencies into the scheme.

The figures indicated a significant expansion in coverage, with the 250,144 employees registered in the first 10 months of 2026 representing an increase of about 55 per cent over the 160,971 workers covered in the whole of 2025.

Faleye, however, acknowledged that expanding social protection remained a major challenge because so many Nigerian workers operate in the informal economy, including traders, artisans, transport operators, small-scale manufacturers and service providers.

He said many of these workers either lacked awareness of the Employees' Compensation Scheme or did not understand its benefits and registration requirements.

To address the gap, the NSITF registered 2,133 micro, small and medium-sized enterprises between January and September 2026 as part of efforts to bring more businesses and their employees into the workers' compensation framework.

The Managing Director said the Fund was increasingly engaging businesses through markets, workshops, trade associations, and business clusters to ensure workplace protection was not limited to formal corporate establishments.

FG targets job creation through automotive industry law amendment

From **Collins Olayinka**, Abuja

THE Federal Government is seeking to unlock the employment potential of Nigeria's automotive industry through a proposed amendment of the automotive industry law aimed at expanding local vehicle production, improving access to funding and strengthening the domestic market.

The reform is expected to stimulate investments in vehicle manufacturing and assembly, develop local supply chains and create employment opportunities across the automotive industry and related sectors.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Dr Jumoke Oduwole, disclosed this at the opening of the 26th Abuja International Motor Fair in Abuja, describing the automotive industry as a major platform for industrialisation, job creation and economic growth.

She said the government was committed to ensuring Nigeria maximises opportunities in the automotive sector, particularly through improved legislation, access to finance, and stronger integration into the African market.

According to her, reviewing the existing automotive industry law is necessary to align the sector with contemporary realities, address funding constraints facing manufacturers, and improve citizens' capacity to purchase locally produced vehicles.

Oduwole noted that expanding domestic vehicle production would generate employment beyond vehicle assembly, creating opportunities across the solid minerals, iron and steel industries and other segments of the manufacturing value chain.

She said the government was also working to leverage the automotive industry agenda under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to provide Nigerian manufacturers with access to a wider continental market.

"Beyond the Nigerian market, we are also going to support you to interconnect with the African market and the value chains that exist on the continent, so that Nigeria can take a prominent role," she said.

The minister added that the government wanted Nigerians to have access to quality vehicles while creating an enabling environment for the automotive industry to become more sophisticated and competitive.

Earlier, the Director-General of the National Automotive Design and Development Council (NADDC), Oluwemimo Osanipin, called for a modern legal framework to address the industry's emerging challenges, expand local production, and improve access to vehicles manufactured in the country.

He said the sector also required policies that would enable Nigerians to purchase locally produced vehicles and encourage the development of a sustainable spare-parts market to meet the needs of ageing vehicles.

The Guardian Classifieds

Change of Name · Property · Guardian Jobs · SME's/Business Page
Loss of document · Legal Notice · Education Page
Health · Automobile · Fashion · Agro

Guardian Jobs

www.guardian.ng

ENQUIRIES:
LAGOS OFFICE:
08028411767
07069747993

VACANCY

EXPERIENCED ESTATE AGENT URGENTLY NEEDED

Interested applicants must be able to manage properties in some areas in Lagos such as **Lagos Island, Ikoyi, Orile Iganmu, Alaba Suru, Coker** and other specified locations.

Application forms are available **for free**, Monday to Friday (working days), at the address below. Please come along with your **Curriculum Vitae** and **two (2) passport photographs**.

Group Personnel Manager's Office,
No. 4 Abagbon Close, off Ologun Agbaje Street, by Adeola Odeku,
Post Office Bus Stop, Victoria Island, Lagos.
Phone: 08057936690

Only shortlisted applicants shall be contacted.

VACANCIES
JOIN OUR TEAM!
EDUCATIONAL & PROPERTY COMPANY

Be part of our growing team and build a rewarding career!

OPEN POSITIONS

1. **DIGITAL MARKETER** – with knowledge of Corel Draw and Social Media Marketing
2. **RECEPTIONIST** (Computer Literate Lady)
3. **ONLINE MARKETING OFFICERS**
4. **OFFICE ASSISTANT**
5. **PART TIME COORDINATORS** – must have lecture facilities
6. **HOUSEMAID**

LOCATION: NATIONWIDE
Except Digital Marketer – Lagos Only

HOW TO APPLY
Interested and qualified candidates should send their updated **CV** to:
statistic4edu@yahoo.com

Take Advantage of this Opportunity!

NBA-SPIDEL pushes for anti-torture commission, CCTV in police stations

By **Joseph Onyekwere**

- Lawyers urge judicial autonomy, compliance with court orders
- Seek reforms to tackle prison congestion, promote non-custodial sentencing

THE Nigerian Bar Association Section on Public Interest and Development Law (NBA-SPIDEL) has called for an independent Anti-Torture Commission to investigate human rights abuses, monitor detention facilities, and ensure accountability for violations by law enforcement agencies.

The section also advocated mandatory audio-visual recording of police interrogations, taking of confessional statements, as well as the installation of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) systems in police stations, detention facilities and designated interrogation rooms.

These formed part of the resolutions adopted at the end of its 2026 Annual Conference held at the International Conference Centre, Umuahia, Abia State, between November 9 and 13.

In a communiqué issued at the end of the conference, themed 'In Public Interest: Advancing Justice, Democracy and Development', the lawyers expressed concern that torture, arbitrary detention, coercive interrogation and denial of medical attention to persons in custody persisted despite existing constitutional and statutory safeguards.

They called for the effective implementation of the Anti-Torture Act 2017. They urged relevant Ministries of Justice to establish dedicated complaint desks to provide accessible channels for reporting, investigating and prosecuting torture allegations.

The section further urged courts to scrutinise carefully the circumstances under which confessional statements were obtained while advocating prompt access to legal representation, family contact and medical care for people in custody.

It also called for medical, psychological and social rehabilitation, compensation and reparation for survivors of torture.

On judicial independence and the rule of law, NBA-SPIDEL insisted that all arms and tiers of government must uphold constitutional supremacy, separation of powers and the authority of the courts, stressing that court orders must be obeyed without exception.

It maintained that judicial independence requires genuine financial, administrative and institutional autonomy, warning against undue interference in the administration of justice.

The conference identified weak institutions, corruption, poor funding, implementation failures and inadequate accountability as major obstacles to effective justice delivery, rather than the absence of laws.

On access to justice, the section called for stronger collaboration between the NBA, NBA-SPIDEL and the Legal Aid Council of Nigeria to expand legal aid and pro bono representation, particularly for indigent citizens and underserved communities.

It urged lawyers to undertake pro bono cases as part of their professional and civic responsibilities and advocated the provision of legal assistance from the earliest stages of arrest, investigation and detention.

The section also called for effective implementation of the National Legal Aid Strategy 2026–2036, supported by adequate funding, measurable performance indicators, regular monitoring and yearly evaluation.

Addressing the challenges confronting correctional facilities, the lawyers advocated the adoption of non-custodial sentencing, restorative justice and rehabilitation programmes to reduce congestion and promote the reintegration of offenders.



Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Abia State, Ikechukwu Uwanna (left); Founder, Centre for Value in Leadership, Prof. Pat Utomi; Immediate past president of the NBA, Afam Osigwe; NBA President, Oyinkansola Badejo-Okusanya; Abia State Governor, Alex Otti; Former Vice President of Nigeria, Yemi Osinbajo; Chairman of the NBA-SPIDEL, Prof Uju Agomoh and the former chairman of the NBA-SPIDEL, Prof. Paul Chibuike Ananaba during the conference in Umuahia.

NLS challenges Fani-Kayode's rejection of Blue Silk title

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

NIGERIAN Law Society (NLS) has challenged Nigeria's High Commissioner to South Africa, Femi Fani-Kayode's rejection of the Senior Counsel of Nigeria (SCN) designation, popularly known as Blue Silk.

The society also demanded payment of an outstanding balance from the former Minister of Aviation in connection with the conferment, which they said was authorised by his office and a representative delegated to receive the certificate on his behalf.

In a public notice dated November 8, 2026, NLS said its lawyers had written to Fani-Kayode to demand payment of the outstanding amount.

It also disputed his claim that members of his staff attended the November 5 event and accepted the designation without his authorisation.

To support its position, the society published an email dated November 4, purportedly sent by Kemi Akinwale, Secretary to the High Commissioner, to NLS President, Ambassador Dahiru Aliyu.

In the email, Akinwale identified Fani-Kayode's Special Assistant on Media, Lizzy Okoji, as his representative and stated that she would collect the certificate on his behalf.

"I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your email and to inform you that Ms Lizzy Unekwuojo Okoji is the representative of Chief Femi Fani-Kayode. Ms Okoji is the one who will collect the certificate on behalf of the High Commissioner", the mail read.

The NLS said the correspondence contradicted Fani-Kayode's position that his representation at the event and the subsequent communication of acceptance resulted from an administrative misjudgement.

Fani-Kayode, in a statement issued November 6 by Okoji, said he neither authorised nor personally approved the acceptance of the SCN designation.

He consequently dissociated himself from the conferment, questioning its legal and professional basis and its conformity with the statutory framework governing the legal profession.

The former minister, who said he had practised law for over 41 years, maintained that he would not knowingly engage in a conduct capable of violating the law or undermining the integrity of the profession.

The dispute followed NLS's announcement of Fani-Kayode, Seyi Tinubu and three other lawyers as recipients of the SCN designation at its 2026 annual general conference in Abuja.

In February, the Legal Practitioners Privileges Committee (LPPC) warned lawyers against adopting the Blue Silk designation, arguing that it lacked statutory backing and could attract disciplinary consequences.

Continental, regional courts strengthen pact on decision enforcement

From **Bridget Chiedu Onochie**, Abuja

THE Community Court of Justice, ECOWAS, has joined the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR) and the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) for the third Tripartite Judicial Dialogue to strengthen institutional cooperation.

Held under the theme, 'Strengthening Institutional Cooperation, Implementation of Decisions and the Future of AJUDATA in Africa', the dialogue sought to consolidate cooperation among the three judicial institutions, strengthen mechanisms for the implementation of judicial decisions and advance the development of the African Jurisprudence Database (AJUDATA).

The meeting, which took place in Arusha, Tanzania, built on the outcomes of the 2024 Second Tripartite Judicial Dialogue, which identified key institutional challenges, including inadequate human, technical and financial resources, low levels of implementation of judicial decisions and gaps in institutional coordination.

It also reaffirmed the importance of sustained judicial cooperation in advancing human rights protection, access to justice, rule of law and regional integration across Africa.

The Third Dialogue provided an avenue for judges, registry officials and representatives of partner institutions to review progress made on previous commitments, including improved exchange of jurisprudence and judicial practices, enhanced implementation and monitoring of judicial decisions and advanced joint awareness, research and capacity-building initiatives.

It also addressed challenges and identified practical measures to strengthen institutional collaboration.

A key focus of the discussions was the development of AJUDATA, a continental and transregional initiative designed to facilitate access to African international jurisprudence, legal resources and institutional information. The platform is expected to support legal research, monitor implementation and promote harmonisation of jurisprudence.



Cross-section of judges/participants at the Tripartite Judicial Dialogue in Arusha, Tanzania.

HEDA seeks ICPC disclosure on $2.3b tax evasion allegations against SEEPCO

By **Silver Nwokoro**

HUMAN and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA Resource Centre) has asked the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to disclose details of the out-of-court settlement that led to the withdrawal of proceedings against Sterling Oil Exploration and Energy Production Company Limited (SEEPCO) over alleged $2.3 billion tax evasion.

In a Freedom of Information (FOI) request addressed to the ICPC Chairman, the civil society organisation called for the disclosure of the settlement agreement, details of financial recoveries made by the federal government and any administrative, tax or legal clearance granted to the company and its affiliated entities following the investigation.

The request followed public disclosures and court records indicating that ICPC, through its Head of High-Profile Prosecution, Osuobeni Akponimisingha, withdrew its suit against SEEPCO on March 23, before Justice James Omotosho of the Federal High Court, Abuja, citing an out-of-court settlement reached with the company.

The case originated from an ex parte application filed by ICPC on June 24, 2025, in which the Commission alleged that SEEPCO operated a scheme to evade taxes estimated at approximately $2.3 billion between 2012 and 2021.

The company was accused of under-declaring its daily crude oil production to evade taxes on production income and allegedly used multiple corporate entities and bank accounts across commercial banks to divert exploration profits and launder funds belonging to the federal government outside Nigeria.

Following the application, the Federal High Court reportedly granted an order freezing SEEPCO's bank accounts for 120 days to facilitate investigations. Seeking clarity on the outcome of the proceedings, HEDA requested a certified copy of the complete settlement agreement between ICPC and SEEPCO, including the terms that informed the withdrawal of the suit.

Court adjourns suit against Chevron to March 2027

By **Ngozi Egenuka**

THE National Industrial Court of Nigeria, Lagos Division, has adjourned a suit filed by Lawrence Olatunji Akeju and 35 others against Chevron Nigeria Limited to March 9, 2027, for hearing of the defendant's preliminary objection.

The claimants in suit number NICN/LA/34/112025 appeared before the court presided over by Justice I.J. Essien, where their counsel, A. Abayomi, indicated readiness to proceed with the substantive case, noting that the defendant had yet to file its defence.

However, counsel to Chevron, Omono Omaghomi, informed the court that the defendant had a preliminary objection ripe for hearing and sought permission to argue it before the substantive proceedings could commence.

But the defendant objected, challenging the competence of the suit on four grounds, including absence of a reasonable cause of action and the argument that the claims were statute-barred.

Omaghomi argued that the claimants had waited for over 15 years before approaching the court, insisting that their claims ought to have been instituted within the time prescribed by the applicable Lagos State law.

She also questioned the propriety of the claimants instituting an action on behalf of deceased people, arguing that the matter did not meet the requirements for representative proceedings.

The defence counsel further contended that the 36 claimants did not have a common interest capable of being pursued in a single action, as their claims involved different entitlements, including pensions, gratuities and property-related matters.

She also argued that the claimants did not have identical contracts of employment.

The Nigerian Society of Engineers

Announces its

2026 INTERNATIONAL ENGINEERING CONFERENCE, EXHIBITION AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

"MAIDUGURI 2026"

Date: Monday, 30th Nov - Friday 4th Dec, 2026
Venue: International Conference Centre, Maiduguri



Theme:

ENGINEERING INNOVATION FOR ENHANCED SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



ENGR. ALI ALIMASUYA RABIU,
FNSE, F.ASCE, FAEng, MFR
PRESIDENT,
THE NIGERIAN SOCIETY OF ENGINEERS
CONVENER



HIS EXCELLENCY
BOLA AHMED TINUBU, GCFR
PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
DISTINGUISHED GUEST OF HONOUR



HIS EXCELLENCY ENGR. PROF.
BABAGANA UMARA ZULUM
FNSE, CON, mni
EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR, BORNO STATE
HOST

Activities: Technical Sessions & Excursion ■ Group Dynamics Competition ■ Engineering Exhibition ■ Cultural Night ■ Fellowship Conferment ■ Spouses Programme ■ Gala Night/Dinner ■ AGM/Election

Signed:

Engr. Aliyu Ibrahim Dutsinma, FNSE
Executive Secretary

ECKANKAR
The Path of Spiritual Freedom

Presents

The 2026 Nigeria Regional ECK

Soul Adventure Seminar



Sri Doug Kunin
The MAHANTA, the Living ECK Master

Listening to the Secret Voice of God: A Key to Spiritual Living





Guest Speaker
Maximillienne Inier Zibo
Regional ECK Spiritual Aide (RESA), DRC Congo

December 11 - 13, 2026 | 8:00a.m. Daily

Temple of ECK, Obi Wali Road, Rumuigbo, Port Harcourt

You are warmly invited

For more information about the seminar and ECKANKAR, please call: +234-806-658-0742, +234-803-339-2088, +234-803-568-7855, +234-803-719-2344 or visit our websites: www.eckankarnigeria.org, www.Eckankar.org

Presented by ECKANKAR Nigeria, A Chartered Affiliate of ECKANKAR, P.O. Box 2000, Chanhassen, MN 55317-2000, USA

Copyright ©2026 ECKANKAR. All rights reserved. The terms ECKANKAR, ECK, EK, MAHANTA, SOUL TRAVEL, and VAIRAGI among others, are trademarks of ECKANKAR.

https://www.eckankarnigeria.org/registration

2026 NIGERIA REGIONAL ECK SOUL ADVENTURE SEMINAR, REGISTRATION

Please pre-register for the 2026 NIGERIA REGIONAL ECK SOUL ADVENTURE SEMINAR. Payment can be made at Local ECK Centers or into **ECKANKAR NIGERIA SEMINAR DONATION; 1019034934, UBA,** and send proof of payment along with your details to your centre's registration coordinator or local director. Please pre-register on or before **December 9, 2026**. You can call 07039124101 or 08037742611 for further information.

First name:	Surname:	Donation Category: Adult ☐ Young Adult ☐ Youth ☐ Child ☐
ECK Centre:	Phone no:	
EMAIL	ECK ID EXPIRY DATE	Initiation Category: A, B, C, & G

Initiation category: [0-1 = A, 2-4 = B, 5 and above = C, Guest = G] (please choose as appropriate)

Please include family member(s) registering with you.

S/N	Name	Donation Category	Initiation Category	Email	Amount

Total Amount of Your Donation ₦

Minimum Requested Seminar Donation:

Donation Category	Pre-registration Donations ₦	Door Donations ₦
Adults	10,000	15,000
Young Adults (18-30yrs)	7,000	10,000
Youth (13-17yrs)	5,000	7,000
Children (5-12yrs)	2,500	3,500
Children (0-4yrs)	Free	Free
Guest (newcomer/ Visitor)	Free	Free
International	$45	$50

Singing HU, the most beautiful prayer, is a spiritual technique you can use to keep your balance in this world. It can help you keep your perspective. HU can protect. HU can give love, HU can heal. It can give peace of mind.

-Harold Klemp
The Sound of Soul, page 36.

https://www.eckankarnigeria.org/registration

VACANCIES

A reputable school located in Ikeja axis is urgently seeking qualified and experienced applicants for the following positions ahead of school resumption in January 2027.

1. PRINCIPAL
2. HEAD OF SCHOOL
3. NURSERY COORDINATOR

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR POSITIONS 1, 2 & 3
Applicants for the above positions must be Education graduates and meet the following specific qualifications and experience requirements:

Principal
- Must be an Education graduate.
- Must have a minimum of five (5) years' teaching experience in a High School and/or have held the position of Vice Principal/Principal in a reputable school.

2. Head of School
- Must be an Education graduate.
- Must have a minimum of five (5) years' teaching experience in a Primary School.
- Must have held a Supervisory/Management position in a reputable school.

3. Nursery Coordinator
- Must be an Education graduate.
- Must have a minimum of five (5) years' Nursery experience as Teacher/ Supervisor.

4. PARENT RELATIONSHIP OFFICER
5. QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICER
6. COMPLIANCE OFFICER
7. HUMAN RESOURCE ASSISTANT
8. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Requirements for Positions 4–8:
Candidates must possess a B.A./B.Sc./HND degree in a relevant field, with a minimum of three (3) years' relevant experience in a similar role in a reputable school.

Candidates must demonstrate:
- Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office Suite- Word, Excel and Power Point.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Pleasant personality and professional conduct.

9. TEACHERS
Vacancies exist in the following subject areas:
High School:
- Physics, Chemistry, Biology, English Language, Accounts/Commerce, School Counsellors

Primary School:
- Primary Science

Requirements:
Candidates with NCE and/or B.Ed. or equivalent, B.A. /B.Sc. (Hons), PGDE, and a minimum of five (5) years' experience in an established and reputable institution will be considered.

In addition:
- Certified teachers in CHECKPOINT and IGCSE will be preferable.
- Possession of a TRCN Certificate will be an added advantage.

10. DRIVERS

Candidates are expected to:
- Possess a valid driver's licence.
- Have a maximum of five (5) years' professional driving experience.
- Be conversant with Ikeja axis and its environs.
- Demonstrate good driving skills, responsibility and professionalism.

N.B: Applicants residing in Ikeja, Agege, Ojodu, Ogba, Moowe, Berger, Ketu, Alagbole, Iju and environs will be given preference.
Only candidates who meet the stated requirements are advised to apply.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE
Applications should be addressed to:
schoolvacancies3@gmail.com
Applicants are required to clearly state the position being applied for and submit their applications within 14 days of this publication.

EXPERIENCED TELECOMS PROFESSIONALS REQUIRED IN FIBRE, SITE ROLLOUT, HR & ADMIN

We are a leading Telecommunications and Technology Company and we desire to engage highly competent individuals for the following positions.

Very attractive and competitive remuneration packages and challenging prospects await the successful candidates.

SITE ROLLOUT MANAGERS (Ref: SRM)
Qualifications, Experience and Skill
- B.Sc/ HND in Engineering (Electrical/Electronic, Building/ Civil or Telecommunications), Surveying, Estate Management or any other related field.
- A Post Graduate degree or Project Management certification will be added advantage. Emphasis would however be accorded relevant experience, even with lower qualifications
- Minimum of 10 years cognate experience in site acquisition and/or site building
- Experience working in a Telecoms environment either with clients or vendors.
- Project Management and negotiation skills.
- Good Information Technology skills.

Key Responsibilities
- Work with the network-planning unit in developing, implementing and overseeing site roll-out programmes for the Company.
- Coordinate, control and analyse the cost-benefit of potential and actual site coverage and implement agreed action plans.
- Advise and recommend improvements on sites for coverage and capacity growth of the Company's network.
- Collate all data within specified area and analyse for management reporting purposes.
- Interface and manage Government regulatory agencies on Roll-Out Sites' construction and operation.
- Resolving community-related issues which may affect Roll-Out programmes

FIBRE ROLLOUT & MAINTENANCE MANAGERS (Ref: FRMM)
Qualifications, Experience and Skill
- Minimum of first degree in Electrical, Electronics or Telecommunications Engineering or any other related field.
- A Post Graduate degree in Engineering or Project Management will be an added advantage.
- Minimum of 8 years cognate experience in Fibre optic operations.
- Experience working on Fibre Optic Projects.
- Vast knowledge in live network splicing and testing.
- Should have an understanding of SDH/PDH/DWDM technology.
- Good understanding of network, monitoring concepts and management tools.

Key Responsibilities
- Design and create fit for purpose and cost-effective fibre optic to include topology layout, fibre splice plans, cable duct and routing, and where applicable, utilising Open reach PIA.
- Coordinate the production of construction and cabling work packages for internal or external teams.
- Ensure that all works comply with guidelines and relevant codes of practice.
- Work closely with relevant stakeholders, internal, external and local authorities to ensure effective implementation of the infrastructure and react to any changes.
- Coordinate projects, execute processes, and ensure successful project completion.
- Development of the project execution plan.
- Assist with scheduling project tasks and keeping the project deliverables up to date with accurate information.
- Support all levels of the organization by generating and analysing program/project data using standard reporting tools.
- Track project milestones and deliverables and be accountable for standardizing reporting formats and statistical analysis methodologies.
- Estimate the resources and participants needed to achieve project goals.

MANAGER, HUMAN RESOURCES (Ref: MHR)
Responsibilities
- Develop and implement HR policies and programs as required by the business.
- Ensure job descriptions for all positions are accurate and up-to-date.
- Develop a robust and all-inclusive organizational development and employee training programs.
- Conduct performance reviews with departmental managers, and monitor employee productivity, attitudes and performance results.
- Provide assistance with implementing any HR related software systems.
- Recruit and retain top quality staff for each department; conduct interviews.
- Build a Quality Assurance Program that is tied to performance review.
- Create compensation plans and provide administration for employee benefits.
- Provide company-wide communications and manage social committees.
- Develop a code of conduct requiring professional behavior at all times.

General Qualifications, Experience, Attributes & Skills Required
- Minimum of Bachelor's degree in Law, Accountancy, Business Administration, Social Sciences, Engineering or any other related field.
- An MBA will be added advantage.
- Membership of CIPM is essential.
- Excellent leadership and communication skills.
- Excellent organisational skills.
- Strong selling, presentation and negotiation skills.
- MS Office Suite essential.
- Excellent leadership and communication skills.
- Strong presentation and negotiation skills.
- Minimum of 12 years cognate experience with at least 3 years at Management level

ADMINISTRATION OFFICERS (Ref: AO)
Responsibilities
- Ensuring offices are stocked with necessary supplies and office equipment's are well maintained.
- Ensure safe, secure and well-maintained facilities that meet environmental, health and Safety Standards.
- Supervising multidisciplinary team of contractors and staff in cleaning, maintenance, heating systems, water systems and electromechanical systems.
- Maintain fleet database and ensure proper usage of vehicles by carrying out inspections.
- Carry out regular inspection of facilities and oversee building projects, renovation and refurbishments
- Ensure proper space planning and efficiency.
- Ensure that Technical and non-technical offices are fumigated quarterly, maintain good ambience and ensure great look and feel.
- Review utilities consumption and strive to minimise costs.

General Qualifications, Experience, Attributes & Skills Required
- Bachelor Degree in Engineering, Estate Management, Finance, Architecture, Economics or Business Administration.
- Not Less than five (5) years post qualification experience.
- Strong problem solving, critical thinking and interpersonal and communication skills.
- Facilities and Project Management skills.
- Fleet Management skills.
- Excellent Negotiating Skills.
- Commercial awareness

METHOD OF APPLICATION

Candidates who meet the above requirements should forward a soft copy of their applications and Curriculum Vitae quoting reference as subject of the mail to: telecoms.humancapital@gmail.com within 2 weeks from the date of this advertisement.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted through their e-mail and/or by SMS to the telephone number provided.

36 assemblies approve police bill, clearing constitutional hurdle

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

According to him, the government remained determined to ensure that terrorists and other criminal elements were neutralised on the battlefield and subjected to appropriate legal processes.

He disclosed that four of eight identified senior terrorist leaders had been killed or arrested under his administration.

Among the operations he cited were actions against Ahmed Ohida's ISWAP southern expansion network, the elimination of senior Islamic State leader Abu Bilal Mainuki in May 2026, and the arrests of Abu Barra of Ansaru and Mamuda of Mahmudawa in 2025.

He commended the Armed Forces and other security agencies for their sacrifices, stressing that operational successes must translate into lasting peace and security.

Tinubu also called for closer cooperation among the Armed Forces, Department of State Services, National Intelligence Agency, Nigeria Police Force and other security institutions to improve intelligence fusion, ensure timely responses to emerging threats and protect vulnerable communities.

U.S. intelligence support boosts military operations

MEANWHILE, Defence Minister Christopher Musa has disclosed that the Nigerian military is receiving real-time intelligence and satellite support from the United States to track militant leaders and disrupt insurgent networks.

Musa, who spoke during a briefing yesterday, said intelligence sharing, satellite imagery and training provided by Washington had strengthened the military's capacity to identify and strike targets.

He disclosed that Nigerian troops had killed several terrorist and bandit leaders in overnight operations in the Northwest and Northeast, adding that the military was conducting near-daily operations with improved intelligence support.

"We took out a lot of the bandit leaders and the terrorists themselves," he said.

According to him, Nigeria and the United States have continued to expand security cooperation as the country confronts Islamist insurgencies in the Northeast, armed banditry in the Northwest and kidnapping gangs across the country.

He said Nigeria was also expecting additional helicopters from the United States and Italy to strengthen its operational capacity.

The minister recalled the joint Nigerian and US operation that killed Abu-Bilal al-Minuki, a senior Islamic State leader, in May 2026.

He added that security agencies were monitoring the use of Starlink, cryptocurrencies and commercial drones by militant groups and working with American authorities to disrupt their financing networks.

Musa further disclosed that Nigeria had agreed on a five-kilometre cross-border right-of-pursuit arrangement with Cameroon, Niger and Chad, allowing troops to pursue militants and bandits across designated border areas.

He warned that Islamic State Sahel was seeking to recruit criminal gangs in northwestern Nigeria, raising concerns that largely profit-driven bandit groups could evolve into ideologically motivated insurgents similar to ISWAP in the Northeast.

According to him, militants and bandits were exploiting dense forests and porous borders with Niger and Benin to evade security forces after carrying out attacks.

He, however, said advances in surveillance had improved the military's capacity to track criminal groups through difficult terrain, restrict their movements and disrupt their logistics.

"We don't want them to develop that capacity," Musa said. "We're blocking the logistics and taking them out from within Nigeria."

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

VACANCY ADVERT – November 2026

A Hospital Group providing multispecialty tertiary healthcare services in Abuja is inviting applications from suitably qualified candidates for the following positions.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES

Job Purpose
The Executive Director, Corporate Services provides strategic leadership and oversight for the Group's corporate and administrative functions, ensuring that people, facilities, procurement, technology, legal/compliance, security, support services and other shared services effectively support the organization's clinical and business objectives. The role is responsible for strengthening corporate governance, operational efficiency, cost optimization, employee experience, infrastructure and service delivery while ensuring compliance with applicable regulatory and organizational standards.

Key Responsibilities
- Develop and implement the Corporate Services strategy in alignment with the Group's strategic objectives.
- Provide executive oversight of corporate support functions and drive cross-functional collaboration.
- Establish departmental objectives, KPIs and performance plans and contribute to Executive Management decisions.
- Strengthen corporate governance, policies, procedures and internal controls.
- Ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations and professional standards.
- Coordinate with Legal, Internal Audit, Risk and Compliance functions to identify and mitigate organizational risks.
- Provide strategic oversight of workforce planning, talent management, succession planning and employee engagement.
- Support effective recruitment, retention, performance management and organizational development.
- Promote a high-performance culture and optimize workforce structures and costs.
- Oversee facilities, infrastructure, procurement, supply chain, vendor and contract management.
- Ensure operational efficiency, quality, safety and regulatory compliance.
- Drive strategic sourcing, cost optimization and effective utilization of resources.
- Provide strategic oversight of ICT, digital transformation, automation, data management and cybersecurity initiatives.
- Ensure technology supports efficient hospital operations and patient services.
- Oversee administrative and support functions including security, transport, logistics, housekeeping and maintenance.
- Establish service standards and ensure efficient delivery of corporate support services across the Group.
- Partner with Finance on Corporate Services budgets, expenditure and financial performance.
- Drive cost efficiency, productivity improvement and economies of scale while maintaining quality standards.
- Identify and manage corporate and operational risks.
- Ensure business continuity, emergency preparedness and organizational resilience across critical functions.
- Maintain effective relationships with regulators, government agencies, vendors, partners and other key stakeholders.
- Represent the Group at relevant corporate engagements and contribute to strategic decision-making.
- Oversee Corporate Services functions – ICT, Administration, Human Resources, Supply Chain and Business Development.
- Provide regular performance and strategic reports to the GMD/CEO/Board.
- Drive continuous improvement, operational excellence and service quality across the Group.

Job Requirement
- Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Business Administration, Management, Human Resources, Finance, Public Administration or a related discipline.
- Relevant professional certifications in CIPM, CIPS, ICAN, PMP, IOD, risk management, compliance or healthcare management are desirable.
- Minimum of 25 years' relevant post-qualification experience, including at least 10 years in senior management or executive leadership.
- Proven experience managing multiple corporate/support functions in a complex organization.
- Experience in healthcare, hospitals, multinational companies or large corporate organizations is highly desirable.
- Demonstrated expertise in strategic planning, corporate governance, restructuring, operational improvement, cost optimization and change management.
- Experience managing large teams, significant budgets, multiple locations, Boards, senior executives and external stakeholders.

HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICER

Job Purpose
The Human Resource Officer will be responsible to provide professional and operational support in the implementation and management of the hospital's Human Resources policies, strategies and processes. The role is responsible for coordinating key HR functions, providing support to departmental heads, managing employee relations, supporting workforce planning, driving talent management initiatives and ensuring compliance with applicable labour laws and hospital policies.
The successful candidate must possess sound HR knowledge, practical experience across multiple HR functions and the ability to independently manage assigned HR responsibilities while contributing to hospital effectiveness and employee productivity.

Key Job Responsibilities
- Coordinate and manage end-to-end recruitment and selection processes, including manpower requisitions, candidate sourcing, interviews, background checks, placement and onboarding.
- Provide HR advisory support to management, departmental heads and employees on HR policies, employee relations, grievances, disciplinary matters and conflict resolution.
- Coordinate and manage employee lifecycle activities, including appointments, confirmations, promotions, transfers, redeployments, secondments, contract renewals and employee separations.
- Coordinate performance management and appraisal processes, monitor employee performance, identify performance gaps and support the implementation of performance improvement plans.
- Coordinate training needs assessments, staff development programmes, succession planning, talent management, coaching, mentoring and employee retention initiatives.
- Support workforce planning, manpower budgeting and staff deployment through monitoring of workforce strength, vacancies, turnover, absenteeism and staffing requirements.
- Coordinate compensation, benefits and payroll administration, ensuring accurate and timely processing of employee-related payroll inputs, allowances, pensions and other entitlements.
- Support the development, review and implementation of HR policies and ensure compliance with applicable labour laws, statutory requirements, professional licensing and hospital standards.
- Maintain accurate HR records and HRIS data, analyze workforce information, monitor HR performance indicators and prepare periodic HR reports to support management decision-making.
- Coordinate employee welfare, engagement, recognition and reward initiatives, participate in HR projects and hospital development activities, and promote a positive, productive and inclusive workplace culture.

Job Requirements
- Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management, Industrial Relations, Business Administration, Public Administration, Psychology or other relevant disciplines.
- Master's degree in Human Resources Management, Business Administration or a related discipline will be an added advantage.
- Associate Membership of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (CIPM) is a must.
- Minimum of 5–7 years' relevant progressive experience in Human Resources Management.
- Strong knowledge and experience in HR management principles, Nigerian labour laws, recruitment, talent management, performance management, compensation, benefits, payroll, employee relations, HR Audit, HR reporting, workforce analytics and HR policy implementation.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office and HR Information Systems, with strong capabilities in HR reporting, data analysis, records management and data protection.
- Excellent communication, interpersonal, stakeholder management, problem-solving skills, with high integrity, confidentiality and emotional intelligence.
- Previous experience in a structured organization; experience in the healthcare or hospital industry will be a strong advantage.

BIOMEDICAL ENGINEER

Job Purpose
The Biomedical Engineer is responsible for overseeing the maintenance, installation, calibration, troubleshooting and optimal performance of medical equipment across the Group's hospitals. The role ensures equipment reliability, patient safety, regulatory compliance and uninterrupted clinical operations through effective equipment lifecycle management, preventive maintenance and technical support. The role ensure that medical equipment is safe, reliable and available for patient care through effective preventive maintenance, fault diagnosis, repair, inspection, calibration coordination, equipment management and technical support.

Job Objectives
- Maintain safe and functional medical equipment across the hospital.
- Minimize equipment downtime and disruption to clinical services.
- Complete preventive maintenance, inspection and calibration within due dates.
- Maintain accurate equipment inventory and maintenance records.
- Support equipment procurement, installation, commissioning and replacement decisions.
- Promote correct equipment use and compliance with hospital safety procedures.

Key Responsibilities
- Develop and implement preventive maintenance schedules; carry out routine servicing and corrective repairs.
- Conduct functional, electrical-safety and performance checks appropriate to the equipment and level of competence.
- Perform or coordinate calibration and verification; track due dates and retain certificates and results.
- Inspect, install, test and commission new or relocated equipment before clinical use.
- Receive equipment fault reports, assess risk, troubleshoot faults and restore equipment to service safely.
- Maintain an up-to-date inventory, service history, warranty details, manuals and equipment status.
- Liaise with suppliers and approved service providers for specialist repairs, spare parts and technical support.
- Train and guide clinical staff on safe operation, routine care and basic troubleshooting.
- Provide technical specifications, assess equipment suitability and advise on repair-versus-replacement decisions.
- Remove or recommend removal of unsafe equipment from service, escalate risks and submit maintenance reports.
- Ensure equipment reliability, regulatory compliance and minimal downtime to support uninterrupted clinical services.

Job Requirements
- Bachelor's degree (B.Eng/B.Sc.) in Biomedical Engineering, Electrical/Electronic Engineering, Mechanical Engineering or a related discipline.
- Master's degree in Biomedical Engineering or a related field will be an added advantage.
- COREN registration, where applicable to the candidate's engineering discipline.
- Relevant professional certifications in biomedical equipment maintenance, calibration or healthcare technology management will be an advantage.
- Minimum of 10 years' relevant post-qualification experience in biomedical engineering or medical equipment management.
- At least 5 years' experience in a senior technical or supervisory capacity.
- Demonstrated experience maintaining and troubleshooting critical hospital equipment, including imaging, laboratory, anaesthesia, ventilation and patient monitoring systems.
- Experience in a multi-specialty hospital or healthcare organization is highly desirable.
- Proven experience in equipment lifecycle management, preventive maintenance planning and technical supervision.
- Candidate must demonstrate high integrity, professionalism, accountability, safety consciousness, strong analytical and problem-solving abilities, effective leadership and interpersonal skills, and the ability to work under pressure while maintaining a strong commitment to patient safety and quality healthcare delivery.

Application
Interested and qualified candidates are to submit their application as one (1) PDF document containing the following:
- A cover letter
- A detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Copies of relevant academic and professional certificates
- The names and contact details of three (3) referees under whom they have previously worked

The application should be sent to hrcvs321@gmail.com on or before 5th December, 2026 using applicant's full name and position applied as the email subject. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

VACANCIES

A LEADING PUBLISHING COMPANY

Applications are invited from suitably qualified, experienced and performance-driven professionals to fill the following positions:

1. DEPOT OFFICER – LAGOS & OWERRI

Qualifications and Experience:

- Minimum of OND/HND/BSc in Accounting, Business Administration, Logistics or a related discipline.
- 3–5 years' relevant experience in depot, warehouse or inventory management, preferably in a book publishing company.
- Proven ability to manage stock movement, inventory reconciliation, storage and timely dispatch.
- Strong organisational, supervisory and record-keeping skills, with attention to operational efficiency and stock accountability.

2. INVOICING CLERK – LAGOS & OWERRI

Qualifications and Experience:

- OND/HND/BSc in Accounting or a related discipline.
- 2–5 years' relevant experience in invoicing, preferably within a publishing organisation.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Excel and accounting software, with strong knowledge of invoice processing, sales reconciliation and financial documentation.
- Three years' audit experience in a medium-sized audit firm will be an added advantage.

3. JUNIOR ACCOUNTANT – LAGOS & OWERRI

Qualifications and Experience:

- HND/BSc in Accounting, with a strong accounting background.
- Minimum of five years' relevant accounting or bookkeeping experience, preferably in a book publishing company.
- Practical knowledge of financial reporting, account reconciliations, transaction processing and internal accounting procedures.
- ICAN/ACCA qualification in view will be an added advantage.

4. HEAD OF AUDIT/INTERNAL CONTROL – LAGOS

Qualifications and Experience:

- BSc/HND in Accounting, Finance or a related discipline; ICAN/ACCA qualification is preferred.
- Minimum of seven years' post-qualification experience in audit, internal control or risk management, preferably in a book publishing organisation.
- Demonstrable expertise in internal control assessment, audit execution, risk mitigation, compliance monitoring and operational reviews.
- Strong leadership, analytical and investigative skills, with proficiency in Microsoft Excel and accounting software.

5. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER (CFO)- ABUJA

Qualifications and Experience:

- BSc/HND in Accounting and full professional qualification as a Chartered Accountant (ICAN/ACCA).
- Substantial post-qualification experience in senior financial management.
- Strong expertise in financial strategy, budgeting, financial reporting, taxation, cash flow management and regulatory compliance.
- Proven ability to strengthen financial controls, optimise resource utilisation and drive sustainable business performance.
- Proficiency in accounting software and Microsoft Excel.

6. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE- LAGOS & ABUJA

Qualifications and Experience:

- BSc/HND in Business Administration, Marketing, Economics or a related discipline.
- 2–5 years' relevant experience in business development, sales or market expansion, preferably in the publishing industry.
- Proven ability to identify new markets, secure business opportunities, develop strategic partnerships and drive revenue growth.
- Strong negotiation, communication, presentation and market development skills.

7. OPERATIONS MANAGER- ABUJA

Qualifications and Experience:

- BSc/HND in Business Administration, Management Science, Economics or a related discipline.
- 5–7 years' relevant experience in similar position preferably in the publishing industry.

Key Expected Deliverables

- Daily Operations Management: Oversee and coordinate the organization's daily activities to ensure smooth and efficient operations.
- Staff Supervision and Coordination: Supervise employees, assign responsibilities, monitor performance and ensure staffs comply with organizational policies.
- Planning and Resource Allocation: Plan operational activities and ensure effective utilisation of human, financial, material and technical resources.
- Budget and Cost Control: Monitor operational expenditure, control costs, minimise waste and ensure activities are carried out within approved budgets.
- Performance Monitoring: Establish operational targets, monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) and evaluate departmental performance.
- Process Improvement: Identify operational weaknesses, eliminate inefficiencies and introduce better procedures to improve productivity and service delivery.
- Quality Assurance and Service Delivery: Ensure that products and services meet established quality standards and customer expectations.
- Internal Control and Compliance: Ensure adherence to organisational policies, procedures, safety standards and applicable regulatory requirements.
- Inventory and Asset Management: Monitor the acquisition, utilisation, maintenance and safeguarding of organisational assets, equipment and inventory.
- Reporting and Management Decision Support: Prepare periodic operational reports, identify challenges, recommend solutions and provide management with information for informed decision-making.

8. NATIONWIDE SALES REPRESENTATIVES

Qualifications and Candidate Requirements:

- Minimum of OND/HND/BSc in Business Administration, Marketing or a related discipline.
- Relevant sales experience, preferably in publishing, distribution or consumer goods.
- Proven ability to generate sales, acquire customers, manage client relationships and achieve sales targets.
- Good knowledge of the assigned territory and fluency in the predominant local language.
- Applicants should preferably reside within their assigned territories.
- Must demonstrate driving competence and possess a valid driving licence where vehicle allocation is required.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested and qualified candidates should forward their CVs to the below email within 2 weeks of this publication:

giraffeforensics1@gmail.com

Please indicate the position and preferred location as the subject of the email.

ambiente
29.1–2.2.2027
FRANKFURT/MAIN

MOVING THE MARKET TOGETHER

creativeworld
29.1–1.2.2027
FRANKFURT/MAIN

christmasworld
29.1–2.2.2027
FRANKFURT/MAIN

A mega-event for the international consumer goods industry: three leading trade fairs in Frankfurt showcase all the new products and trends at the same time – from table, kitchen and household through furniture and accessories to seasonal decorations and DIY articles. Countless synergies and a varied programme make for a successful multi-trade-fair visit!

Global networking,
international inspiration.
consumergoods.messefrankfurt.com
info@exhibitionandtradefair.com
Tel. +234 80 33 77 33 35
Tel. +234 8023 12 64 44

messe frankfurt

Building homegrown solutions for Nigeria's clean energy future

...NCDMB, NLNG invest $9m in six universities to advance indigenous research and innovation.

Can Nigeria's universities become engines of indigenous innovation capable of powering the country's transition to cleaner energy? As the global energy industry increasingly shifts towards cleaner and more sustainable energy sources, the need for Nigeria to develop home-grown technologies and innovative solutions to address its energy challenges has become more pressing. In a move to bridge the gap between academic research and industrial application, the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and Nigeria LNG Limited (NLNG) have committed $9 million to strengthen research and technological innovation across six Nigerian universities, ***Ann Godwin writes.***



AS Nigeria intensifies efforts to transition to cleaner and more sustainable energy, attention is increasingly turning to the capacity of its universities to drive indigenous innovation, develop homegrown technologies and provide research-based solutions to the country's energy challenges, with the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and Nigeria LNG Limited (NLNG) committing $9 million to strengthen research and innovation across six universities.

The initiative, through a professorial chair endowment programme, is designed to harness the intellectual resources of Nigerian universities to develop commercially viable solutions to challenges confronting the oil and gas industry, while positioning local researchers to contribute meaningfully to the country's evolving energy landscape.

At a time when the demand for cleaner and renewable energy is gaining momentum globally, the programme is expected to provide a platform for researchers, academics and industry experts to explore innovative approaches to energy production, efficiency, sustainability and the development of indigenous technologies. It also underscores the importance of connecting university-based research with the practical needs of the energy sector.

Beyond the financial commitment, the $9 million endowment raises important questions about Nigeria's capacity to translate academic research into industrial solutions, reduce dependence on imported technologies and build a knowledge-driven energy sector as seen in other countries.

For instance, countries such as Denmark, Germany, China, South Korea and the United States have demonstrated how universities can become critical drivers of indigenous technological innovation and the transition to cleaner energy. Through sustained investment in research, collaboration with industries and government support, these countries have transformed their universities from conventional centres of teaching and learning into hubs for developing technologies that address national energy challenges and create new economic opportunities.

Perhaps, this explains why the NCDMB and NLNG are investing in the initiative, seeking to bridge the gap between academic research and practical industrial solutions.

In Denmark, for instance, research at the Technical University of Denmark played a significant role in laying the foundation for the country's globally competitive wind energy industry. Through research, testing and collaboration with manufacturers, the university contributed to improvements in wind turbine technology, efficiency and reliability. Today, Denmark is recognised for its advancement in wind power, including offshore wind development, demonstrating how academic research can support the growth of an indigenous renewable energy industry.

Similarly, Germany has leveraged its university-based and applied research institutions, particularly the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems, to advance solar photovoltaic technology, battery storage, hydrogen and other renewable energy solutions. Its research model places considerable emphasis on translating scientific discoveries into practical industrial applications through partnerships with private companies. China has also invested heavily in university research and development, with institutions such as Tsinghua University contributing to innovations in solar power, battery technology and energy storage, strengthening the country's clean energy technology ecosystem.

Also, the United States provides another example of how academic discoveries can be transformed into commercially viable products through effective technology transfer, patent protection and partnerships with the private sector.

For Nigeria, the $9 million professorial chair endowment programme by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and Nigeria LNG Limited (NLNG) presents an opportunity to build a similar research-to-industry pathway. With the growing demand for cleaner and renewable energy, the initiative would support indigenous research into solar technology, gas-to-power solutions, affordable energy storage, hydrogen development, waste-to-energy conversion and carbon management. However, its long-term impact will depend on the ability of participating universities to produce measurable outcomes, including patents, prototypes, locally developed technologies and commercially viable solutions that can be adopted by Nigeria's energy industry.

The benefiting schools include the University of Ibadan (UI), Ibadan, Oyo State, Rivers State University (RSU), Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, Rivers State, Modibbo Adama University (MAU), Yola, Adamawa State, Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology (ADUST), Wudil, Kano State, University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN), Nsukka, Enugu State, and University of Abuja (UofA)(Yakubu Gowon University), Abuja, FCT.

The endowment which was signed on Tuesday, November 10, 2026 at the NLNG 's Corporate Head Office, Port Harcourt noted that the University of Ibadan will focus on natural gas processing, pollution control and environmental management, while Rivers State University will concentrate on digital engineering, intelligent energy systems, automation and asset integrity.

Modibbo Adama University will undertake research in energy transition and the environment. Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology will focus on sustainable energy innovation and climate-resilient food systems.

The University of Nigeria Nsukka, will specialise in green energy production and geoenvironmental engineering, while University of Abuja (Yakubu Gowon University), will focus on geoscience and satellite intelligence for resilient gas infrastructure.

Each university will work towards agreed research targets and commercialisation pathways, providing a framework for measuring progress and translating findings into practical applications. The institutions will also jointly host an information management hub to support knowledge sharing and exchange programmes.

The funding includes provision for minor civil works and infrastructure upgrades to transform identified spaces into fit-for-purpose research centres.

Proposed arrangements would enable industry professionals to contribute practical expertise in technical and non-technical disciplines while pursuing master's and doctoral degrees. This would give students greater exposure to industry experience while strengthening the connection between postgraduate study and practical problem-solving.

This move no doubt, aligns with the ongoing 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31), discussions on accelerating the global transition to renewable energy which have remained a key focus, with emphasis on increasing investments in solar, wind, hydropower and other cleaner energy sources to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

The conversations also highlighted the need for countries to move beyond climate commitments to practical implementation through stronger policies, sustainable investments and the development of alternative energy technologies.

A major concern has been how to finance the global energy transition, particularly in developing countries, where limited access to funding, technology and infrastructure continues to constrain the adoption of renewable energy. Participants at COP 31 emphasised the importance of mobilising affordable financing, strengthening research and innovation, and fostering partnerships between governments, industries and academic institutions to develop locally relevant solutions.

The NCDMB and NLNG initiative involving six Nigerian universities to develop local solutions through research and innovation aligns with the broader global conversation on energy transition where the collaboration seeks to bridge the gap between academia, industry and government by supporting research into alternative energy sources and translating academic findings into industry-ready products capable of addressing Nigeria's energy needs while contributing to the global shift towards cleaner and more sustainable energy.

NLNG Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Adeleye Falade speaks

NLNG's Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Adeleye Falade, said the ultimate goal of the programme was to establish a productive partnership between industry, academia and government, with the NCDMB representing the government and providing funding under a clearly defined framework for research and development.

He said the initiative was designed to ensure that research received adequate funding and produced industry-ready solutions capable of addressing real-life challenges.

According to him, each of the six beneficiary universities, representing the country's geopolitical zones, would receive $1.5 million, amounting to slightly more than N2 billion at the current exchange rate.

He explained that the programme had a governance structure and review mechanism to ensure that its objectives were consistently achieved.

"What we are looking forward to is to have people coming out of academia who will be able to solve today's problems and tomorrow's challenges, while academic institutions continue to thrive on research, with qualified researchers funded through the partnership between NCDMB and NLNG," he said.



Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Headline inflation slows to 14% as core, food segments continue to diverge

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

straint, particularly in food-producing communities where farmers face displacement, restricted access to farmland and disruptions to agricultural activities.

Beyond reducing the area available for cultivation, insecurity disrupts the movement of agricultural produce, increases the risks associated with farming and raises the cost of getting food from rural communities to major consumption centres.

The problem is compounded by inadequate cold storage facilities and other infrastructure needed to preserve harvested produce, increasing post-harvest losses and limiting the ability of farmers and traders to distribute food efficiently, he said.

He noted that agricultural production was also affected by seasonality, meaning the availability and prices of particular commodities depend on harvesting periods. Although the ongoing harvest could improve supplies of some staples, he warned that increased demand during the festive season could offset those gains.

He expressed concern that food inflation could remain elevated into 2027, particularly as households increase food purchases during December. He also identified the hoarding of agricultural produce by farmers and intermediaries seeking to maximise returns during periods of scarcity as another factor contributing to price increases.

Managing Director of Macrostat Nigeria Limited, Dr Justin Amase, argued that the more fundamental problem was declining production, driven largely by insecurity and rising farm input costs.

He said the quantity of food harvested this year had fallen short of expectations because many farmers were unable to cultivate their land, while others reduced production because the cost of farming had become increasingly difficult to recover through sales.

According to him, persistent attacks and displacement in parts of the North-West and Middle Belt have reduced cultivated farmland, weakening output from regions that traditionally supply substantial quantities of food to domestic markets.

"The percentage level of cultivation of land generally is lower, and there hasn't been much done if you don't curb that insecurity. A lot of the farmers have been heavily displaced, and the displacement is going on continuously. The consequence is the lower level of food production. And food prices, as a result, are going up," he said.

Amase said his visits to Wuse Market in Abuja showed that prices of some basic food items had increased by more than 30 per cent within a month, highlighting the disconnect between improving national inflation figures and the experience of consumers.

He argued that the expected decline in food prices during the harvest season had not materialised because the volume of produce entering the market was insufficient to meet demand.

The economist, who is also a farmer, said he was discouraged from expanding his rice production this year because input costs remained high while the prices farmers received for their produce at the farm gate had declined.

He identified fertiliser, herbicides and insecticides as major cost pressures, arguing that government interventions had yet to make these inputs sufficiently affordable for many small-scale farmers. "When you produce, when you pay more to produce and you end up having a negative net margin, there is no incentive for you to produce more again. So that is what is happening," he said.

Amase added that the combination of expensive inputs and weak farm-gate prices was discouraging farmers from expanding output, further limiting market supply. The situation, he said, was reflected in the reduced availability of new yams in markets compared with previous harvest seasons.

THE economists' concerns are consistent with warnings from international development and humanitarian organisations about Nigeria's worsening food security challenges.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) projected that 34.7 million Nigerians would face high levels of acute food insecurity in 2026, placing the country among those experiencing the world's most severe food crises.

Its assessment identified armed conflict, particularly in the North-East, climate variability, displacement and disrupted livelihoods as major drivers of the crisis, stressing the need for targeted agricultural investments to restore production and strengthen vulnerable households' livelihoods.

Similarly, the October 2026 food security outlook by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), covering October 2026 to May 2027, warned that limited harvest gains and persistent insecurity would continue to constrain food access, particularly in northern Nigeria.

The report projected that 16 million to 17 million people would require humanitarian food assistance as the country approaches the 2027 lean season, despite a temporary improvement in food availability during the current harvest.

It warned that elevated fuel, transportation and food costs would continue to erode household purchasing power, with poor households dependent on market purchases expected to face the greatest difficulties.

FEWS NET identified conflict as a major driver of acute food insecurity across northern Nigeria, noting that attacks by armed groups, banditry and farmer-herder violence were disrupting harvests, displacing households and restricting access to farmland.

It also warned that food production during the main harvest was expected to remain below average in many northern areas because of insecurity, high input costs, flooding and localised rainfall deficits.

The assessment projected that Emergency (IPC Phase 4) food insecurity conditions would persist through May 2027 in inaccessible parts of Borno State, including Abadam, Guzamala and Marte, where conflict-related restrictions prevent households from cultivating farmland and accessing markets.

The assessment further cited flooding that affected about 228,000 people across 15 states between September 1 and 23, while late-season floods in Taraba, Benue and Niger destroyed crops shortly before harvest. Rainfall deficits and prolonged dry spells in parts of the North-East and North-West also contributed to harvest losses estimated at between 30 and 50 per cent in affected areas.

ALSO, the World Bank, in its October 2026 Food and Nutrition Security Update, highlighted high transportation costs and logistical disruptions as sources of uncertainty in global agricultural markets, despite broadly adequate global food supplies.

The national food inflation figures also conceal significant regional differences, with some states experiencing much higher price pressures than others.

NBS state-level data showed that Ondo recorded the highest year-on-year food inflation in October at 31.74 per cent, followed by Lagos at 31.43 per cent and Imo at 29.75 per cent. In contrast, Nasarawa recorded 3.70 per cent, Bayelsa 7.11 per cent and Kano 7.13 per cent.

On a month-on-month basis, food inflation was highest in Yobe at 18.41 per cent, followed by Kebbi at 16.45 per cent and Borno at 13.96 per cent. Lagos, Plateau and Benue recorded declines of 5.93 per cent, 5.83 per cent and 5.49 per cent respectively.

The variations reflect differences in local supply conditions, distribution costs and consumption patterns, although the NBS cautioned that differences in state consumption weights make direct comparisons potentially misleading.

PROFICIENT VESSEL CAPTAIN & CREW NEEDED IN OIL & GAS

We are a leading Maritime and Oil Logistics Operator in Nigeria, in search of a very senior Vessel Captain with remarkable experience in Oil Barging, as well as experienced Vessel Crew.

The Company is seeking to recruit well-rounded personnel who are currently in similar roles with proven track records and robust hands-on experience..

We are reputed for above Industry remunerations and conditions of service.

VESSEL CAPTAIN (Ref: VCAP)

Qualification / Experience Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in Marine Engineering, Nautical Science, Shipping Management, Logistics, Business Administration or any other relevant field. Relevant post-graduate qualifications or professional maritime certifications, e.g Master Mariner or equivalent.
- Minimum of 15 years significant hands-on experience in shipping, vessel operations and/or commercial maritime management, with at least 8 years spent in a senior management role overseeing fleets or vessel operations.
- Proven experience in the day-to-day management of vessels, with particular expertise in Oil Barging Vessels (tank barges, product tankers or similar petroleum logistics assets).
- Strong knowledge of maritime regulations, ISM Code, ISPS Code, SOLAS, MARPOL, flag-state and port-state control requirements, and oil & gas HSE standards.
- People management experience, including proven ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams (crew, technical, commercial and shore-based staff) and develop talent.
- Strong analytical, leadership, negotiation and communication skills.
- Ability to handle the pressure of working in a dynamic, high-risk and result-oriented environment typical of oil logistics operations.
- Experience in establishing and building strong collaborative partnerships with charterers, terminals, agents, classification societies, regulators and other key stakeholders.
- Proven track record of achieving operational targets, cost control, vessel utilisation and delivering profitable growth.

Responsibilities

- Provide day-to-day management and operational oversight of the Company's fleet of vessels, with primary focus on Oil Barging Vessels engaged in the transportation of petroleum products.
- Ensure all vessels under management operate safely, efficiently and in full compliance with international maritime conventions, flag-state regulations, class requirements and company HSE policies.
- Develop and execute shipping and fleet operational strategies that drive vessel utilisation, cost efficiency, customer satisfaction and revenue growth.
- Design and implement operational plans, voyage schedules, maintenance programmes and crew manning strategies for the oil barging fleet.
- Manage and supervise the Crew members for optimal performance, including Officers, Engineers and Deckhands
- Set comprehensive operational, safety, commercial and financial goals for the fleet and monitor performance against KPIs.
- Evaluate vessel and team performance by analysing and interpreting operational data, voyage reports, bunker consumption, off-hire statistics and other key metrics.
- Participate in expansion activities including fleet acquisition, newbuilding projects, charter-in/out decisions and strategic alliances.
- Represent the Company in negotiations with charterers, oil majors, terminals, agents, classification societies, insurers, regulators and other key contacts to secure the most effective commercial and operational terms.
- Manage relationships with technical managers, crewing agents, bunker suppliers, shipyards, surveyors and other service providers.
- Identify and explore new commercial opportunities, trade routes and optimised deployment strategies for the oil barging fleet.
- Ensure robust emergency response, incident investigation and continuous improvement processes are in place and effectively executed.

VESSEL CAPTAIN (Ref: VCRW)

Every crewmember has specific duties, depending on the post applied for, defined by STCW certification requirements, and shaped by the vessel's daily operational needs.

The vacant positions include: Chief Officer, Second Officer, 3rd Officer, Deck Cadet, Bosun, Able Seaman, Ordinary Seaman, Chief Engineer, 2nd Engineer, 3rd Engineer, 4th Engineer, Engine Cadet, Oiler, Wiper, Steward and Messman

General Qualifications / Experience Requirements:

- Ordinary Level Certificate, OND or HND in any disciplines
- Valid STCW certificates
- Valid Medical fitness Certificate
- Valid Seaman's Book
- Offshore certificates relevant to the position applied for
- Proven Offshore vessel experience
- Ability to communicate in good English

General Responsibilities

The main duties may include (depending on the positions applied for), but not limited to:

- Ensuring safe and efficient vessel operations
- Carrying out assigned duties in line with rank/ position
- Maintaining compliance with International and company safety standards
- Supporting Offshore operations as per project requirements

METHOD OF APPLICATION

Qualified candidates should e-mail their resume, possibly with a scanned passport photograph, within 2 weeks of this publication to: career.shippingprofessional@gmail.com.

All applications will be treated in confidence and only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

FCT Police release 78 suspects in Tinubu mosque attack

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

• Minister urges APC, Rainbow Coalition to deny opposition 25% of votes

THE Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Police Command said it would be releasing 78 suspects arrested following an attack on President Bola Tinubu' motorcade on November 13 at the Shehu Shagari Central Mosque in Garki District, Abuja.

The incident occurred shortly after the president observed Jumu'ah prayers at the mosque, with some individuals pelting the departing convoy with stones and other dangerous objects, damaging several vehicles and causing injuries to some security operatives.

In the meantime, Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike, has challenged members of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Campaign Council and the Rainbow Coalition to ensure that opposition parties, particularly the African Democratic Congress (ADC) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC), do not secure 25 per cent of the votes in the territory during the January 2027 general election.

In another development, FCT indigenes and residents have condemned the reported mobilisation of protesters during Tinubu's visit to the Shehu Shagari Central Mosque in Abuja, accusing opposition political interests of sponsoring the demonstration to undermine the president and the FCT minister, Wike.

THOUGH the presidency denied any confrontation or attack on the president's motorcade, the FCT Police Public Relations Officer, Josephine Adeh, said in a statement that a joint security team, led by the police, swiftly responded to the incident.

She added that subsequent intelligence-led raids within the area led to further arrests, bringing the total number of suspects arrested in connection with the incident to 78.

However, "the presidency directed that the suspects arrested in connection with the incident be warned and released," she added. "In compliance with the directive, the command wishes to inform the public that the suspects are currently undergoing the necessary release processes."

SPEAKING yesterday in Abuja during the inauguration of the FCT APC Presidential Campaign Council and Rainbow Coalition, he urged members to intensify grassroots mobilisation and take President Bola Tinubu's achievements to residents across the six area councils.

The minister, who is coordinating the FCT Presidential Campaign Council, said members have the task of securing an overwhelming victory for Tinubu and the APC's National Assembly candidates, warning that the party must not take the electorate's support for granted.

He urged campaign officials to move beyond conventional political rallies and engage directly with residents, indigenous communities, business operators, market associations, youth groups and other stakeholders, particularly in satellite towns and underserved communities.

Earlier, the FCT APC Chairman, Ishaku Yamawo, described the infrastructure projects executed under Wike as a major electoral advantage, saying they had strengthened public confidence in the APC-led administration.

Also speaking, the FCT Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman, Ismaila Dogara, expressed confidence in the coalition's capacity to deliver Tinubu and other endorsed candidates, even in Wike's absence.

COORDINATOR of the FCT Coalition of Youth Civil Society Groups, Ifeoma Adegbe, made the allegation at a press conference on behalf of FCT natives and residents.

FG maps over 34m learners, 700,000 teachers into education database

From **Owede Agbajileke**, Abuja

AS part of efforts to strengthen education planning, resource allocation and accountability, the federal government said it has mapped over 34 million learners, 700,000 teachers and 340,000 schools nationwide through its Nigeria Education Data Infrastructure (NEDI).

The National Project Coordinator, Special Programmes Operations and Implementation Unit (SPOI) in the Office of the Minister of Education, Adebayo Onigbanjo, disclosed this to newsmen in Abuja yesterday ahead of the launch of the Nigeria National Education Technology (EdTech) Strategy.

Onigbanjo said the NEDI platform, which has already been deployed and is collecting data, would provide a centralised database for identifying learners, tracking teachers and monitoring educational institutions across the country.

He explained that the initiative was critical to addressing gaps in the education sector, particularly the challenge of identifying out-of-school children and directing government interventions to those who need them most.

Masari vows continued Tinubu campaign in Katsina as Radda hails Buhari's APC legacy

From **Danjuma Michael**, Katsina

SPECIAL Adviser to President Bola Tinubu on Political and other Matters, Ibrahim Masari, has vowed that no one can stop the campaign for Tinubu in Katsina State.

Speaking on the background of the alleged disunity between him and Governor Dikko Radda, Masari told an interview with the Hausa Service of the *British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)* that anyone trying to frustrate the promotion of Tinubu's political ambition in the state has not yet been created.

Meanwhile, Governor Dikko Radda of Katsina State has said the late former President Muhammadu Buhari's legacy, especially his contributions to infrastructure, education and development across the country and Daura Zone, remains a foundation for continued progress.



Chairman, Skill Acquisition and Big League Sub–Committee, Kingdom Life World Conference (KLWC), Sam Chika (left); Chairman of the 2026 Planning Committee/Director, Media and Digital, TREM, Ugochukwu Ezeagwula; Head of Corporate Services, KLWC, Ijeoma Ezeagwula; and Web Team Lead, Nomso Asugha, during the media briefing on the 2026 Kingdom Life World Conference in Lagos yesterday. PHOTO: AYODELE ADENIRAN

NDC, Ochei accuse APC thugs, demand probe of attack on Kwankwaso

By **John Akubo** (Abuja) and **Monday Osayande** (Asaba)

• Police arrest eight after supporters' clash in Kano

THE Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) has accused thugs loyal to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) of the recent attack on its vice-presidential candidate, Rabiu Kwankwaso, in Bichi, Kano State.

Similarly, the party's Delta North Senatorial candidate, Victor Ochei, has raised concerns over what he described as the growing pattern of political violence, intimidation and attacks against opposition members ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Citing the recent attacks on Kwankwaso's campaign convoy and the party's Kano State governorship candidate, Aminu Gwarzo, in Bichi, Kano State, Ochei described the incident as another disturbing indication of the threats confronting Nigeria's democratic process.

Meanwhile, the Kano State Police Command has arrested eight suspects following a political clash between supporters of the APC and NDC in Bichi Local Council Area of the state.

Five persons sustained injuries in the clash, which occurred at about 4:45 p.m. on November 15, and also reportedly destroyed campaign banners, billboards and 13 vehicles.

IN a statement yesterday by the NDC National Publicity Secretary, Osa Director, the party condemned the incident and called on security agencies to investigate, arrest those responsible and examine the alleged role of the sponsors.

The NDC described the attack as more than a disruption, saying it was a violent assault on its candidate and supporters, as well as on democratic participation.

The party said the incident added to a wider pattern of attacks on opposition candidates and supporters across the country, alleging the APC had turned to intimidation because it had lost public support.

Noting that the safety of candidates and supporters was essential to a credible electoral process, the NDC urged the authorities to ensure that political activities could take place without violence or threats, regardless of party affiliation.

MEANWHILE, the former Speaker of the Delta State House of Assembly, in a statement, backed the condemnation earlier by the NDC presidential candidate, Mr Peter Obi, warning that increasing incidents of political hostility could undermine public confidence in the electoral process if left unaddressed.

Unions oppose Wike in UNIABUJA land dispute, seek Tinubu's intervention

From **Owede Agbajileke**, Abuja

• Size cut approved by former minister – FCTA

NO fewer than five university unions held a protest at the University of Abuja (UNIABUJA) yesterday against the alleged encroachment on the institution's land by the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike.

Demanding an immediate reversal of the alleged land reallocation, they warned that the dispute could threaten the institution's development and disrupt industrial harmony in the nation's tertiary education sector.

However, the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) has defended its decision to reduce the land allocated to UNIABUJA, saying it was based on recommendations made by a joint committee established in 2016 by the administration of former FCT Minister Mohammed Bello.

The FCTA said the committee, comprising representatives of the administration and the university, had recommended that the institution's landholding of over 11,000 hectares be reduced to 100 hectares in line with the National Universities Commission's recommended size for universities.

THE protest brought together members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU), Students' Union Government, and the university's alumni association.

The unions accused the FCT minister of disregarding the rule of law by allegedly transferring portions of the land allocated to the university to private individuals.

Speaking during the protest, the UNIABUJA ASUU Chairman, Sylvanus Ugoh, said the land was allocated to the institution in 1988, when it was established, insisting that it should not be taken away for private interests.

Ugoh described the action as an attack on public education and called on President Bola Tinubu to direct Wike to reverse the decision.

The ASUU chairman warned that the university community would not remain passive while land reserved for the development of future generations is being transferred to private individuals.

Also speaking, the UNIABUJA SSANU Chairman, Nurudeen Yusuf, said the unions would resist any attempt to take over the institution's land, stressing that adequate land was critical to the growth of universities and their academic programmes.

14 Kaduna residents remain in captivity after bandits' attack

NO fewer than 14 residents of Kurmin Wali community in Kajuru Local Council Area of Kaduna State are being held captive by bandits following a fresh attack that led to the abduction of nine people.

The village head, Isiaku Danazumi, disclosed this to newsmen in Kaduna yesterday, saying the latest attack occurred at about 9:14 a.m. on November 15.

According to him, the gunmen abducted 12 residents during the raid, but three later escaped and returned home, leaving nine people in captivity.

Danazumi said the nine victims joined five other residents abducted in two separate attacks in October, bringing the total in captivity to 14. He added that two residents were kidnapped on October 2, while three others were taken away during another attack on October 10.

The traditional leader expressed concern over the continued attacks, lamenting that despite reporting the incidents to the relevant authorities, there had been no concrete action to secure the victims' release.

Northern elders warn against politicisation of judiciary

From **Ernest Nzor**, Abuja

THE Northern Elders Forum (NEF) yesterday warned against attempts to politicise the judiciary, insisting that the institution must remain independent, neutral and impartial to safeguard Nigeria's democratic process.

It called on politicians, political parties and the judiciary to exercise caution and restraint as political activities ahead of the 2027 general elections gather momentum.

In a statement by its spokesperson, Prof. Abubakar Jiddere, the NEF said the increasing political tension ahead of the elections made it imperative for all stakeholders to exercise restraint in their approaches to the struggle for voters' support.

"The NEF cautions judges against allowing partisan interests or political considerations to influence their decisions in cases brought before them," the statement read.

TheGuardianSports

www.guardian.ng

Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria



Chelle (left) led the Super Eagles to their official training session at the Amaan Stadium in Zanzibar yesterday.

2027 Africa Cup of Nations Qualifier

Chelle on trial as Super Eagles fight for survival in Zanzibar

By Christian Okpara

SUPER Eagles' Coach, Eric Chelle, enters one of the most important battles of his career as Super Eagles' coach in Tanzania today knowing that defeat will bring his tenure as manager of the senior national team to question.

When the Franco-Malian took over the Super Eagles and failed to rescue their fading hope of playing at the 2026 World Cup, many followers of the game did not blame him much because he inherited a team that was in a bad shape both mentally and in the race for the Mundial.

Nigeria was then marooned in fifth place in a six-team race with only two points from three and needed to win all its remaining games to qualify for the World Cup. The Super Eagles fell short of that and even lost the opportunity presented by the African playoff to make the Mundial by losing via penalties to DR Congo in the final game.

Since then, Nigerians have given the former Mali manager the benefit of the doubt, hoping that he would rebuild the team and bring them at par with other African leading teams like Morocco, Senegal, Egypt and Cote d'Ivoire.

But a 3-0 loss to Guinea Bissau early in the race for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations ticket has cast shadows on his ability to lead the team to glory any time soon.

Guinea Bissau won by 2-0 against Tanzania in this same Zanzibar and if the Eagles fail to beat the same Taifa Stars, they may fall further behind the Group L leaders in the race, which consequence is missing the 2027 AFCON to be co-hosted by Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

That is a prospect that could be too difficult for Chelle's employers, the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), to explain to Nigerians, especially if the country also fails to qualify for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

LA 2028 Olympics Race

Nigeria seek big comeback against DR Congo in Ikenne

NIGERIA'S U-23 national team, the Olympic Eagles, face a crucial test today when they host their counterparts from the Democratic Republic of Congo in the second leg of their 2027 CAF U23 Africa Cup of Nations qualifying tie at the Remo Stars Stadium in Ikenne-Remo.

The Nigerian side will be desperate to secure a victory and keep its hopes of reaching the continental tournament alive. The Olympic Eagles must overturn a two-goal deficit following their 2-0 defeat in last Friday's first-leg encounter at the TP Mazembe Stadium in Lubumbashi.

DR Congo netted twice in the first half to establish a commanding advantage ahead of the return fixture, leaving Nigeria with a difficult task on home soil.

Sanwo-Olu rewards Flamingos with N300m, iPhone 18

MTN gives world champions N150m, one-year subscription

By Gowon Akpodonor and Eniola Daniel

LAGOS State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, at the weekend, doled out N300 million to the 21 players and nine officials of the national U-17 team, Flamingos, as reward for winning the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup.

The Flamingos made history with an impressive campaign in Morocco, culminating in a victory over Japan in the final to claim the world title and become the first African team to achieve that feat.

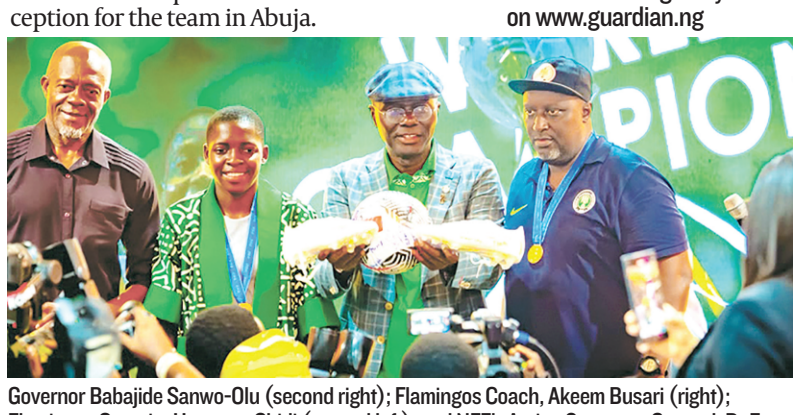
In addition to the cash gifts, each of the 21 players received an iPhone 18 and a pair of headphones, which will be customised with their names.

Addressing the players, the governor reminded them that winning the World Cup was only the beginning of their football careers, urging them to maintain the discipline and consistency required to reach the highest level.

The reward adds to the recognition and financial incentives the team has received following President Bola Tinubu's announcement of a N100 million Federal Government Savings Bond for each squad member at a reception for the team in Abuja.

Sanwo-Olu said: "Sports is one of the strongest social enablers. Sports help activate the brain, stimulate cognitive functions, and help both psychologically and mentally."

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng



Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu (second right); Flamingos Coach, Akeem Busari (right); Flamingos Captain, Harmony Chidi (second left); and NFF's Acting Secretary General, Dr Emmanuel Ikpeme, at the reception for the Flamingos in Lagos on Sunday.

Okoko wins seventh CIO Golf Classic with record score

By Christian Okpara

NINETEEN-YEAR old Godwin Okoko, at the weekend in Port Harcourt, outclassed the field to win the seventh CIO Golf Classic.

Okoko's victory came with a record-breaking 22-under-par total at the Python Golf Club in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

The rising star delivered a commanding performance across the four-day championship, carding rounds of 67, 63, 65 and 71 for a remarkable 266 total, shattering the three-year-old course record by four strokes.

Okoko's triumph represents another significant milestone in his rapidly advancing professional career and further underscores the potential of Nigerian professional golf talent on the continent.

"I have been looking forward to moments like this since my career started, and I am very delighted that things are coming together for me," an elated Okoko said after his victory.

His exceptional performance was highlighted by a stunning nine-under-par 63 in the second round, which laid the foundation for his record-breaking achievement. He subsequently maintained his advantage against a strong international field to claim one of the most prestigious titles on Nigeria's professional golf calendar.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Onogagamue lauds national grassroots sports summit

By Gowon Akpodonor

FORMER Director of Sports in Delta State, Victor Onogagamue, has described as "fantastic" the idea behind the National Grassroots Sports Development Summit slated for Abuja.

Twelve state governors are expected to feature at the event, which has now been shifted to November 19 and 20 at the Presidential Banquet Hall, Presidential Villa, Abuja.

Speaking with *The Guardian*, yesterday, Onogagamue, who is currently the Executive Assistant to Delta State Governor on Sports, said that the summit would bring together government officials, sports administrators, private sector representatives, development partners, academics, coaches, athletes and grassroots practitioners.

Onogagamue is one of those invited by the organisers as a special guest at the summit, which, he said, will greatly benefit the country.

One of the major highlights of the summit will be the Governors' Round Table, themed "Sub-National Leadership in Grassroots Sports Implementation."

The session will bring together 12 state governors to discuss how to translate policy commitments into practical grassroots sports programmes across their respective states.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Lawani, Saliu win 2026 Elizabeth Wuraola Ojo Golf Tournament

By Eniola Daniel

ABIODUN Muyiwa Lawani of Nimbar Golf Club, Ondo City, and Adenike Saliu of Ikeja Golf Club were all smiles at the end of the 2026 Elizabeth Wuraola Ojo Toyota Golf Tournament held at the Smokin Hills Golf and Country Resort, Ilara-Mokin, Ondo State.

The duo had every reason to be happy as they had just beaten the field to win the men and ladies' categories of the tournament, which attracted players from across the country.

Lawani, playing off handicap 19, returned a gross score of 81 and an impressive net score of 62 to clinch the men's overall title, while Saliu, with a handicap of 22, secured the ladies' overall crown with a net score of 66 from a gross score of 88.

In the men's net category, Fagboyibo Fass finished second with a gross score of 87 and a net score of 65, playing off handicap 22. Seun Olagoke also returned a net score of 65 from a gross score of 90, playing off handicap 25.

The men's veterans' category was won by Isaac Shedowo, who played off handicap 25 and returned a gross score of 99 and a net score of 74. Lincoln Ojo finished second with the same net score of 74, having returned a gross score of 100 off handicap 25.

In the men's gross category, Tunji Ojuolape claimed the title with a gross score of 76, playing off handicap seven, while Kewani Amusan finished second with a gross score of 81 off handicap three.



Tournament Director, Safari Tour, Francis Okwara (left); Seventh CIO champion, Godwin Okoko; Chairman, Keeves Global Leasing (Sponsor CIO Classic), Ikenna Okafor and his wife, Dr Esther Okafor, at the prize presentation ceremony in Port Harcourt at the weekend.

SOLUTION

H	O	R	R	O	R		J	A	B
A		E		N		G			A
B	A	B	E	L		U	G	L	Y
I		A		Y	E	N			
L	U	T	E		G		S		Y
E		E		A		F	I	L	A
			B	I	A		L		M
G	O	R	Y		S	P	E	R	M
U			E		I		N		E
T	O	W		C	A	N	T	E	R

TheGuardian
Conscience, Nurtured by Truth

Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

Tuesday, November 17, 2026



2027 Africa Cup of Nations Qualifier: Chelle on trial as Super Eagles fight for survival in Zanzibar

/31



Guest Writer

Chidi Anselm Odinkalu

For Keyamo: Heavens may not fall but the sky can recede

THERE are two different expressions that show how deeply courts, judges and politicians are inter-mingled in Nigeria today. When politicians desire to signal how deeply their control of the courts runs, their dialect is mirth: "go to court!" And to celebrate an improbable outcome snatched through undue propinquity to judicial robes, they gloat with "heavens will not fall!"

These are two sides of Nigeria's alluring currency of impunity. Its remit runs everywhere – the executive, legislature, judiciary, bureaucracy, universities, contractocracy, faith organisations, civics. Even the uniformed services are not left out in the rat race for impunity. Those who have it want to maximise it; those who lack it seek its face.

In the past week, the debate on impunity in Nigeria has centered around the judgment on November 5, 2026 by Peter Lifu, a judge of the Federal High Court, nixing the slate of candidates of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) for the 2027 general elections.

It is the most recent - but by no means the only one - of a slew of quite incredible judgments by a judge who has developed a genius for being the destination referee in the "endless family quarrels" of Nigeria's politicians.

Much of this latest controversy has focused on the text of what Peter Lifu decided but the trouble with this case precedes its outcome. It is the evidence around it of what can happen when judicial administration is captured.

This case began on September 2, 2025 in the court of Emeka Nwite, another judge of the same Federal High Court. The claimant was one Nafiu Bala Gombe, who sought judicial recognition as the rightful national chairman of the ADC. To achieve this, he asked the court to de-recognise David Mark and Rauf Aregbesola in the roles of national chairman and secretary respectively of the party.

A procedural objection by the party traveled all the way to the Supreme Court, which decided on April 30, 2026 to return the case to Justice Emeka Nwite for hearing on its merits.

Four days after that decision, on May 4, 2026, Nafiu Bala Gombe delivered a letter to the Chief Judge of the Federal High Court, John Tsoho, inexplicably complaining that the case before Emeka Nwite had suffered "prolonged and inordinate delay" and asking the Chief Judge to transfer it to another judge.

Remarkably, the date on this letter was April 4. That was nearly one month before the Supreme Court decided the appeal. That did not make logical sense.

Yet, the day after receiving Nafiu Bala's transfer request, on May 5, 2026, Chief Judge Tsoho transmitted it to the lawyer for the ADC, Luka Musa Haruna, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, SAN.

In a response dated May 11 and copied to the Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Luka Haruna said Nafiu Bala's request was "an odious effort" to impugn the integrity of the trial judge. Instead, he sought compliance with the order of the Supreme Court to return the case to Emeka Nwite, together with accelerated hearing of the case.



Three days earlier, on May 8, upon being notified that Nafiu Bala had written to the Chief Judge to ask for the transfer of the case to another judge, Emeka Nwite adjourned the matter indefinitely to await the decision of the Chief Judge.

In the midst of this frenzy, on May 14, 2024, the National Judicial Council (NJC) recommended 12 judges to the president of Nigeria for elevation to the Court of Appeal. One of them was Emeka Nwite. Six months later, that recommendation still awaits the president's attention and Emeka Nwite still works as a High Court judge.

Meanwhile, on May 19, Chief Judge John Tsoho addressed a fresh letter to Luka Musa Haruna, SAN in which he observed that the recommendation of Emeka Nwite for appointment to the Court of Appeal "constitutes an intervening event that makes the reassignment of this suit inevitable."

The Chief Judge informed the lawyer that he had "therefore, reassigned this suit to Hon. Justice P.O. Lifu for accelerated hearing." He offered no reason for why it had to be Peter Lifu.

At this time, Peter Lifu was already presiding over another case seeking the de-registration of the ADC. On May 22, the Court of Appeal issued an order "staying further proceedings" in that case. That was a mere three days after the Chief Judge chose to send to the same judge yet another case seeking essentially the same outcome. He took no notice.

On June 15, in defiance of the directive of the Court of Appeal, Peter Lifu issued judgment de-registering the ADC. Why then would he sit to decide the leadership of a party that he'd ordered de-registered?

Two weeks earlier, on June 1, in a four-page letter to Chief Judge John Tsoho, National Secretary of the ADC, Rauf Aregbesola, protested the reassignment of the case saying, among other things: "we have serious concerns regarding the reassignment of politically sensitive matters involving opposition parties to a recurring group of judges of the Abuja Division, particularly, Hon. Justice Peter Lifu. . .."

The letter named two other judges among this list. It also accused the Chief Judge of "administrative interference" with the proceedings and of undermining full compliance with the decision of the Supreme Court. The Chief Judge took little notice.

To be sure, the ADC was not alone in noticing the pattern of assignment of political cases by the current Chief Judge of the Federal High Court. Law Akhigbe, who has analysed the pattern, publicly wonders "how so many politically explosive cases seem to find their way before the same judge", and worries that "when a judge repeatedly finds himself at the centre of politically consequential disputes, scrutiny inevitably follows."

> "Much of this latest controversy has focused on the text of what Peter Lifu decided but the trouble with this case precedes its outcome. It is the evidence around it of what can happen when judicial administration is captured."

He is not alone. On July 28, 2026, the Court of Appeal overturned the decision of Peter Lifu to de-register the ADC, accusing him of the highest level of "judicial impertinence", and calling him a "misfit on the bench." The NJC, which has met since then, was unconcerned; nor, it appears, was Chief Judge, John Tsoho.

Merrily, Peter Lifu's latest judgment achieves the same end that the Court of Appeal overturned in its judgment of July 28.

In response to this latest outing by Peter Lifu, Aviation Minister, Festus Keyamo, SAN, joined the "heavens will not fall" gang, in capital letters. Babafemi Ojudu, a former Senator and presidential adviser, responded to him thoughtfully, inviting him to care about the country.

In a separate response, Olusegun Adeniyi argues that "when a minister of the Federal Republic, and a respected SAN, tells critics to keep quiet about a judgment with this history, he is not defending the judiciary."

The political significance of judicial power is not in doubt. That is precisely why it needs to be conserved with care, not weaponised with recklessness. The price of failing to conserve it can be steep.

The index case, of course, was Nazi Germany. Ernst Fraenkel reminds us in The Dual State, his classic study of Adolf Hitler's overthrow of democratic institutions leading to the catastrophe of the Third Reich, that "administrative and general courts aided in the achievement of this condition. . .., the purpose being the achievement of a political aim."

When Kenya voted in presidential elections at the end of 2007, their judiciary was widely acknowledged to be "designed to serve the interest of the president and could not be trusted to pass impartial judgments, particularly where the president was involved." So, the politicians sought to settle their electoral disputes in killing fields.

With the country staring down the edge of the precipice, they finally agreed to pull back. The price was a clear out of the judiciary. In 2010, they began a re-set under a new Chief Justice whose record included political detention and exile. He had never sat previously as a judge.

Those – like Festus Keyamo – living under the false assurance that the heavens will not fall, stare in the wrong direction. They should fear instead for what may happen to the ground underneath them when some judges and their political patrons finally achieve the goal of rendering the courts irrelevant with a succession of noxious decisions.

The final moments as the earth satiates its anger and the skies recede in one terminal 'woosh!' could be worse than a collapse of the heavens.

Odinkalu, a lawyer and teacher, can be reached at chidi.odinkalu@tufts.edu

Views expressed by contributors are strictly personal and not of The Guardian.

Published by The Guardian Group, Rutam House, Isolo, Lagos Tel: 01-4489600
Abuja Office: Plot 415 Olu Awotesu Street, Off Idris Ibrahim Crescent, Off Obafemi Awolowo Way, Jabi District, Abuja. Tel: 08065290744
Advert Hotlines: 01-4489619, 08023015115 08031930899, advert@guardian.ng; Circulation Hotline: 07038746449
All correspondence to Guardian Newspapers Limited, P.M.B. 1217, Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria.
E-mail:Letters@guardian.ng; www.guardian.ng

Editor:
OLUWAFEMI F. ADEKOYA

ABC (ISSN NO 0189-5125)

What TheGuardian stands for
Conscience, Nurtured by Truth

- *The Guardian* is an independent newspaper, established for the purpose of presenting balanced coverage of events, and of promoting the best interests of Nigeria. It owes allegiance to no political party, ethnic, community, religious or other interest groups. Its primary commitment is to the integrity and sovereignty of the Federation of Nigeria, and beyond that, to the unity and sovereignty of Africa.
- *The Guardian* will at all times uphold the need for justice, probity in public life, equal access to the nation's resources and equal protection under the law of Nigeria for all citizens.
- *The Guardian* journalist must whole-heartedly subscribe to the 1979 Code of Conduct for Nigerian journalists as amended in 1998.
- *The Guardian* believes, therefore, that it is the moral duty of every journalist to have respect for the truth and to publish or prepare for publication only the truth and to the best of his knowledge.
- It is the duty of *The Guardian* journalist to resist and refrain from earning other than his just salary or allowances from his employers: not to demand, and to refuse any reward if offered in cash or kind for publishing news or comments.
- The motto of *The Guardian* is Conscience Nurtured by Truth.

Please report any of our erring journalists to these dedicated telephone numbers: 014489600, 07098147948, 07098147951 Or our e-mail: Complaints@guardian.ng