Sunbeth acquires controlling stake in Livestock Feeds Plc

Acquisition to aid continuity, operational strength, sustainable growth

SUNBETH Treenuts and Sesame Limited, a subsidiary of Sunbeth Agro HoldCo, has announced the completion of its acquisition of UAC of Nigeria Plc's 73.29 per cent shareholding in Livestock Feeds Plc, following approval from Nigeria's Securities and Exchange Commission.

The completion establishes Sunbeth as the majority shareholder of Livestock Feeds Plc and marks the beginning of a new phase focused on preserving the company's heritage, strengthening its operations and supporting its long-term growth.

Sunbeth's immediate priority is to support business continuity, working closely with the Board, management and employees to strengthen operations and maintain dependable service to customers and partners.

Commenting on the completion, Peeyush Karnani, Chief Strategy Officer of Sunbeth Agro HoldCo, said: "Livestock Feeds is an established business with a proud heritage, trusted brands and longstanding relationships across Nigeria's livestock industry. We recognise the responsibility that comes with becoming its majority shareholder.

"Our approach is to build on these foundations. Our immediate focus is continuity, operational stability and supporting the people and partnerships behind the business. We intend to combine Sunbeth's strength in sourcing soya and other key feed ingredients with Livestock Feeds' manufacturing expertise and established distribution network to improve supply reliability, strengthen competitiveness and create sustainable value for all shareholders.

"This acquisition also provides an important foundation for

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The Guardian

Conscience, Nurtured by Truth

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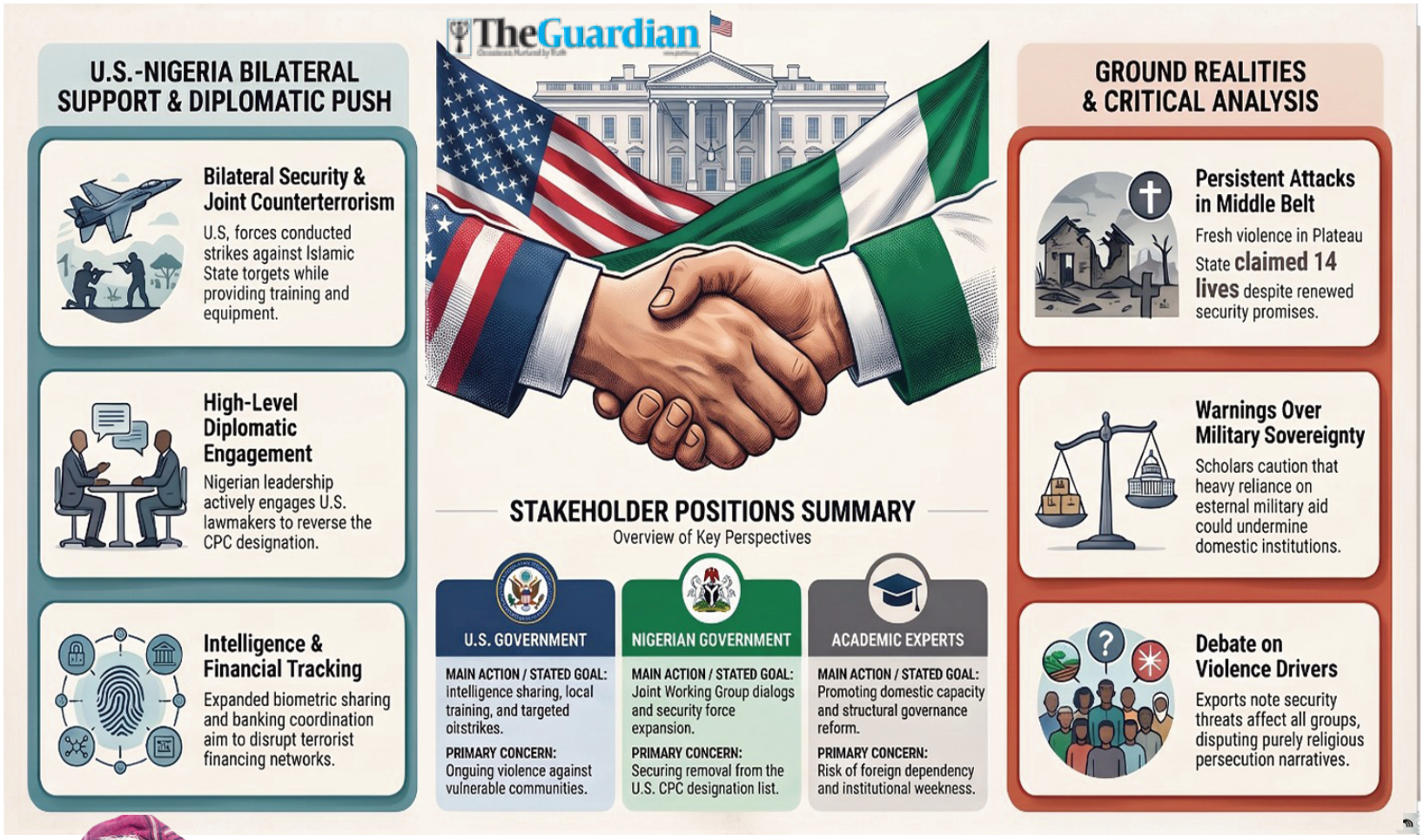
South Africa summons Fani-Kayode over diplomatic dispute

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One year after CPC tag, fresh Plateau killings test U.S.-Nigeria security deal

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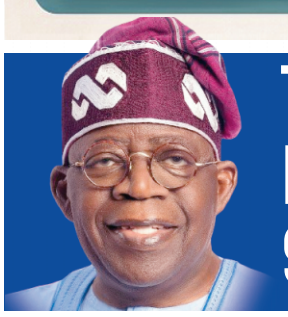


Reps demand action against 22 states over pension defaults

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Hackers intensify operations, attack 178 websites to steal crypto, infect iPhones

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Tinubu offers Nigerians N100m housing loans at 9.75% interest

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Military force alone cannot defeat Boko Haram, Irabor declares

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Campaign violence: APC, ADC trade blame as Jonathan warns of post-election crisis

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NRS flags trillions in potential illicit financial flows from imports

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SPOTLIGHT

UN: Everyday products expose millions to hormone-disrupting chemicals

By **Ijeoma Nwanosike**

THE United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have warned that exposure to hormone-disrupting chemicals found in everyday products could begin before birth, potentially causing lasting damage to human health, including impaired brain development, fertility problems and metabolic disorders.

The chemicals, known as endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs), interfere with the body's hormonal systems and have been detected in human blood, breast milk and umbilical cord blood, raising concerns about their effects on pregnant women, unborn babies and future generations.

In a new report, State of the Science on Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals 2026, the organisations said more than a decade of additional research had strengthened and broadened scientific evidence linking exposure to EDCs with adverse health effects in humans and wildlife.

The assessment, the first major global update since the 2012 UNEP-WHO report, identified stronger evidence associating exposure to the chemicals with fertility problems, impaired reproductive development, neurological disorders, thyroid dysfunction, metabolic conditions, immune system disturbances and cardiovascular diseases.

It also highlighted emerging concerns about possible effects on the kidneys and metabolic liver disease, although the organisations acknowledged that important scientific gaps remain.

Group demands records on N88.6tr debt issuance

From **Ernest Nzor** (Abuja)

THE Global Integrity Watch (GIW), on Tuesday, staged a peaceful protest at the headquarters of the Debt Management Office (DMO) in Abuja, demanding the release of public records relating to Nigeria's debt management details of N88.674 trillion in reported new debt issues and a N4.265 trillion debt-stock discrepancy.

The group said its protest followed the failure of the DMO to provide a substantive response to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request submitted on August 19, 2026, seeking access to records on public debt management, financial reporting, debt issuances and reconciliation of debt figures.

Addressing journalists, GIW Country Representative, Eneji Mohammed, said the request was informed by issues raised in the Auditor-General for the Federation's 2024 Annual Report on Non-Compliance.

AfDB commits $102m to Nigerian businesses, targets 6,000 jobs

By **Abigail Ikhaghu**

AT least 6,000 jobs and support for more than 5,000 smallholder farmers are expected from a $102 million financing package approved by the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) for Sterling Bank, as the lender moves to widen access to funding for businesses across Nigeria.

The facility will support at least 200 businesses, with particular attention to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), women and youth entrepreneurs, and farmers whose livelihoods have been affected by insecurity, displacement and climate-related challenges.

In a statement issued yesterday, the AfDB said the financing combines four instruments designed to address different funding needs, from business expansion and sustainable investments to agricultural lending and international trade.



Todd Tiahrt (left); Beth Van Duyne; Presidential candidate of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), Peter Obi and Marlin Stutzmanwith after his engagement with some U.S lawmakers during his visit to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Fountain of Life BOT names interim leader as Odukoya rejects removal

THE Board of Trustees of Fountain of Life Church has reaffirmed its decision to remove Pastor Jimmy Odukoya as senior pastor, appointing Pastor Rotimi Okpaise to oversee the church's interim spiritual and administrative leadership.

The board said the interim arrangement would remain in force pending consultations and the completion of processes for appointing a substantive leadership structure in accordance with the church's constitution and established procedures.

The latest decision comes amid an escalating leadership and succession dispute between the board and Jimmy, son of the church's late founder, Pastor Taiwo Odukoya, who had earlier rejected his removal.

In a statement on Tuesday, the trustees insisted that their November 16, 2026 resolution withdrawing recognition of Jimmy as senior pastor remained valid.

The board also alleged that individuals linked to Jimmy had taken control of the church's social media platforms without its authorisation and were using them to publish what it described as inaccurate and misleading accounts of the dispute.

RANDOM FACTS

- Chelsea is the most popular British club in Africa. South Africa has the largest banking industry in Africa.
- A 'Judas goat' is a trained goat used to gain a herd's trust before leading them to a specific destination. In stockyards, the Judas goat leads sheep to slaughter while its own life is spared.
- In China, it is acceptable to walk into an IKEA store to relax and take a nap.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

- Right to disclosure of second-hand or reconditioned good: Any person who offers to sell goods that are second hand or have been reconditioned, rebuilt or remade must clearly notify the consumer of the nature of the goods.

TODAY'S QUOTE

Life is not meant to be easy, my child; but take courage: it can be delightful.

Silence is the most perfect expression of scorn.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Be moderate in a dance you are not adept at, in the king's presence.

Those pair of shoes on the refuse dump was once worn to a wedding.

YORUBA PROVERBS

TODAY IN HISTORY

• 2023 - Liberia
Liberian President and African football legend George Weah conceded defeat to opposition leader Joseph Boakai in the keenly contested presidential election. The opposition leader was leading the polls with nearly 51 per cent of the votes in Liberia. Speaking as the election umpire continued the result announcements, Weah said there was no way he could overturn Boakai's lead. "The result announced tonight, though not final, indicates that. . .Boakai is in a lead that we cannot surpass. This is the time for graciousness in defeat." Pres. Bola Tinubu commended Weah for demonstrating uncommon leadership by conceding the election and averting any form of socio-political crisis.

• 2013 - UAE
Twitter users in Kuwait and UAE received prison terms in the latest sign of widening crackdowns in the region on social media for posts considered offensive or against state

• 2012 - Greece
Pope Tawadros II of Alexandria became the 118th Pope of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria.

• 2011 - Nigeria
President Goodluck Jonathan established its first Sovereign Wealth Fund hoping to curb the plunder of oil revenues.

• 2011 - Libya
Moammar Gadhafi's son Seif al-Islam (39), the only wanted member of the ousted ruling family to remain at large, was captured as he traveled with aides in a convoy in Libya's southern desert.

• 2011 - Egypt
Arab Spring: Thousands of Egyptians, dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood, rallied in Cairo's Tahrir Square to protest against military rulers which eventually toppled the regime of Hosni Mubarak.

• 2010 - Nigeria
FIFA banned and fined 4 Africans from involving in the sport for breaches of trust. They included Amos Adamu of Nigeria and three others from Tunisia, Botswana and Mali plus Reynald Temarii, president of the Oceania Football Confederation.

• 2004 - Chile
A woman (48) became the first person in Chilean history to file for divorce.

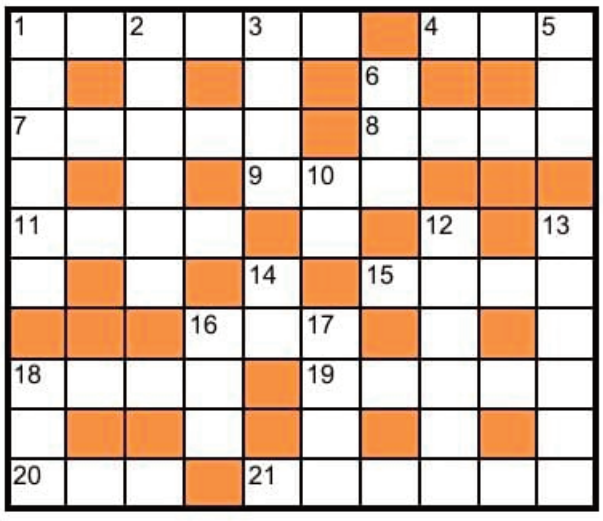
• 1926 - UK
George Bernard Shaw refused to accept the money for his Nobel Prize, saying, "I can forgive Alfred Nobel for inventing dynamite, but only a fiend in human form could have invented the Nobel Prize."

... DAY 4588

OUR GIRLS STILL MISSING

Tope Templer Olaiya,
News Editor
@TopeTempler

CROSS WORD PUZZLE



• ACROSS

I. City in Jigawa state, (6).
4. Albanian currency unit, (3).
7. Kind of insecticide, (5).
8. On the sea, (4).
9. Gases forming atmosphere, (3).
11. Small whirl, (4).
15. Former Information Minister, (4).
16. Extinct bird, (3).
18. NAFDAC's Late Director-General, (4).
19. Sports FM Radio Station, (5).
20. Recently made, (3).
21. Greet somebody, (6).

• DOWN

1. Hot-tasting spice, (6).
2. Refer indirectly, (6).
3. Illegal drinking place, (4).
5. Korean saloon car, (3).
6. A long way off, (3).
10. Identification., (2).
12. Jigawa state EX Governor, (6).
13. City in Kano state, (6).
14. Body odour, abbr., (2).
16. Spoil, (3).
17. Governor Dr. Alex Otti's state, (4).
18. University teacher, (3).

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Check page 31 for solution to the puzzle

News

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State police: Presidential assent won't guarantee immediate take-off, says NIPS DG

By **Seye Olumide**

Reps, APC hail unanimous approval of state police by 36 states

ALTHOUGH all 36 states have approved the establishment of state police, the proposed security arrangement may not become operational immediately after President Bola Tinubu assents to the legislation, as states will first have to satisfy a series of institutional, financial and operational requirements for certification.

Director-General of the National Institute of Police Studies (NIPS), Prof. Olu Ogunsakin, who previously served as technical adviser to successive Inspectors-General of Police (IGPs) and presently heads the Nigeria Police Reform Secretariat, said presidential assent would only provide the legal foundation for state police, while actual take-off would depend on individual states meeting prescribed readiness requirements.

The House of Representatives has, however, welcomed the approval by all 36 Houses of Assembly.

Echoing the lawmakers' sentiments, National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda, described the endorsement by the 36 Houses of Assembly as a breakthrough in Nigeria's efforts to address its security challenges.

Ogunsakin, in a telephone conversation with *The Guardian*, said states will be required to establish the necessary administrative structures, including state police service commissions and other oversight bodies, while demonstrating their capacity to recruit, equip, train and maintain personnel before being authorised to operate their respective police formations.

He said some states could require between six and 18 months to meet the conditions, suggesting that the transition to a decentralised policing system would be gradual rather than simultaneous across the federation.

Ogunsakin explained that states would have to demonstrate that they possess adequate facilities, uniforms, armaments, equipment and trained personnel, alongside sustainable financial arrangements for running the new police formations.

He added that states would also be expected to make provisions for the payment of salaries and other operational costs, stressing that the financial implications of establishing a police institution could be substantial.

THE House described the unanimous endorsement as a significant milestone in the constitutional amendment process, saying it represents 100 per cent approval by the state legislatures and exceeds the constitutional requirement of at least two-thirds.

House Spokesman, Akin Rotimi Jr., disclosed this in a statement issued in Abuja yesterday.

According to the statement, the approval was confirmed by the Clerk to the National Assembly, Kamoru Ogunlana, who said the bill had satisfied the constitutional and administrative requirements for transmission.

Ogunlana, in a statement issued on Monday, November 16, explained that the bill had earlier met the requirements for transmission, but that the leadership of the National Assembly directed a brief delay to allow for broader national consensus and engagement with all states.

YILWATDA, who commended the state governors, Speakers and members of the state legislatures for supporting the constitutional amendment, said the development demonstrated growing political consensus on the need to decentralise the country's policing structure.

He also credited President Bola Tinubu with providing the political leadership to advance the proposed reform, describing state police as a critical component of the administration's efforts to build a more responsive and effective security architecture.

The APC chairman spoke during a meeting with party stakeholders in Abuja, according to a statement issued on Monday by his Special Adviser on Media and Information Strategy, Abimbola Tooki.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

South Africa summons Fani-Kayode over diplomatic dispute

FG denies reprimand as envoy claims meeting was cordial

From **Joel Oladele**, Abuja

SOUTH AFRICA has summoned Nigeria's High Commissioner, Femi Fani-Kayode, over the controversy surrounding his presentation of letters of credence to President Cyril Ramaphosa and his subsequent comments on social media.

While the Federal Government contradicted South Africa's claim that Fani-Kayode was reprimanded over his public remarks, Fani-Kayode described the meeting as "cordial" and "constructive."

South Africa's Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) disclosed the summons yesterday following a meeting between its Director-General, Zane Dangor, and the Nigerian envoy.

At the meeting, Dangor reportedly conveyed South Africa's displeasure over the events surrounding the diplomatic ceremony and Fani-Kayode's public reaction to the incident.

According to DIRCO, the discussion also focused on the need for diplomats to respect established procedures in their dealings with host countries.

"During the meeting, the Director-General conveyed South Africa's concern regarding events that transpired following the presentation of the High Commissioner's Letters of Credence to His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa, as well as subsequent remarks made on social media," the department said.

Dangor also reminded Fani-Kayode of Article 41 of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which requires diplomatic agents to conduct official business with the receiving country through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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National Chairman, All Progressives Congress (APC), Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda (left); Vice President Kashim Shettima; President Bola Tinubu; Director-General, APC Presidential Campaign Council (PCC) for the 2027 general elections, Abdulaziz Yari; Kebbi State Governor, Nasir Idris, and Speaker, House of Representatives, Tajudeen Abbas, during the APC presidential campaign in Kebbi State, yesterday.

Nigerians not benefiting from declining inflation, CPPE alerts

From **Tobi Awodipe** (Lagos) and **Collins Olayinka** (Abuja)

FG raises panel to address TUC's concerns over workers' ordeals

CHIEF Executive Officer (CEO), Centre for the Promotion of Private Enterprise (CPPE), Dr Musa Yusuf, has urged the Federal Government to refocus Nigeria's inflation management towards reducing the cost of living; warning that the declining inflation being touted is not translating into cheaper food, transportation, housing and other needs for households.

The above probably pushes the Federal Government to establish a high-powered committee to address concerns raised by the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC) over the country's economic situation, workers' welfare, security and unresolved labour issues.

Yusuf said although Nigeria recorded significant progress in price stabilisation last month, persistent food price pressures, high logistics costs, energy expenses and regional disparities continue to undermine household welfare and business competitiveness.

In its October 2026 inflation policy brief, released yesterday, the CPPE boss commended the monetary and fiscal authorities for their commitment to monetary discipline and price stability, noting that the improvements were consistent with monetary policy objectives, although fiscal developments, FX conditions and supply-side factors also influenced inflation outcomes.

However, he warned that the latest figures contain emerging risks, particularly around food prices and essential household expenditure.

He noted that headline month-on-month inflation accelerated from 0.06 per cent in September to 0.43 per cent in October, while the monthly decline in food prices weakened from 1.55 per cent to 0.75 per cent. Rural inflation also reversed from a decline of 0.89 per cent to an increase of 0.18 per cent.

According to him, these figures demonstrate that the gains from price stabilisation are not sufficiently broad-based, leaving the inflation outlook vulnerable to supply disruptions and structural constraints.

He further noted that Nigeria's inflation challenge was not exclusively monetary, identifying high logistics costs, deteriorating transportation infrastructure, expensive energy, inadequate storage facilities and insecurity in agricultural communities as major factors driving production costs and consumer prices.

The CPPE boss called for closer alignment between inflation management and poverty reduction, urging the government to prioritise food affordability, transportation, housing, education and healthcare.

He cautioned that progress in macroeconomic stabilisation would deliver limited welfare benefits if essential goods and services remain beyond the reach of most Nigerians.

THE high-powered committee, expected to submit its report within two weeks, followed an intervention meeting between the government and the labour centre to address critical national economic, security, and labour challenges affecting workers and the coun-

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Fashola defends Tinubu's economic reforms, acknowledges hardship

Dismisses alleged emasculation of opposition

By **Kehinde Olatunji**

FORMER governor of Lagos State, Babatunde Fashola, has defended the economic reforms of President Bola Tinubu, arguing that the removal of petrol subsidy and other fiscal measures are necessary to address Nigeria's long-standing revenue challenges and restore macroeconomic stability.

While acknowledging that Tinubu's economic reforms have yet to sufficiently address the hardship facing Nigerians, the senior advocate said the gap between policy formulation and tangible results remains a challenge.

However, Fashola dismissed claims that Nigeria's opposition has been weakened or that the country is drifting towards dictatorship, describing the political activities ahead of the 2027 general elections as evidence of a functioning democracy.

The former minister, who spoke yesterday on *Channels Television's* Politics Today, anchored by Seun Okinbaloye, said Nigerians should assess the government's economic policies against the financial realities confronting the country rather than embrace opposition promises without clear implementation plans.

He argued that the administration had introduced measures to cushion the effect of its reforms, including tax concessions, stamp duty exemptions, adjustments to salaries and the promotion of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) as an alternative fuel.

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Reps demand action against 22 states over pension defaults

By **Bankole Orimisan** (Lagos) and **Joel Oladele** (Abuja)

HOUSE of Representatives has called for urgent action against 22 state governments over their failure to pay retirement benefits regularly, warning that thousands of elderly pensioners face worsening hardship.

The lawmakers urged the Federal Government to prevail on the affected states to clear outstanding pension arrears and comply with the provisions of the Pension Reform Act, 2024.

• Pension assets hit N31.8tr, RSA holders 352,061

The House also resolved to investigate the circumstances surrounding the pension defaults, following concerns that retirees who spent decades in public service could no longer afford necessities.

The resolutions followed the adoption of a motion of urgent public importance sponsored by Adesola Adebayo, representing Apapa Federal Constituency, Lagos State, during yesterday's plenary.

Moving the motion, Adebayo cited a newspaper report which indicated that only 14 of Nigeria's 36 states pay pensions regularly, while 22 others owe retirees several months or, in some cases, years of entitlements.

The lawmaker expressed concern that many pensioners aged between 70 and 90 were dying in poverty because they could not afford food, medication, rent and other necessities.

MEANWHILE, Nigeria's pension fund assets have increased by N4.34 trillion in the first eight months of 2026, reaching N31.80 trillion in August, from N27.46 trillion recorded at the end of December 2025, while the number of registered Retirement Savings Account (RSA) holders rose to 11.39 million.

The growth represents a 15.8 per cent increase in pension assets, with 352,061 new RSA accounts registered between January and August, reflecting the continued expansion of the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS).

However, the growing asset base has heightened expectations on Pension Fund Administrators (PFAs) to improve investment performance, diversify their portfolios and ensure that the increasing pool of retirement savings delivers better returns for contributors and retirees.

Speaking during a virtual press conference with journalists yesterday, the Executive Secretary/Chief Executive Officer of the Pension Fund Operators Association of Nigeria (PenOp), Mrs Anthonia Ifeanyi-Okoro, said the development reinforces the importance of pension funds as a major source of long-term capital for the Nigerian economy.

Ifeanyi-Okoro said the next phase of growth should focus on translating the expanding asset base into sustainable investment returns, while ensuring the protection of contributors' retirement savings.

She identified investment diversification, improved returns and stronger risk management as critical priorities for pension operators as the industry moves into 2027.

CJN tasks new Appeal Court justices on independence, integrity

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

CHIEF Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Justice Kudirat Kekere-Ekun, has charged newly appointed Justices of the Court of Appeal to uphold judicial independence, demonstrate integrity and embrace collective decision-making without compromising their individual judicial convictions.

Justice Kekere-Ekun, who gave the charge at the swearing-in ceremony of 12 newly appointed Justices of the Court of Appeal held in Abuja yesterday, noted that the Court of Appeal occupies a central position in the administration of justice and development in the country.

She said the new Justices brought valuable judicial experience from different parts of the country and jurisdictions, saying that the diversity of their professional backgrounds would enrich the Court of Appeal's deliberations by bringing different perspectives shaped by varied legal traditions and practical experiences.

Africa loses $150b yearly to illicit financial flows, ex-envoy warns

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

AFRICA loses an estimated $150 billion yearly to illicit financial flows, a development that has deprived the continent of resources needed for infrastructure, healthcare, education and other critical sectors, former Nigerian Ambassador to Russia, Prof. Abdullahi Shehu, has said.

Shehu, a former Director General of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), said the scale of the financial losses underscored the urgent need for African countries to strengthen asset recovery mechanisms and move beyond political commitments to concrete action.

He spoke at the maiden General Assembly of the African Asset Recovery Practitioners' Forum (AARP-F), which opened in Abuja yesterday, with the theme, 'From Commitment to Action: Enhancing Africa's Asset Recovery Architecture through Effective Implementation of the Common African Position on Asset Recovery (CAPAR).'



Chairperson, African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AUABC), Kwami Senanu (left); Chairman of Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Dr Musa Aliyu; Attorney General and Minister of Justice of the Federation, Lateef Fagbemi; Executive Chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Olanipekun Olukoyede; and Executive Chairman, Nigeria Revenue Service (NRS), Dr Zacch Adedeji, during the opening ceremony of the Maiden General Assembly of the African Asset Recovery Practitioners' Forum (AARP-F) in Abuja, yesterday. PHOTO: NAN

Hackers intensify operations, attack 178 websites to steal crypto, infect iPhones

By **Adeyemi Adepetun**

• Gmail, Marriott, Microsoft Outlook suffer outages

CRIMINAL elements, yesterday, unleashed terror, targeting some of the world's most visited websites.

According to a report, some of the world's most-visited websites, including those of Zoom, HSBC, Equifax, CNN, Salesforce, and IKEA, were subverted in an effort to steal cryptocurrency and infect iPhones.

The cybercriminals unleashed malicious JavaScript targeting visitors to the websites of 178 organisations across various sectors via Optimizely, a website optimisation platform, according to researcher Scott Helme.

The scripts attempted to replace cryptocurrency payment addresses with the attacker's wallet, skim card numbers as users entered credit card details, steal cookies and screenshots, and plant exploit code on iOS devices.

Helme wrote about the danger of the attack, claiming that the hackers could do almost anything they wanted.

Verified attacker transactions show that some crypto was stolen, according to Helme's research blog. "Most of the malicious code has now been removed," Helme wrote.

Cybersecurity firm Hudson Rock also said it had found evidence that the sites had served malicious code to their visitors.

It was difficult to immediately ascertain whether the code was successfully used in each case, or the extent of any resulting hacks.

Salesforce said it was investigating unauthorised changes to the Optimizely script and had disabled it as a precaution. Equifax also looked into the issue. It stopped using Optimizely and found no evidence that its systems were compromised.

IKEA said it was seeking to determine if there was any potential impact on its digital services and customers.

Reuters noted that Optimizely, Apple, Zoom, HSBC, and CNN did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

Further, users across the globe reported outages yesterday affecting several major services, including Gmail, Marriott, Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft 365.

Reports are also surging for Apple Support, the App Store, iCloud and Apple Pay.

Experts noted that the simultaneous disruptions suggested a broader underlying issue rather than isolated platform glitches, potentially pointing toward a major cloud infrastructure, DNS, or content delivery network (CDN) failure.

Across social media and outage-tracking platforms, there have been divided observations. Some users flagged widespread connection timeouts, authentication errors, and an inability to process payments or sync cloud-based files. Others claimed that there has not been any form of outage, thereby dousing the claim.

Nonetheless, users are advised to avoid repeated login attempts that could trigger security lockouts and to monitor official status pages for real-time updates as engineers work to bring systems back online.

Military force alone cannot defeat Boko Haram, Irabor declares

By **Oludare Richards** and **Ngozi Egenuka**

• Says Nigeria's regional influence declining over governance failure

• Nigeria, ECOWAS advance plans for regional counter-terrorism brigade

FORMER Chief of Defence Staff of Nigeria, General Lucky Irabor, has said that the fight against Boko Haram insurgency could not be won through military force alone, stressing that bullets could only contribute about 25 per cent to the solution.

He said that there are other factors, such as a mindset change, that could help address the root causes of insecurity, adding that a multidimensional security approach should prioritise the rule of law, good governance, tackling unemployment, reducing poverty and addressing economic deprivation.

This was at the General Lucky Irabor Special Lecture Series themed: 'Peace Building in a Time of Fragility: The Role of Early Warning in Conflict Prevention in West Africa', held yesterday in Lagos, organised by the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA).

On marginalisation and separatist agitations, he warned that creating more states or returning to regional arrangements would not resolve the problem, as marginalisation could persist even within regions and states.

General Irabor stated that the responsibility for addressing these divisions rested largely with the political elite, stressing that any structure or arrangement that promotes sectionalism and division must be attacked and prevented.

On the role of technology in security, he said artificial intelligence would become increasingly important in early warning systems through the analysis of complex data, the detection of financial flows linked to terrorist financing, the tracking of small-arms movements, and the real-time monitoring of social sentiments in communities under pressure.

Nigeria's former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prof. Bolaji Akinyemi, emphasised the importance of resolving violence in Africa.

He noted the immeasurable value of experienced generals in addressing security issues.

The Director-General, NIIA, Prof. Eghosa Osaghae, emphasised the importance of technology and data in developing effective early warning systems.

MEANWHILE, the Nigerian Government and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have resumed discussions on establishing a regional counter-terrorism brigade, with the bloc also seeking action plans to strengthen its military missions in The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau.

The discussions took place during a meeting between the Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission, Anthony Oluwatosin Ogunjimi, and the Chief of Defence Staff, General Olufemi Oluyede, at the Defence Headquarters in Abuja.

Ireland moves to improve visa services as Nigeria seeks direct flights

By **Olusegun Koiki**

IRISH Government is considering measures to improve its visa processing capacity for Nigerians as part of efforts to facilitate stronger aviation, trade and tourism relations between Nigeria and Ireland.

The Irish Ambassador to Nigeria, Ms Lesley Ní Bhriain, disclosed this yesterday, during a courtesy visit to the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, in Abuja.

A statement by the Special Adviser on Media and Communications to the Minister, Tunde Moshood, said that Ní Bhriain, who assumed office in September, had identified improved visa services as one of the critical requirements for expanding bilateral engagements, particularly in aviation, trade and tourism between the two countries.

She disclosed that she had engaged with Ireland's Ministry of Justice regarding the deployment of additional personnel to visa offices to improve processing capacity and facilitate easier movement between the two countries.

According to her, efficient visa services would be essential to advancing discussions on direct flights, business partnerships and other areas of economic cooperation.

Nigerian start-ups make Africa Applied AI Lab cohort

By **Adeyemi Adepetun**

THREE Nigerian start-ups, Intron, Termii and Vendy, have been selected for the first cohort of the Google Africa Applied AI Lab.

They are among the 10 start-ups chosen from thousands of applications received from more than 45 African countries.

The Lab, managed by the Google AI Futures Fund alongside Google Research, helps African founders turn AI research into products that people and businesses can use. Applications opened in July and closed on August 31, and the final 10 were selected for the quality of what they have built and the traction they already have.

All three Nigerian companies have products that are already in use. Intron builds speech recognition for hospitals, courtrooms and contact centres that understands African accents and speakers who switch between languages mid-sentence.

Tinubu charges varsities to commercialise research for national devt

From **Rotimi Agboluaje**, Ibadan

- UI seeks special funding at 2026 convocation
- Danjuma donates 88-room hostel to UI medical students, boost accreditation

PRESIDENT Bola Ahmed Tinubu, yesterday, urged Nigerian universities to commercialise research breakthroughs and improve administrative efficiency to promote national development and economic self-reliance.

He also reiterated his administration's commitment to improving funding, infrastructure and staff welfare in tertiary institutions, describing investment in higher education as critical to economic growth and technological advancement.

Tinubu, who was represented by the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC), Prof. Abdullahi Yusufu Ribadu, gave the charge during the 78th Foundation Day ceremony and grand finale of the University of Ibadan (UI) 2026 convocation ceremonies held at the International Conference Centre of the institution.

He said no nation could achieve sustainable economic growth, technological advancement and social harmony without substantial investment in human capital.

The President said the Federal Government was strengthening tertiary education through research grants, infrastructure support and university intervention frameworks to enable first-generation institutions to compete globally, adding that his administration was promoting renewable energy initiatives to provide reliable electricity for federal universities, while sustaining engagement with staff unions to improve industrial harmony and welfare.

He, however, urged universities to complement the government's efforts through prudent resource management, administrative efficiency and commercialisation of research breakthroughs.

In his address, the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the UI Governing Council, Bisi Akande, commended the President's interventions in the education sector, especially efforts to restore industrial harmony and expand access to higher education funding.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Olapegba, appealed to the Federal Government to give UI special funding priority to address its infrastructural and operational challenges.

Olapegba disclosed that the university's monthly electricity bills had more than doubled, putting considerable pressure on its finances.

Also speaking, the Sultan of Sokoto and Chancellor of the university, Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, urged the Federal Government to introduce specialised funding frameworks and sustained capital allocations for first-generation universities.

MEANWHILE, the UI medical students have received a major boost to their accommodation needs with the commissioning of an 88-room hostel donated by former Minister of Defence, Gen. Theophilus Danjuma (rtd), and his wife, Senator Daisy Danjuma.

The facility is also expected to help the university meet a requirement for sustaining the accreditation of its medical and dental programmes.



Sultan of Sokoto and Chancellor of the University of Ibadan (UI), Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III (third left), and some of the graduating students, during the 78th Foundation Day ceremony and grand finale of the UI 2026 convocation ceremonies, yesterday. PHOTO: NAN

2027 elections: TikTok, NUJ train over 300 journalists on tackling misinformation

Urge journalists to be fair to all political parties, candidates

By **Eniola Daniel**

THE Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) has advised journalists that all the political candidates and parties must be accorded the same level of treatment and they must be fair to them.

The union made the call yesterday in Gbagada, Lagos, during a 2027 Nigeria Election Media workshop organised by TikTok, in partnership with the NUJ.

The training was designed to equip the media industry with deeper insights into how TikTok protects platform integrity and supports democratic participation during election cycles.

TikTok, however, outlined its election integrity approach, which includes the platform's safeguards, partnerships with electoral authorities and media organisations, and engagement with various stakeholders in the country.

Global Integrity Programmes Lead at TikTok, Lorenzo Andreozzi, said: "As important civic events, such as Nigeria's elections, unfold, upholding platform integrity is at the heart of our mission. We recognise that no platform can tackle modern information challenges alone.

Makinde-Daura campaign group slams Tinubu over recruitment embargo

Says FG policies are anti-people

THE Makinde-Daura Presidential Campaign Organisation (MDPCO) has chided President Bola Ahmed Tinubu over the imposition of an embargo on federal recruitments, describing it as the height of insensitivity to the plights of Nigerians, particularly the youths.

In a statement signed by its Director of Strategic Communications, Richard Nnanna Ihediwa, the campaign group stated: "The employment embargo comes as a damning indictment of President Tinubu's economic policies and a glaring contradiction of the All Progressives Congress (APC)'s much publicised promises on job creation, thus showing a wide gap between policy rhetoric and real intentions of government.

"This ill-conceived recruitment freeze clearly offers a glimpse into the inner workings of the Tinubu administration's faltering economic policies; the more alarming prospect being a likely precursor to a possible mass retrenchment in the public service."

FG to dismantle trade barriers as non-oil export earnings hit $6.1b

From **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

THE Federal Government has moved to dismantle bureaucratic bottlenecks and streamline export procedures as Nigeria's non-oil export earnings hit a record $6.1 billion in 2025, representing an 11.5 per cent increase, while export volume grew by 10 per cent to 8.02 million metric tonnes.

It said that the second phase of the National Single Window project, scheduled to commence on December 14, 2026, would simplify export documentation, regulatory approvals and certification processes to reduce the cost and time required to move Nigerian products to international markets.

Director of the National Single Window Project, Tola Fakolade, disclosed this during a stakeholders' engagement in Abuja yesterday, saying the export-focused phase would provide businesses with a single digital platform for processing regulatory licences, permits and certificates.

He said that the platform would enable exporters to submit required documents through one entry point instead of visiting different government agencies and repeating documentation processes.

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

Bamidele hails Olanipekun at 75, says legal victories strengthened Nigeria's democracy

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

Fagbohun, Ajogwu, others to headline WOC Justice Summit

THE Senate Leader, Opeyemi Bamidele, has paid tribute to renowned legal practitioner and Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Wole Olanipekun, describing his five decades in the legal profession as a legacy of courtroom victories, democratic contributions and investment in human capital development.

Bamidele said Olanipekun's contributions went beyond defending clients, noting that some of the landmark cases he handled helped to shape Nigeria's constitutional development, reinforce the rule of law and protect the mandate of the electorate.

He gave the commendation in a congratulatory message marking Olanipekun's 75th birthday and 50 years at the Nigerian Bar.

Olanipekun, who is the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council of the University of Lagos and a former President of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), celebrates the twin milestones today, Wednesday, November 18, 2026.

In a statement by his Directorate of Media and Public Affairs, Bamidele described the legal icon as one of Ekiti State's most distinguished ambassadors, whose philanthropy and scholarship initiatives had transformed the lives of many people.

Bamidele, while describing the celebrant's journey from Ikere-Ekiti to the top echelon of the legal profession as remarkable, identified brilliance, discipline, character and grace as defining features of his career.

MEANWHILE, former Vice Chancellor of the Lagos State University (LASU), Prof. Olanrewaju Fagbohun (SAN), and the renowned titan of Corporate Governance, Prof. Fabian Ajogwu, will review six volumes of books, titled "Wole Olanipekun Through the Cases," billed to take place tomorrow in Abuja.

The books, which will be unveiled at the 2026 edition of the WOC Justice Summit, organised by Wole Olanipekun & Co., are scheduled to feature the unveiling of the six-volume book as well as a panel discussion on burning legal issues.

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

Lagos APM senatorial candidate urges police, agberos to remain neutral at polls

Says his victory is assured

By **Opeyemi Babalola**

THE Lagos Central Senatorial candidate of the Allied People's Movement (APM), Desmond Ojumu, has expressed confidence in winning the 2027 election if the police remain neutral and the activities of agberos are brought under control.

Ojumu, who spoke yesterday during a town hall meeting with residents of Lagos Mainland Local Council, called for a level playing field for all contenders ahead of the forthcoming election, noting that the credibility of the election would depend largely on the neutrality of security agencies and their readiness to prevent disruption of the electoral process.

"If we can put our votes in check and the police do their job instead of staying behind and taking sides with the ruling party, I think we will win the election," he said.

Hamzat urges industry-academia pact, end to silos in tertiary education

By **Iyabo Lawal**

- Anchor varsity graduates 563 at 10th anniversary
- UNILAG ex-VC, Ogundipe, delivers decennial lecture

THE Deputy Governor of Lagos State, Dr Obafemi Hamzat, has called for a fundamental reimagining of Nigeria's tertiary education system, warning that the country cannot achieve extraordinary progress when its institutions operate in isolation.

Hamzat made the call during the 38th convocation lecture of Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH), held at the Yusuf Grillo Auditorium, Yaba, Lagos.

The lecture, titled "From Silos to Synergy: Reimagining the Nigerian Tertiary Education System for National Transformation," was delivered on his behalf by the Commissioner for Tertiary Education in the state, Tolani Sule.

He said the strength of a national education system is determined not just by the individual capacity of its institutions, but by how effectively those institutions work together to translate knowledge into innovation, innovation into enterprise and enterprise into national prosperity.

According to him, the world in which tertiary institutions operate is changing at an unprecedented pace, with Artificial Intelligence (AI), automation, digital technology, renewable energy and biotechnology reshaping professional practice and industrial production.

RELATEDLY, as Anchor University, Lagos (AUL) marks 10 years of existence, the faith-based institution is set to graduate a total of 563 students at its combined sixth and seventh convocation ceremonies for the 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 academic sessions.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Samuel Oye Bandele, who disclosed this during a media briefing to unveil activities lined up for the university's decennial anniversary and convocation ceremonies, said the anniversary, themed "Celebrating a university that is anchored on Christ," provides an opportunity to reflect on the institution's decade of growth, acknowledge the contributions of its founders and stakeholders, and renew its commitment to academic excellence and transformational impact.

One year after CPC tag, fresh Plateau killings test U.S.-Nigeria security deal

From **Bridget Chiedu Onochie**, **Collins Olayinka** and **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

- Pompeo urges Washington to honour pledge as attacks on Christians continue
- U.S. cites training, intelligence sharing, December strikes as security gains
- Fresh Plateau attacks claim 14 lives despite Tinubu's assurances
- Scholars warn U.S. military involvement could undermine Nigeria's sovereignty
- FG intensifies diplomatic push to secure removal from CPC list
- Tinubu, Obi engage U.S. lawmakers, media figures amid security debate

ONE year after the United States designated Nigeria a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) over violations of religious freedom, fresh attacks in Plateau State and renewed warnings from former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have raised questions about the impact of American intervention, even as both governments promote their security partnership.

The renewed debate follows Pompeo's call on Washington to honour its commitment to protect persecuted Christians in Nigeria, coming against the backdrop of fresh killings in Plateau State and growing concerns over the country's worsening security situation.

The former U.S. Secretary of State, in a post on X, said attacks had continued one year after the State Department designated Nigeria a CPC, urging the American government to deploy every available measure to fulfil its promise to protect Nigerian Christians.

"One year after the State Department designated Nigeria as a country of particular concern for the violent persecution of Christians, the attacks continue. America must use all the tools at our disposal to deliver on our promise to stand up for the Christians of Nigeria," he wrote.

The designation followed President Donald Trump's announcement on October 31, 2025, amid growing international outcry over attacks and killings of Christians, particularly in northern Nigeria, including Benue and Plateau states.

The CPC classification was expected to trigger stronger diplomatic and economic pressure on Nigeria, including possible sanctions and restrictions on certain forms of assistance. However, one year after the announcement, the Federal Government's diplomatic engagements with Washington have yet to secure a reversal of the designation, while questions persist over the impact of American security support.

The U.S. House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa recently held a hearing titled, *One Year Later: Assessing Nigeria's Efforts to Protect Christians and Secure the Middle Belt*, where American officials outlined measures taken under the bilateral security partnership.

U.S. defends security partnership

AT the November 12 hearing, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Frank Garcia, outlined some of the measures undertaken by Washington to address Nigeria's security challenges.

He said the Joint Working Group established by both countries had met in Abuja in January 2026 and again in Washington in August, providing a platform for monitoring Nigeria's commitments.

According to him, the U.S. has provided training and equipment to police units protecting vulnerable communities, expanded biometric information sharing to help identify attackers and collaborated with Nigerian banks to disrupt terrorist financing.

He also cited military action, disclosing that U.S. forces carried out strikes against Islamic State targets in north-west Nigeria in December 2025 as part of a joint counterterrorism initiative.

However, concerns remain over whether these measures have significantly improved security, particularly in communities affected by recurring attacks in the Middle Belt.

The U.S.-Nigeria security partnership also attracted support from an X account, @SecureNigeriaHQ, which described President Trump's relationship with President Bola Tinubu as a major contributor to security progress and the protection of Nigerian Christians.

In a direct response to Pompeo's criticism, the account said: "President Trump's (@POTUS) counterterrorism partnership with President Tinubu (@officialABAT) is delivering real security progress and protecting Nigerian Christians."

It added that Pompeo could not bring himself to acknowledge what it described as a foreign policy success under Trump.

However, the account's X page carries a disclosure stating that its materials are distributed by DCI Group AZ, LLC, on behalf of the Republic of Nigeria through Aster Legal, with additional information on file with the United States Department of Justice in Washington.

Fresh Plateau killings test security assurances

DESPITE government assurances and renewed se-



Chairman, Governing Board, Legal Aid Council of Nigeria, Justice Sulyman Durosinlorun Kawu (rtd) (left); Kano State Governor, Abba Kabir Yusuf, and Director General, Legal Aid Council of Nigeria, Aliyu Abubakar, during the Governing Board of Legal Aid Council of Nigeria's visit to the governor on the activities of the council, and to offer free legal services to some inmates at the Kano State correctional centre, yesterday.

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Campaign violence: APC, ADC trade blame as Jonathan warns of post-election crisis

From **Sodiq Omolaoye, John Akubo, Adamu Abuh** and **Andrew Oota** (Abuja)

- Akpabio threatens candidates with disqualification as Senate probes violence
- Law will take its full course on you, INEC warns promoters of violence
- APC accuses ADC, NDC of sponsoring violence, using youths to disrupt Tinubu's rallies
- ADC to APC: Stop blaming opposition for Nigerians' anger over hardship
- ADC to hold rally on the streets today after Kaduna govt rejects use of stadium

AS the spate of political violence races to a frightening crescendo, former President Goodluck Jonathan has warned that Nigeria could face a serious crisis after the 2027 general elections if growing political intolerance, thuggery, ethnic rivalry and declining confidence in democratic institutions are not urgently addressed.

This call of concern was raised yesterday at the 2026 Goodluck Jonathan Foundation Peace Conference in Abuja with the theme, "Safeguarding Trust and Strengthening Social Cohesion in a Competitive Political Environment," where Jonathan expressed concern that political parties and campaign organisations were increasingly being run like rival cult groups, with opponents treated as enemies.

Jonathan, the first incumbent Nigerian president to lose an election in 2015, is remembered for his famous campaign quote: "My ambition is not worth the blood of any Nigerian". Jonathan used the phrase to advocate for peace, issue-based campaigns, and national unity, urging politicians and supporters to reject violence during the electoral cycle of 2015. The statement became a defining moment in Nigeria's political history when he conceded the 2015 presidential election to Muhammadu Buhari, marking a peaceful democratic transition of power.

The former president said he had received calls from Nigerians and friends abroad expressing concern about the country's political direction and the possibility of post-election crises. He warned that political actors were becoming increasingly intolerant of opposing views and the legitimate right of others to contest elections at every level of government.

Jonathan further raised concerns about conflicting judicial pronouncements, particularly when courts of coordinate jurisdiction issue contradictory decisions on the same matters. He said the growing perception that litigants could shop for favourable court decisions could undermine public confidence in the judiciary.

Jonathan warned that the 2027 elections could degenerate into destructive ethnic rivalry if political leaders continued to exploit divisions for electoral advantage. He added: "Once people begin to lose faith in our courts and resort to self-help, the consequences can be very, very disastrous. Because if we don't have confidence in our courts, the next step is self-help. Nothing could be more dangerous to our national existence than the deliberate encouragement of ethnic rivalry."

Using football as an analogy, Jonathan described the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as the referee, the judiciary as the video assistant referee (VAR), and the public as supporters whose conduct could influence the game. He said religious leaders, traditional rulers and other influential members of society had important roles to play in promoting tolerance and preventing violence.

Speaking, INEC Chairman, Prof. Joash Amupitan, acknowledged that the 2023 general elections left a significant trust deficit. He condemned attacks on campaign convoys and supporters of political parties, warning that perpetrators would face the law.

"Let me issue a clear and unambiguous warning to all political actors, sponsors, and their foot soldiers: the law will take its full course, and security agencies working alongside the Commission will go after the promoters and perpetrators of violent campaigns without fear or favour," he said.

In his keynote address, former President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr Omar Alieu Touray, identified national consensus on democratic principles, public trust, responsible political competition, early warning mechanisms, inclusive development and effective responses to misinformation as essential conditions for peaceful elections. Touray warned political leaders against turning electoral contests into struggles over ethnic, religious or regional identities.

He also cited Jonathan's decision to concede defeat in the 2015 presidential election as an example of leadership that prioritised national stability over personal ambition. "No political victory is worth the sacrifice of national peace. No electoral defeat should ever be interpreted as the defeat of an ethnic, religious or regional community. And no political ambition, however legitimate, should outweigh the responsibility to preserve the nation," Touray said.

The 2026 conference is the third in the series organised by the Goodluck Jonathan Foundation, following earlier editions in 2019 and 2022.

MEANWHILE, political parties have continued to trade blame over the recurrence of violence during ongoing campaigns for the 2027 elections. The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) yesterday accused the African Democratic Congress (ADC) and the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) of sponsoring violence, deploying propaganda and recruiting young Nigerians to disrupt its presidential campaign activities.

The party alleged that the opposition parties were using hoodlums, deepfakes, artificial intelligence-generated images, fake news and sponsored protests to create an atmosphere of tension and discontent against President Bola Tinubu and the ruling party.

In a statement issued on Tuesday in Abuja, the spokesperson of the APC Presidential Campaign Council, Dele Alake, said the alleged activities were part of a coordinated plot by opposition elements to manipulate public opinion and undermine the credibility of the forthcoming general elections. Alake recalled that the council had raised the alarm hours before the flag-off of the APC presidential campaign rally in Kaduna on October 24, 2026, warning Nigerians about what it described as plans by opposition elements to introduce violence and disharmony into the political campaigns.

According to him, the council believes that the alleged strategy is intended to deceive Nigerians and the international community by creating a false impression of widespread public dissatisfaction with the Tinubu administration. He cited the incident at an Abuja mosque last Friday, where protesters allegedly pelted the presidential motorcade with stones, as the latest example of what he described as an anti-democratic political stunt.

The council, however, did not provide evidence in the statement to substantiate its allegations against the ADC and NDC or independently establish their involvement in the Abuja incident. Beyond the

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FG reinforces visa, residency reforms for ease of movement, transparency

From **Tina Abeku**, Abuja

FEDERAL Government has reinforced its commitment to modernising Nigeria's migration architecture through comprehensive visa and residency reforms aimed at eliminating bottlenecks, boosting transparency and strengthening national security.

The Comptroller General of the NIS, Kemi Nandap, stated this at a one-day sensitisation workshop yesterday in Abuja.

Speaking on the theme, 'Assessing the Implementation of the Nigeria Visa and Residency Reforms: Stakeholders' Engagement and Strategies for Improved Service Delivery', she noted that the sweeping changes in this regard were introduced to discard cumbersome manual procedures, curb unnecessary human interference, and align Nigeria's immigration administration with global best practices.

Represented by the Department Comptroller General (DCG), in charge of Visa and Residency, Franca Nwanneka, Nandap pointed out major milestones achieved since the rollout of the digital initiatives, explaining that the Nigeria e-Visa, which commenced operations on May 1, 2025, has drastically cut down processing times to a maximum of 48 hours for eligible applicants.

She further noted that the introduction of specialised categories, such as the F9A and F9B visas, had successfully streamlined entry requirements for adult and minor Nigerians returning with foreign passports.

Addressing other operational components, the Comptroller General spotlighted the Electronic Temporary Work Permit (e-TWP) and the electronic Comprehensive Expatriate Residence Permit and Automated Card (e-CERPAC), both of which took effect in August 2025.

She explained that the e-TWP integrates biometric capture and mandatory insurance requirements, while the e-CERPAC features an exclusive Investors Residence Permit designed to actively court foreign direct investment.

Both platforms, she said, were fully integrated with the national border management architecture via Landing and Exit Card facilities, enabling real-time verification of expatriate status.

While acknowledging the initial teething problems such as payment integration hurdles and portal technicalities, Nandap assured stakeholders that the service remained open to constructive feedback.

She equally urged Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs), and private sector employers to deepen collaboration with the NIS to ensure the long-term sustainability and success of the digital transformation.



Chief Sustainability Officer, Bank of Industry (BOI), Mrs Eniola Akinsete (left); Executive Director, Corporate Finance, Sustainability and Investments (BOI), Mr Rotimi Akinde; Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, BOI, Dr Olasupo Olusi; Dean, Lagos Business School, Prof. Olayinka David-West; Executive Director, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), BOI, Mr Oluwatoyin Ahmed Edu; Executive Director, Large Enterprises, BOI, Mr Shekarau D. Omar and Group Head Strategy, Policy & Research, BOI, Prof . Mutiu Oyinlola, during the unveiling of the 2026 State of ESG Adoption by Nigerian MSMEs report at the 2026 BOI Sustainability Conference, in Lagos, yesterday.

FG, World Bank Group seek investment in care economy

Project 17m jobs, $9.3b GDP boost

By **Helen Oji**

EXPANDING Nigeria's care economy could generate between 9.4 million and 17 million jobs and contribute at least $9.3 billion to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, has said.

Speaking at the National Care Forum, with the theme, "Advancing Nigeria's Care Economy: Jobs, Growth and Productivity," organised in collaboration with the World Bank Group and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the minister said the care economy offers significant opportunities for job creation, women's economic empowerment and national productivity.

Sulaiman-Ibrahim, who was represented by the Director, Child Development Department, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Andrew Madugu, said the projections were contained in UN Women's 2026 West and Central African Care Economy Modelling, which estimated that closing Nigeria's unpaid care gaps and expanding universal childcare could contribute no less than $9.3 billion to GDP.

According to her, women could account for between 57 and 67 per cent of the employment opportunities that would emerge from the expansion of the sector, while the modelling also estimated that every dollar invested in quality childcare could generate a return of about $3.

Pinheiro addresses criminal trials, insolvency, arbitration in six law books

By **Joseph Onyekwere**

THE admissibility of electronic evidence in criminal proceedings, corporate rescue and insolvency procedures, enforcement of arbitral awards and the growing role of alternative dispute resolution are among the legal issues examined in six books to be presented by Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Dr Kemi Pinheiro, on Friday, November 20, 2026.

The publications, which draw on nearly four decades of Pinheiro's experience in legal practice, also explore the relationship between law and faith, professional development and contemporary issues in Nigerian jurisprudence.

The collection comprises Strategies in Criminal Trial: A Practitioner's Guide; Insolvency Law in Nigeria: Practice and Procedure; Arbitration Law and Practice in Nigeria; Defining Moments: Chronicles of a Silk (Volume One); The Compendium; and MULAN Legal: Trending Issues of Law and Faith – Essays in Honour of 'Kemi Pinheiro.

A major focus of the publications is the application of law in practice, particularly in areas where procedural requirements, statutory interpretation and evolving legal principles present challenges to practitioners and the administration of justice.

In Strategies in Criminal Trial: A Practitioner's Guide, Pinheiro examines the practical demands of criminal litigation, including procedural and evidential questions that arise during criminal proceedings.

The book also considers the treatment and admissibility of electronic evidence, an increasingly significant issue in criminal investigations and prosecutions.

The publication is expected to provide practical guidance to legal practitioners on the complexities of conducting criminal trials and navigating evidential requirements.

Similarly, Insolvency Law in Nigeria: Practice and Procedure examines the legal framework governing corporate rescue, restructuring and insolvency proceedings under the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020.

Ebonyi remodels Trade Centre into five-star hotel, others

From **Lawrence Njoku** (Enugu) and **Gordi Udeajah** (Umuahia)

BOI approves N1.04b support for Abia SMEs

TWENTY years after, Ebonyi State government has begun the remodelling of the 200-room multi-million naira Ebonyi Trade Centre into a five-star hotel, targeting February 2027 for its completion.

This was as the Bank of Industry (BoI) approved N1.041 billion to boost the activities of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) operating under the SME support initiative of the administration of Governor Alex Otti.

The 10-storey building, whose sod was turned during the administration of Dr Sam Egwu and abandoned since he left office, is being converted to a five-star hotel.

Special Adviser to Governor Francis Nwifuru on Documentation, Dr Boniface Nwankwo, told journalists during a tour of the state government's ongoing projects that the project was being revisited in accordance with the needs of the people of the state.

He stated that the building, which was already at its 10th floor when Egwu was exiting office in 2007, had gulped a huge sum of state resources, stressing that it would be a disservice to continue to allow it to waste.

"The Nwifuru administration did not think it was a good way to manage the lean resources for a facility of this nature to continue to rot a The governor, therefore, ordered an integrity test on the building, which proved that it is still strong".

Tinubu offers Nigerians N100m housing loans at 9.75% interest

From **Lawrence Njoku**, Enugu

Enugu Assembly pegs rent increment at two per cent in new tenancy bill

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu has announced that eligible Nigerians can access mortgages of up to N100 million at a fixed interest rate of 9.75 per cent, with a repayment period of up to 20 years, under the Federal Government's housing finance initiative.

Meanwhile, the Enugu State House of Assembly yesterday passed the Landlord and Tenant Amendment Bill which provides two per cent incremental on rent after four years.

Tinubu said the facility, provided through the N1 trillion MOFI Real Estate Investment Fund (MREIF), was part of his administration's efforts to expand access to affordable housing and help Nigerians move from renting to home ownership.

Disclosing this on his verified X handle yesterday, the President explained that beneficiaries could secure mortgages with an initial deposit of 10 per cent of the property's value.

Using a N10 million house as an example, he said a prospective homeowner would need an initial deposit of N1 million and could repay approximately N85,400 monthly over 20 years.

According to the President, more than 2,300 Nigerians across 27 states have accessed N160 billion in mortgages through MREIF.

"Imagine paying house rent for 25 years. Your children have grown up, you are approaching retirement, and you are still worried about the next rent increase. This is the reality for many hardworking Nigerians," he said.

Tinubu said expanding access to affordable, long-term credit was a priority when he introduced his economic reforms in 2023, leading to the establishment of the N1 trillion MREIF.

He also announced that the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN) had been strengthened to provide eligible Nigerians with housing loans of up to N50 million at an interest rate of six per cent, repayable over a maximum period of 30 years.

Air Peace slashes military personnel's airfare to N80,000

From **Joke Falaju**, Abuja

IN recognition of their sacrifices for national security, the Chairman of Air Peace, Dr Allen Onyema, has announced special travel concessions for serving and retired Nigerian military personnel.

According to the announced package, all serving and retired Armed Forces personnel, dating back to 1960, would enjoy a special one-way flight fare of N80,000 across the carrier's domestic network, alongside additional travel concessions on its regional and international routes.

Onyema disclosed this in a special lecture titled "Strengthening Citizens' Support to Military Operations in a Complex Security Environment" at the 2026 Chief of Defence Intelligence Annual Conference in Abuja.

The conference, organised by the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), with the theme "Optimising Intelligence Through Technological Innovations and Strategic Partnerships in a Complex Security Environment," brought together key stakeholders in Nigeria's defence and security architecture, including all serving and former service chiefs dating back to 1985.

Bayelsa'll deliver Tinubu, Diri assures, as Tompolo donates campaign vehicles

From **Julius Osahon**, Yenagoa

BAYELSA State Governor, Senator Douye Diri, has assured President Bola Tinubu of the state's support in the January 16, 2027 presidential election, declaring that the All Progressives Congress (APC) is determined to secure victory for the President.

Diri gave the assurance on Monday in Yenagoa at the inauguration of the Bayelsa State chapter of the PBAT Door-to-Door Movement, during which its Grand Patron, High Chief Government Ekpemupolo, popularly known as Tompolo, donated campaign vehicles and other mobilisation materials.

The governor said the party would embark on an extensive grassroots mobilisation exercise across the state's three senatorial districts ahead of the presidential campaign rally scheduled for December 15, 2026.

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Growing mistrust fuels clashes between Lagos motorists, enforcement officers

By **Glory Sunday**

A ROUTINE traffic stop on a Lagos road can quickly degenerate into an argument, accusations of extortion, physical assault and, sometimes, deadly violence.

Behind the recurring confrontations is a growing trust deficit between traffic enforcement officers and motorists, with both sides increasingly viewing each other with suspicion.

The breakdown in relations was evident on September 7 when a Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) official confronted a motorist, identified as Afeez Onifade, along a busy road during an enforcement operation.

The incident disrupted the movement of vehicles commercial buses travelling from Magboro towards Oshodi and other motorists were caught in the resulting traffic congestion.

From the roadside, the official appeared to be demanding payment from the motorist, although the purpose of the payment could not be independently established.

Onifade resisted, and an exchange of words soon escalated into a physical struggle as the official grabbed him.

For commuters and other motorists, the incident was another reminder of how quickly encounters with traffic officials can turn confrontational in Lagos.

While enforcement personnel complain of increasing hostility, attacks and resistance from motorists, road users accuse some officers of harassment, intimidation, arbitrary fines and extortion.

The opposing experiences have created an atmosphere in which routine enforcement is increasingly approached with apprehension rather than cooperation.

A review of publicly reported incidents by *The Guardian* identified at least 21 cases of assaults and serious confrontations involving traffic and other enforcement personnel between 2020 and August 2026.

The incidents involved motorists, transport operators and personnel of LASTMA, the Lagos State Environmental Sanitation Corps (LAGESC), popularly known as KAI, and the Vehicle Inspection Office (VIO). They were recorded in different parts of the state, including Anthony, Ojota, Mile 2, Costain, Lekki, Ile-Epo and Apongbon.



Lagos commercial bus operation along Ikorodu Road, Ojota. PHOTO: GLORY SUNDAY

Court reaffirms arrest order against NURTW officials, adjourns contempt case till January

By **Eniola Daniel**

The National Industrial Court of Nigeria (NICN), Lagos Division, has reaffirmed its earlier order for the arrest and committal to prison of the Lagos State Chairman of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), Alhaji Mustapha Adekunle, popularly known as Sego, and the union's Secretary, Usman Teslim.

The court also adjourned further proceedings in the contempt case involving the two officials till January 25, 2027.

The adjournment followed a petition written to the President of the NICN challenging the ongoing proceedings.

Justice Isaac Essien, who presided over the matter, said the court would await the decision of the NICN President on the petition before taking further steps in the case.

However, the judge maintained the earlier committal order and directed security agencies to arrest the two officials and bring them before the court on the next adjourned date.

He urged those attending the proceedings to maintain order and allow the court to conduct its business without interference.

The committal proceedings stem from allegations that NURTW officials continued to interfere with the activities of Tricycle Owners Association of Nigeria (TOAN), despite a December 11, 2025 judgment recognising the association as an independent trade union.

Court grants ex-official N250m bail over alleged N605m diversion of company funds

By **Yetunde Ayobami Ojo**



A FORMER Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Borough Lagos Limited and Bodega Emporium Limited, Ejeh Caleb Ojochokoubi, has been granted N250 million bail by a Lagos State High Court over allegations of fraudulently diverting N605.29 million belonging to the two companies.

Justice Abdul-Raheem Tejumade, who granted the bail, directed the defendant to produce two sureties in like sum, both of whom must own landed property. Their title documents are to be verified by the Lagos State Ministry of Lands.

The judge also ordered Ojochokoubi to deposit his international passport with the court's registry and barred him from travelling outside the country without the court's permission while the case remains pending.

The court ordered that the defendant be remanded in a Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS) facility pending the fulfilment of his bail conditions.

Ojochokoubi was arraigned yesterday by operatives of the Force Criminal Investigation Department (ForceCID), Annex, Alagbon, Ikoyi, Lagos, on an eight-count charge bordering on forgery, stealing and fraudulent conversion of company funds.

The prosecutor, Mr Morufu Animashaun, told the court that the defendant allegedly diverted the funds between 2024 and July 2026 while serving as COO of the companies at their offices in Lekki Phase 1, Lagos.

According to the prosecution, Ojochokoubi allegedly transferred N139,926,790 from Borough Lagos Limited's Moniepoint account into his personal bank account and converted the money to his personal use.

One dead, six injured as crash disrupts Gombe APC campaign journey

From **Ahmad Umar, Gombe**

WHAT began as a journey to a political campaign rally in Gombe State ended in tragedy yesterday when a crash involving a vehicle conveying the state chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Dantata Ndus, left one person dead and six others injured.

Ndus and the party's Campaign Director-General, Malam Sa'adu Hassan, were among those injured in the accident, which occurred along the Yamaltu Deba–Talase road, shortly after Yamaltu Deba, at about noon.

The party officials were travelling to Balanga Local Council to join Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya's entourage for the APC governorship campaign rally in Balanga North when the vehicle, a black Toyota SUV operated by the Government House, collided with a red Bajaj motorcycle.

A preliminary incident report said seven male persons were involved in the crash, with one of them losing his life.

While Ndus reportedly sustained serious injuries, Hassan suffered minor injuries. Both were taken to the Federal Teaching Hospital, Gombe, for treatment. However, their medical conditions had yet to be officially confirmed.

The crash also left four other victims requiring treatment at the Federal Teaching Hospital, while two were taken to the General Hospital, Yamaltu Deba, according to the incident report.

The victims reportedly sustained injuries, including head injuries, lacerations and multiple fractures.

The report, however, did not identify the specific injuries suffered by each victim.

The remains of the deceased, whose identity was not immediately disclosed, were deposited at the mortuary of the General Hospital, Yamaltu Deba.

ASF France demands release of journalist Ojukwu, review of Cybercrimes Act

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

AVOCATS Sans Frontières France (ASF France) has called for the unconditional release of Daniel Ojukwu, a journalist with the Foundation for Investigative Journalism (FIJ), following his remand at the Kuje Correctional Centre over allegations linked to his reporting.

In a statement yesterday, the organisation expressed concern that Ojukwu was remanded on November 10, pending the hearing of his bail application, over charges of cyberstalking under the Cybercrimes Act and criminal defamation.

While acknowledging the independence of the judiciary and the presumption of innocence, ASF France maintained that pretrial detention should remain an exception, particularly in cases involving alleged non-capital offences.

The organisation said Ojukwu's case reflected a broader pattern in which the Cybercrimes Act, particularly Section 24, had been used to arrest, detain and prosecute journalists, bloggers and other citizens over their online publications.

It noted that although the ECOWAS Court of Justice ordered Nigeria in 2022 to amend Section 24 to bring it in line with its human rights obligations, and the provision was subsequently narrowed in 2024, its application against journalists had continued.

LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT

LANDS BUREAU, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

RE: EXTENSION OF LEASEHOLD INTEREST

1. This is to inform the general public that **HUTTON ENGINEERING WORKS NIGERIA LIMITED** being the occupied lessee of the property located at **PLOT 1, AT INDUSTRIAL AVENUE, VIA ONIKE ROAD, YABA, LAGOS STATE (NOW KNOWN AS PLOT 1, BLOCK 62 YABA ESTATE)** covered by Land Certificate with Title MO 2671, has applied to the Lagos State Land Bureau for Extension of Leasehold Interest on the above mentioned property.

2. In line with Government's policy on renewal of leasehold interest, members of the public who have objection/interest or any contrary information concerning this application for the renewal leasehold interest should please come forward with any renewal/useful evidence in writing with supporting document(s) in support of such claim/objection within 21 days from the date of the publication, addressed to the office of the Permanent Secretaryy, Lagos State Lands Bureau, Block 13/14, The Secretariat, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos.

3. For further enquiries, please contact the office of the Permanent Secretary, Lands Bureau or the Executive Secretary, Land Use and Allocation Committee, Lands Bureau, Block 13/14, The Secretariat, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos.

SIGNED:

KAMAR OLOWOSHAGO

(PERMANENT SECRETARY, LANDS BUREAU)

www.guardian.ng

The Metro Section

NDLEA arrests eight cocaine couriers on Lagos-Kano route, recovers 634 pellets

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

EIGHT suspected members of a transnational cocaine trafficking syndicate have been arrested by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in Lagos and Kano, recovering a total of 634 cocaine pellets weighing 13.795 kilogrammes.

The suspects, who were arrested during intelligence-led operations between October 30 and 31, 2026, allegedly planned to transport the drugs through Niger Republic and Libya before taking them to Europe.

The arrests exposed a trafficking route through which the syndicate allegedly moved cocaine from Lagos to Kano before attempting to smuggle it across the Sahara Desert to Europe.

The operation began on October 30 when operatives of the NDLEA Special Operations Unit arrested a 57-year-old suspect, Okwudiba Ifeanyichukwu Damian, at Nice Touch Hotel, Ago Palace, Okota, Lagos.

He subsequently excreted 74 wraps of cocaine weighing 1.650kg.

On October 31, four other suspected couriers were intercepted at the domestic terminal of the Murtala Muhammed Airport, Lagos, as they prepared to board a flight to Kano.

They were identified as Jackson Ahamefule, 43; Nwafor Osita Emmanuel, 47; Marcel Nnabuike, 38; and Onyenwuba Ignatius, 44.

According to the agency, the suspects excreted 90, 85, 75 and 75 pellets of cocaine, weighing 1.950kg, 1.750kg, 1.655kg and 1.650kg respectively.

The five suspects arrested in Lagos excreted a combined 399 wraps weighing 8.655kg.

Intelligence gathered from the Lagos operation revealed that other members of the syndicate had travelled to Kano.

NDLEA operatives at the Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport (MAKIA) were subsequently mobilised to intercept them at the arrival hall of the domestic terminal.



The suspects

Three other suspects were arrested. They were Chinweike Ephraim Ifechukwu, 48; Edezuno John Nwaorji, 45; and Chukwudi Chinaka, 31.

A body scan confirmed that the trio had also swallowed cocaine pellets. They were placed under observation and subsequently excreted 85 pellets weighing 1.853kg, 80 pellets weighing 1.752kg and 70 pellets weighing 1.535kg respectively.

The three suspects recovered a total of 235 pellets weighing 5.140kg, bringing the overall seizure from the eight couriers to 634 pellets weighing 13.795kg.

The suspects reportedly disclosed that they intended to travel by road from Kano through Niger Republic to Libya, with Europe as their final destination.

Reacting to the arrests, the NDLEA Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Brig. Gen. Mohammed Buba Marwa (rtd.), commended operatives of the Special Operations Unit and the MAKIA Command for their intelligence-led collaboration and professionalism.

He said the coordinated operations ensured that none of the eight suspects escaped detection.

"This cartel thought it had found a back door to Europe through our northern borders and the Sahara. Their arrests are a message to drug barons and their couriers that there is no safe route out of Nigeria. Whether they go by air, by road or through the desert, we will trace them, find them and bring them to justice," Marwa said.

Fresh attacks claim four lives in Plateau as council demands probe into boy's death

From **Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi**, Jos

FRESH attacks in Plateau State have reportedly claimed the lives of at least four people in Riyom Local Council, while the death of a young boy following his alleged arrest over suspected theft in Langtang North has sparked calls for an impartial investigation.

The incidents have heightened concerns over insecurity in the state, with community groups and residents urging security agencies to strengthen surveillance, protect vulnerable communities and bring perpetrators of violence to justice.

In the latest attacks in Riyom, two herders were reportedly killed on Saturday night in Tafawa community, while two farmers were killed in separate attacks on Sunday in Sho and Sambak communities.

The Plateau State Chairman of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), Ibrahim Yusuf Babayo, confirmed the killing of the two herders, identified as Abdulhamid Isa and Rabiu Sale.

Babayo condemned the attack, describing it as tragic and one too many, and called on security agencies to conduct a thorough, impartial and transparent investigation to identify those responsible.

He also appealed to members of the Fulani community to remain calm, avoid reprisal attacks and cooperate with security agencies.

MACBAN, he said, remained committed to peaceful coexistence, dialogue and lawful means of resolving disputes, urging government and community leaders to take urgent steps to prevent further violence.

Similarly, the spokesperson for the Berom Youth Moulders Association (BYM), Rwang Tengwong, confirmed the killing of two farmers in separate attacks in Riyom.

He said the first incident occurred at about 5.20 p.m. on Sunday when gunmen attacked Sho community and killed 79-year-old Ishaku Pam Vwos.

Two killed, five rescued in separate Lagos-Ibadan, Ogun road crashes

From **Rotimi Agboluaje**, Ibadan

TWO people have died in separate road accidents involving heavy-duty trucks in Oyo and Ogun states, while five others were rescued alive from a collision on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway.

The incidents, which occurred on Monday, November 16, 2026, involved two trucks at Soka Junction, Ibadan, and an Iveco truck that knocked down a Vehicle Inspection Officer (VIO), Oluwaseun Adeshina, along the Agbara–Unilever Expressway in Ogun State.

The Oyo State Fire Services Agency said one person died while five others were rescued following a collision between a Stackman truck loaded with white stone and a DAF truck with registration number LND286XH at Soka Junction.



Accident scene at Soka Junction, Ibadan.

According to the agency, it received a distress call at about 6:19 a.m. and immediately deployed personnel to the scene.

The Stackman truck, whose registration number was not immediately known, reportedly collided with the DAF truck before swerving off the road.

Fire service personnel subsequently sprayed the affected area to prevent a possible ignition or fire outbreak.

The agency said five people were rescued alive, while the body of a man estimated to be about 45 years old was recovered and handed over to CSP Ajao of Sanyo Police Station.

It attributed the accident to a mechanical fault involving the truck.

Varsity students petition FG over 'controversial' staff audit

From **Felix Uroko**, Makurdi

FOR some employees of the Federal University of Health Sciences, Otukpo (FUHSO), Benue State, years of service and subsequent promotions have not guaranteed security in their careers, following a controversial staff audit that has reportedly resulted in demotions, reversed promotions and changes in job classifications.

The development has prompted the Benue Students Network to petition President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, seeking an independent investigation into the exercise and urgent intervention to protect the rights of affected workers.

In an open letter to the President, the group alleged that some senior professionals who had served the university for several years received letters in October 2026 informing them that they lacked the required cognate experience for the positions they occupied.

It also alleged that some academic staff members with advanced qualifications in relevant fields had been demoted or reclassified into non-teaching positions, raising concerns about the fairness of the exercise and its implications for their careers.

The network expressed concern that the staff verification exercise, being conducted under the administration of the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Francis Abah Uba, had generated discontent among employees whose appointments and promotions were being reviewed years after their recruitment.

It warned that the decisions could erode staff morale, force experienced professionals to seek employment elsewhere and undermine the university's reputation as a specialised institution for health sciences education.

The group further accused the management of applying the audit selectively, alleging that some employees recruited under similar circumstances had been left unaffected while others faced demotions and changes to their employment status.

It also called for independent verification of claims concerning the Vice-Chancellor's previous administrative experience and positions held at other institutions.

Consequently, the network urged Tinubu to direct the National Universities Commission (NUC) to investigate the audit, review disputed demotions and reclassifications, and ensure that affected employees were given fair hearings.

Court fixes December 3 to rule on substituted service in Jankara market suit

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

THE Magistrate's Court sitting in Ogba, Ikeja, Lagos, has fixed December 3, 2026, to rule on an application for substituted service in a fundamental rights enforcement suit filed against the Babaloja General of Ojokoro Local Council Development Area (LCDA), Mr Akin Fagbola, and the leadership of Jankara Orisunmibare International Motors and Spare Parts Market, Ijaiye, Lagos.

The respondents were absent yesterday when the matter, marked MCIK/6251/CIV/2026, came up for hearing following unsuccessful attempts by court officials to serve them with the processes relating to the suit.

The action was filed by a human rights activist, Comrade Ola Agboola Jnr, over his alleged unlawful suspension from the market and threats to eject him from his business premises.

Agboola, who is also the coordinator of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR), Jankara Unit, was represented by a three-member legal team led by Olalekan Matti Oniru, alongside Bolaji Akintunde and Bayo Meduoye.

At the proceedings, counsel to the claimant moved an ex-parte application seeking an order for substituted service, after efforts by court sheriffs to serve the respondents through the conventional method reportedly proved unsuccessful.



AIG tasks newly promoted police officers on greater responsibility, protection of lives

From **Tina Agosi Todo**, Calabar

THE Assistant Inspector-General of Police in charge of Zone 6 Headquarters, Calabar, Rashid Afegbua, has urged newly promoted senior police officers to demonstrate greater commitment to the protection of lives and property and the maintenance of law and order.

Afegbua gave the charge while decorating five senior officers recently promoted to higher ranks in the Police at a ceremony held at the zonal headquarters in Calabar, Cross River State.

The officers comprised four Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs) and an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP).

Those promoted from Assistant Commissioners of Police to Deputy Commissioners of Police are Chukwuemeka Onyekaba, Augustine Chidozie, Kefas Jare and Usman Muhktar, while Peter Ajah was elevated from Chief Superintendent of Police to Assistant Commissioner of Police.

Congratulating the officers at the ceremony, Afegbua described their promotions as recognition of their dedication, commitment and years of meritorious service to the force.

He said their elevation reflected the confidence reposed in their abilities by the Police Service Commission, stressing that the new ranks came with greater responsibilities and higher expectations.

The AIG cautioned the officers against viewing their promotions merely as an increase in status, describing them instead as a call to greater service, effective leadership and accountability.

He urged them to contribute to the development of the force, mentor younger officers, uphold the rule of law and remain committed to safeguarding lives and property.

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RED STAR EXPRESS PLC

STATEMENT TO THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE AND SHAREHOLDERS ON THE GROUP'S UNAUDITED RESULTS FOR THE SECOND QUARTER ENDED SEPTEMBER 30TH, 2026.

UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED AND SEPARATE STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE SECOND QUARTER ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2026

	THE GROUP			
	Current Period		Comparative Period	
	Interim Period	Year to Date	Interim Period	Year to Date
	Jul'26-Sep'26	Apr'26-Sep'26	Jul'25-Sep'25	Apr'25-Sep'25
	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000
TURNOVER	6,772,559	13,223,821	5,897,268	11,188,756
PROFIT BEFORE TAX	388,325	744,870	371,274	675,098
PROFIT AFTER TAX	256,295	491,614	252,448	459,050

	THE COMPANY			
	Current Period		Comparative Period	
	Interim Period	Year to Date	Interim Period	Year to Date
	Jul'26-Sep'26	Apr'26-Sep'26	Jul'25-Sep'25	Apr'25-Sep'25
	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000
TURNOVER	2,808,958	5,588,266	2,717,407	5,276,015
PROFIT BEFORE TAX	134,143	269,476	137,794	266,606
PROFIT AFTER TAX	88,534	177,854	93,693	181,075

UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED AND SEPARATE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE SECOND QUARTER ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2026

	THE GROUP		THE COMPANY	
	Sep-26	Mar-26	Sep-26	Mar-26
	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000
ASSETS				
Non Current Assets	3,714,405	3,588,259	3,775,568	3,609,006
Current Assets	8,119,064	7,872,859	4,855,549	4,773,754
TOTAL ASSETS	**11,833,469**	**11,461,119**	**8,631,117**	**8,382,760**
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
Non Current Liabilities	444,430	430,934	317,475	303,979
Current Liabilities	5,741,740	5,874,500	4,594,170	4,537,164
Total Equity	5,647,300	5,155,685	3,719,472	3,541,617
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	**11,833,469**	**11,461,119**	**8,631,117**	**8,382,760**

The Board is of the opinion that barring any unforseen circumstances, the company will achieve an improved performance in the next quarter.

Babura Auwalu Badamasi	**Frances Akpomuka**	**Onyibo Valentine**
Group Managing Director	Company Secretary/Legal Adviser	Chief Financial Officer
FRC/2016/ICAN/00000014402	FRC/2013/ICSAN/00000002640	FRC/2013/ICAN/00000003908

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

FACILITIY MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR A MINI ESTATE ON THE ISLAND, IN LAGOS.

The Owners/Residents of a private mini estate located on the Island invite qualified and experienced Facility Management Companies to submit proposals for the provision of comprehensive facilities management services for the estate.

Scope of Services: The successful company will provide year-round management of common areas and shared facilities, including security, power and water systems, waste management, cleaning, landscaping, building maintenance, contractor management, and related support services.

Eligibility Requirements: Interested firms must demonstrate:
Relevant facilities management experience.
Corporate registration and financial capacity.
Qualified management and operational personnel.
Evidence of similar assignments with client references.
Appropriate insurance cover and security licensing (where applicable).

Submission of Interest: Interested companies should submit an Expression of Interest together with supporting credentials by email to **fmtenders.ar@gmail.com** no later than 5:00 p.m. on 30 November 2026.

Shortlisted firms will receive further details regarding site inspection arrangements and proposal requirements.

Email: fmtenders.ar@gmail.com
Deadline: 5:00 p.m., 30 November 2026.
OWNERS/RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

MONI PULO
(PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT)

PUBLIC NOTICE

MONI PULO LIMITED: CLARIFICATION ON MISLEADING PUBLICATIONS

We consider it necessary to issue this clarification following recent media publications concerning our Executive Chairman, Dr. Seinye Lulu-Briggs. The publications contain misleading assertions and representations which warrant clarification in the interest of truth, fairness and the confidence of our stakeholders and the general public.

These very libelous publications, which originated from a purported petition by an organisation identified as the Public Interest and Diplomatic Centre (PIDC), sought to create the impression that our Executive Chairman was the subject of an outstanding criminal process, was evading law enforcement authorities and was liable to arrest in connection with certain court proceedings. The representations are misleading, malicious and do not reflect the true position of the matter.

For the avoidance of doubt, there is no criminal charge pending against Dr. Seinye Lulu-Briggs in respect of any matter whatsoever and definitely not in respect of the matters being referenced in these publications. The underlying disputes relate to shareholding and interests in the Company. They are civil and corporate matters which have been fully litigated before the courts in Nigeria with the judgements and rulings delivered in favour of Moni Pulo Limited and our Executive Chairman.

It is therefore fundamentally misleading and terrible to portray these corporate and shareholding disputes as evidence of criminal wrongdoing or to suggest that our Executive Chairman is a fugitive from justice or is seeking to evade law enforcement authorities.

Furthermore, the purported Public Interest and Diplomatic Centre, on whose representation the publications appear to have been predicated, does not exist. It is not registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission. This raises legitimate questions about these faceless unscrupulous persons and the authority under which they purport to act.

We wish to state unequivocally that our Executive Chairman remains a free citizen, continues to conduct her legitimate personal and business affairs without restraint and has no pending criminal charge arising from the referenced shareholding disputes.

Contrary to the wild, calculated, deliberate, misinformed, false, mischievous and callous publication in respect and concerning our Executive Chairman, we wish to point out the following unassailable points:

i. Our Executive Chairman is a private businesswoman who has invested heavily in the oil and gas sector in Nigeria and currently the Executive Chairman of one of the first indigenous exploration and production companies in Nigeria.

ii. For three decades, Moni Pulo Limited has maintained a significant presence in Nigeria's oil and gas industry as an indigenous exploration and production company. And for 15 of those years, our Executive Chairman has remained the majority shareholder of the Company. The Company has built its reputation through sustained investment, operational experience, industry participation and contributions to the development of Nigeria's petroleum resources.

iii. Our Executive Chairman's huge investment in the oil and gas sector are products of her efforts in private business without any taint of any proceed of crime.

iv. She is a responsible, respectable, decent and accomplished businesswoman and philanthropist who has touched the lives of so many people both in Nigeria and beyond.

v. All through her private business endeavours, our Executive Chairman has maintained a very decent record and significant impact which has brought fame, pride and recognition to her person, family, her people in Rivers State, Nigeria and the global business community.

vi. As an evangelist who is also committed to the propagation of the gospel of salvation and of Christ, she abhors every form of criminality, has maintained an unblemished record and shall therefore resist every effort to link her with any form of criminality as the publication would appear to have done.

vii. By recklessly assaulting her integrity and painting her as a common fugitive, the publication has assaulted the credibility and integrity of our Executive Chairman and subjected her to embarrassment, humiliation, character assassination and public ridicule.

In light of the above, we hereby refute these malicious and libelous publications and state categorically that the publications are complete falsehood as there is no order/warrant of any court in Nigeria as at today, made or issued for the arrest of our chairman. If anything, all those cases brought against our Executive Chairman and Moni Pulo Limited in court have all been fully litigated and resolved in our favour.

Moni Pulo Limited remains an active and operating oil and gas company under the visionary leadership of Dr. Seinye Lulu-Briggs. Our business operations continue, and the Company remains focused on its corporate objectives, operational responsibilities, business relationships and long-term growth prospects.

We therefore urge the general public to kindly disregard any story, news and/or publication issued and/or disseminated by any media outlet or entity either physically or online suggesting that there is any warrant of arrest issued against our Executive Chairman. Our Executive Chairman is a free woman and have been exercising full rights of ingress in and egress out of Nigeria without any impairment and/or harassments by any law enforcement and this is not likely to change in the foreseeable future.

We appreciate the continued confidence, support and understanding of our business partners, associates, regulators, host communities and other stakeholders. We reassure you all and the public that Moni Pulo Limited will continue to conduct its affairs with the professionalism, diligence and corporate responsibility that have characterised its operations over the past three decades.

FOR MONI PULO LIMITED:
MANAGEMENT

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

Editorial

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The onerous task of overcoming heat wave fatalities

THE warning that the rampaging El Niño cycle could claim 31,400 Nigerian lives through heat-related fatalities between September 2026 and February 2027 is not a distant projection. It is a countdown to a major crisis in a country with highly deficient health and environmental systems.

The world is staring down a climate disaster of historic proportions, and Nigeria will not be exempt. Scientists have warned correctly. Nigeria's projected toll is the highest in the world, eclipsing even larger nations, and it underscores the country's acute vulnerability to climate extremes.

These numbers are not mere statistics. They represent, possibly, farmers collapsing in sun-scorched fields, children fainting in overcrowded classrooms, and patients dying in hospitals where cooling systems fail. They represent the elderly, the poor, and the millions who live without electricity, left defenceless against temperatures soaring above 41°C.

Indeed, a recent news article noted that researchers at the University of Chicago's Climate Impact Lab projected that the super El Niño could cause an estimated 451,000 additional heat-related deaths worldwide over the six months, with Nigeria expected to account for nearly half of the projected 66,800 deaths across four African countries identified as most vulnerable.

They urged governments in affected countries, including Nigeria, to strengthen hospital preparedness, establish cooling centres, provide early warnings and protect outdoor workers to reduce the risk of deaths from extreme heat.

According to researchers, Nigeria, Sudan, Niger and Chad are projected to experience the highest heat-related mortality burden in Africa, with Sudan expected to record 17,500 additional deaths, followed by Niger with 10,000 and Chad with 8,000.

Nigeria, with an estimated population of 237.5 million, is projected to have the highest heat-related mortality worldwide under the super El Niño scenario, they said.

Super El Niño refers to an exceptionally strong episode of El Niño, a rare climate phenomenon that occurs when sea-surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean become warmer than normal, influencing weather patterns worldwide.

Explaining the risks facing Nigeria, the researchers noted that more than 60 per cent of the country's population was estimated to be living below the national poverty line in 2025, while frequent power cuts could limit households' ability to cope with extreme temperatures, even where electricity connections exist.

They said poorer populations were generally more likely to suffer heat-related deaths than people in wealthier regions exposed to similar temperatures because they (the poor) had fewer resources to protect themselves.

Nigeria's exposure is not simply a matter of geography. It is the direct consequence of decades of policy inertia and infrastructural decay. Over 92 million Nigerians lack access to electricity (World Bank's Tracking SDG 7: Energy Progress Report (2022), while those connected endure chronic blackouts. In a country where cooling is a matter of survival, this energy deficit is lethal and very dangerous. To compound this is an apparent lack of effective regulation on deforestation.

Contrary to provisions in some master plans, most urban areas are prone to physical development at the expense of greenery and the cover of trees, all of which can douse the harsh effects of extreme weather. Even the federal capital territory is no exception, as vast areas reserved for natural vegetation have been built up for residential and office purposes. The result is that across the country, the protective structure of the natural habitat has been largely destroyed, thus heightening the effect of El Niño.

The health system, already fragile, is unprepared for mass heatstroke emergencies. Hospitals lack reliable power; cooling centres are virtually non-existent, and outdoor workers, drivers, traders, and farmers remain exposed without protection. Poverty compounds the crisis. Recent authoritative reports show Nigeria's poverty rate is between 38.7 per cent (multidimensional poverty, UNDP 2024) and 47 per cent (income poverty, World Bank 2024). As such, access to fans, air conditioners, or even clean water is a luxury in many parts of the country.

This heat wave, which is already biting deeply across the country, exposes the intersection of climate change and systemic neglect. Nigeria, a negligible contributor to global emissions, is set to bear one of the heaviest burdens of El Niño. The injustice is glaring, but the official silence is deafening.

Notably, this is not a seasonal inconvenience. It is a national emergency on par with war or a pandemic. Yet the government's response remains inadequate, as if the projected death toll were tolerable collateral damage. It is not.

Nigeria's leaders must recognise that climate change is no longer a distant threat, but a present killer. Failure to act decisively will transform preventable deaths into a damning indictment of governance. History will not forgive leaders who watched a crisis unfold and did nothing.

The path forward is clear, if only the political will exists. There is a need to declare a national heat emergency. Mobilise federal, state, and local governments to coordinate relief.

Nigeria needs to support its hospitals. Provide emergency funding for cooling equipment, backup generators, and staff training and a concerted policy on greenery and reforestation. It is not out of place for the country to have cooling centres. It won't be out of place to convert schools, stadiums, and community halls into safe shelters.

There must be awareness campaigns. Nigeria needs to educate its citizens on hydration, heatstroke symptoms, and safe work hours.

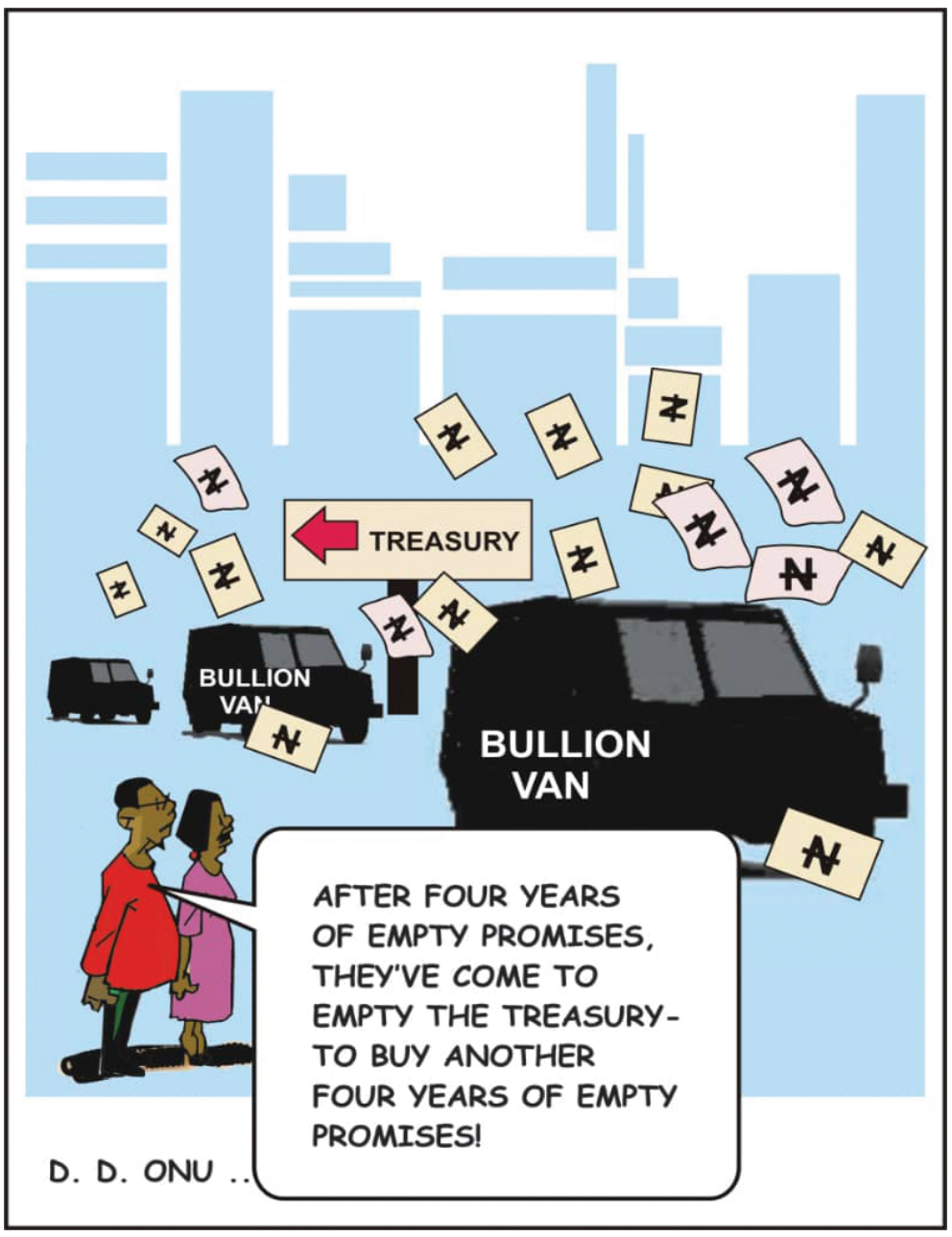
Nigeria must prioritise electricity provision; assure power supply to hospitals, water facilities, and cooling centres. Nigeria's electricity sector today remains fragile. Average generation is only about 4,000 MW for over 200 million people, leaving tens of millions without reliable access. Despite modest improvements in metering and revenue collection, grid collapses, vandalism, and high losses continue to undermine progress. This is worrisome, especially at this time of emergencies.

It won't be out of place for Nigeria to seek international aid, such as urgently appealing to the World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and climate funds for support.

What the country cannot afford is complacency. The projected fatalities are not inevitable; they are preventable, if action is swift and decisive. Every delay will be measured in human lives.

The government must act as though the nation were under siege, because it is. The enemy is heat, the battleground is every Nigerian street and home, and the casualties may be counted in the tens of thousands unless urgent measures are taken.

This is the moment for Nigeria to rise to the challenge. Leaders and relevant agencies should reject the risk of making the country the global symbol of climate failure.



LETTER

None of these diseases: Christianity's perspectives on wellness

SIR: Pastor William Folorunso Kumuyi, General Superintendent of Deeper Christian Life Ministry, DCLM, who is also convener of the Global Crusade with Kumuyi, GCK, has lately cautioned that mankind's war on plagues, pestilences, penury and privation, must not be restrictive; it must be catholic, beyond the confines of (un)orthodox medicine and technology, approaches which have conditioned humanityfor centuries.

The cleric, himself a fastidious student of ruthless logic and complex mathematical applications to unmask solutions in sticky situations, isn't dismissive of the weight of modern science in man's hunger for wellness.

He's disturbed, instead, that we've left out what's pivotal in the equation: the God factor. By which he means there's a Divine perspective on diseases in the Bible, which deserves attention in a truly grave contemplation and attempt to give ailments a fatal knock, and free man from cyclical ill health.

Kumuyi insists man must seek the final answer to sicknesses in their Maker; mankind broke His laws, and that brought in deadly sin with its luggage of all that is disorganising man, his system and environment. It follows that to contain (reverse) the evil gale that came with the breach of God's commandments, we must go back to His dos and don'ts.

So, in his current war on health disorders strictly from Christianity's outlook, the evangelist has repeatedly referred to God's promise in the Bible at Exodus 15:26 to make his case: "…If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee…for I am the LORD that healeth thee."

Wielding the Bible as he faces tens of thousands of believing congregants, Pastor Kumuyi teaches this every Thursday evening at Deeper Life Bible Church, DLBC, headquarters, Gbagada, Lagos, in Nigeria's southwest. There's always a huge overflow outside the 30,000-capacity auditorium, with millions more of local and global audiences reached online via a battery of cameras and klieg lights capturing the moves of the preacher and the responses of hearers and viewers.

Kumuyi's message isn't complicated: he refers to God's own promise and time-tested commitment to heal all the afflicted who approach Him through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. God sent His Son to bear all those ailments and pain, terminal or not, medicine-defiant or compliant; and therefore, anyone genuinely identifying with Christ can't experience miserable conditions again. They can't suffer double jeopardy.

Kumuyi takes God at His Word and invites those who want wellbeing to follow the same path, beginning with a personal (intimate) relationship with God through salvation by Christ.

This is the core of his exhortation. It sets the stage for his prayer that God honours to bring forth torrents of incredible miracles, salvation, healing and deliverance upon the people.

A deluge of medically verified reports has been received, published and aired to prove cases of supernatural recovery. By the word of knowledge (spiritual discernment), Kumuyi in one of the nights pleaded for the life of "someone at the point of death" to be restored to life. Just weeks later during the testimony session, a man came forward with his wife, declaring she was the one in the jaws of death brought back to the land of the living by the intercession of the man of God!

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

Banji Ojewale is an author in Ota, Ogun State.

Opinion

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As Nigeria experiments with permanent economic policy framework

By **Marcel Okeke**

SINCE his assumption of office as Nigeria's substantive Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy on April 23, 2026, Taiwo Oyedele has been experimenting with several economic policy frameworks to get the 'gains' of President Tinubu's reforms to impact Nigerians. He has been forthright in asserting that Nigerians deserve to have 'better life' resulting from the series of socio-economic reforms of the government of the day.

In pursuit of this, the minister has been exploiting every opportunity to adopt some short-term economic frameworks to initiate government programmes and activities that could rub off (positively) on the wellbeing of the citizenry. He started with admission of some weaknesses and failures of the reforms; and formed a ministerial panel to review the entire reform package of the Tinubu administration, with a view to making amends where (ever) necessary.

In the past seven months or so, Oyedele, it seems, has made available to Mr. President some bits of 'novelty' to try move the country from macroeconomic stability to improved wellbeing for the citizenry. Thus, in the build-up to the nation's 66th independence anniversary (October 1, 2026), the Tinubu administration singled out 'crashing' cost of transportation as key to meaningfully reducing the very painful high cost of living in the land.

As Coordinating Minister of the Economy, the plan had Oyedele's imprimatur as a critical measure to assuage the pains of hunger and impoverishment visited on millions of Nigerians by government reforms. Under this initiative, the federal government of Nigeria (FGN) was to massively deploy Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)-powered mass transit lorries across the country. At the same time, petrol (premium motor spirit, PMS) was to be sold at a discount of N66 per liter (at the pump) at all NNPCL fuel stations.

Allied to this programme was the 'hurried' agreement between the government of the day and the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) for each worker to be paid N70,000 transport allowance, effective November 2026. This stipend is to last for six months in the first instance. But from all indications, the fuel discount initiative ended up a failure: there were not many lorries to go round, neither did the NNPCL keep its own part of the bargain. It rather raised the price of PMS mid-way into the month (November).

On their own part, the NLC and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) are still in a lingering disagreement over the propriety and sustainability of the 'token' allowance from the government. While the TUC rejected the allowance as an exercise in tokenism, the NLC believes it should be accepted even as negotiations for a living wage goes on. At present, the proposal remains botched.

While all these are yet hanging, the FGN also came up with sharing of the sum of fifty thousand Naira to the poor and down-trodden. The Federal government says the "cash grant" is coming under its National Emergency Relief and Stabilisation Intervention (NERSI). But the mode of the identification and selection of the very poor and vulnerable Nigerian households has remained contentious. The country has no credible social data nor reliable personal identification mode; a gap that usually turns the monetary handouts to political patronage.

The other day, too, the Minister of Finance, Oyedele, through the National Economic Council (NEC) chaired by the Vice President, Kashim Shettima, got an endorsement for a 90-day "economic action plan." The plan, according to Mr. Oyedele, aims to translate Nigeria's macroeconomic reforms into immediate relief for citizens grappling with the high cost-of-living crisis.

This unprecedented three-month plan, according to the Finance Minister, is to attain food affordability, completion of high-impact projects, resolution of investment bottlenecks, regulated household support, and reduction of transport costs, among others. These objectives are to be jointly pursued by the three-tiers of government, even as all of them are almost fully preoccupied with ongoing campaigns for January/February 2027 general elections.

Thus, wrongly or otherwise, this bouquet of initiatives and programmes by the FGN at this point in time is being widely perceived as a mere vote-buying gambit. And truly, with so much that is stuffed in the 90-day plan, it proves almost certain that the government is merely up to some propaganda. Moreover, the 90-days is only equal to the number of days outstanding for presidential election's campaigns in the country.

And as if to keep Nigerians inundated with this potpourri of economic policies, programs and frameworks, Mr. Oyedele, utilised the opportunity of the recent 32nd economic summit of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) in Abuja, to announce yet another framework. Tagged "Nigeria Economic Policy Framework (proposed)", the framework identifies seven priorities: stability, productivity, enterprise, capital, people, markets, and institutions.

According to Mr. Oyedele, together, "these pillars aim to build a productive, competitive, diversified and inclusive economy that creates quality jobs, raises household real incomes and promotes shared prosperity." Under the proposal, government agencies would conduct mandatory impact assessments before implementing major economic measures.

"These assessments would identify the problems requiring intervention, provide supporting evidence, estimate costs, specify intended beneficiaries and establish conditions for potentially terminating the measures." The framework also aims to promote fair competition and improve coordination among government institutions.

Oyedele emphasised that the proposed framework does not constitute a development plan or a catalogue of investment projects; instead it establishes an economic doctrine to guide government decisions over the long term. "Authorities are also considering giving some of its principles a legal foundation to reduce policy reversals between successive administrations," he said.

No doubt, at a cursory reading, this proposed "Nigeria's Economic Policy Framework" looks potentially a significant intervention in the country's economic governance architecture. As can be inferred from the finance minister's presentation, it is an attempt to establish a durable national system for making economic decisions, evaluating their consequences, assigning institutional responsibility and measuring whether economic growth actually improves the lives of Nigerians.

However, it is a notorious reality that Nigeria does not merely need more economic policies; it needs greater consistency between policies, more credible implementation, transparent measurement of results and stronger accountability for economic outcomes. In Nigeria, economic policies are often announced with a lot of political visibility but the underlying assumptions, implementation responsibilities, performance benchmarks and exit conditions are hardly sufficiently transparent.

Still, regarding minister Oyedele's document, can a framework intended to survive successive administrations become truly binding in a democratic setting? Can the federal government secure the buy-in and dutiful implementation of the framework by the sub-nationals without compromising constitutional autonomy? And what independent mechanism will prevent the framework becoming one of the well-written government documents with limited influence on actual decisions?

These questions are most pertinent under the President Bola Ahmed Tinubu administration that has sufficiently shown a lot of recklessness in economic and fiscal governance. The simple annual plans—Appropriation Acts—have become documents that are subject to the whims and caprices of the President and his cabinet. In the past three years, monetary and fiscal policies have almost been acting as countervailing forces to each other. Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) have (each) been operating in 'silos', almost to the exclusion of the 'rest' of the government.

In this milieu and governance ecosystem, the Oyedele proposal can only be a wild dream; a kite for the gullible public to be pursuing at this point in time. Nothing more!

Dr Okeke, a practising economist, business strategist, sustainability expert and ex-chief economist of Zenith Bank Plc, lives in Lagos and can be reached via: obioraokeke2000@yahoo.com

Democracy, elections and the worth of our lives

By **Olumide Oyebade**

AN adage has it that a society's value for life is measured by how it treats the dead.Without disputing that, I hold the extended view that how it conducts its elections is also atestament to the worth and dignity the state accords itscitizens.

Having witnessed a fellow African country, South Africa, pull off its much-vaunted local council elections in style penultimate week, one is more persuaded that Nigerians ought to demand more from the government and handlers of the 2027 elections. This raises some important questions about the moral essence of democracy and people's participation ahead of the upcoming polls.

Democracy is not solely a concept. It is the lived experience of a modern people who believe that their hope and aspiration are better served by their participation in governance, especially through the electoral process. Among the forms of government tested throughout history, modern man assumes that democracy is best positioned to deliver the highest utilitarian value: human happiness for the greatest number of citizens.

Indeed, the early philosophers in Ancient Greece, where democracy arguably began, wouldn't accord democracy significance because it is the 'rule of the mob'. They reckon that affairs of the state are too serious to be confined to everyday people, the *hoi polio*, and Plato's 'artisans' who are led by the pleasure of the stomach, otherwise called stomach infrastructure. But the untold evils of authoritarian regimes that led to the two World Wars have suggested that the worst of democracy may be better than the best of authoritarian rule. The jury is still out on that verdict.

The point is that democracy is not an accident of history. It is a long-drawn conclusion from a bloody history of experimenting with various forms of government that failed to preserve human dignity. Democracy, the rule of the people, especially in its modern form, more clearly amplifies the nexus among the state, the people, and human worth. Democratic governance derives its legitimacy from the will of the people, while elections provide the mechanism for protecting individual rights and upholding human worth.

For clarity, the people-essence of a democracy is twofold: (a) active participation in the process through elections and (b) in the government's preservation of human dignity in return. By human dignity, I mean respect for citizens' lives or human worth as the ultimate purpose of the state. It takes into account the people's rights, hopes and aspirations, health, security, prosperity, and general well-being as the sole business of governance.In that sense, the ultimate aim and moral foundation of a true democracy becomes the enhancement of human dignity.

While the preservation of human dignity is the moral justification for a democratic government, active participation through periodic elections gives citizens the power to choose leaders and hold them accountable in the delivery and protection of human dignity. Fair participation allows individuals to co-create their social and political realities,rather than live under subjugation. This makessociety's value of life measurable by how it treats its electorate beginning on election day.

Some recent elections exemplify those variables of a healthy democracy. For instance, South Africa held its municipal elections at the same time the United States held its mid-term polls a fortnight ago. The latter's outcome has left President Trump counting his teeth with his tongue. But let's stay with South Africa, as a fellow African country and more comparable to Nigeria, which is preparing for its general elections.

The South African election was held nationwide across the 213 councils (consisting of 205 local municipalities and eight metropolitan) to elect parties, chairmen, and councillors to run their affairs for the next five years. At stake are the basic services – electricity, water, sanitation, road infrastructure, and the alleged failure of the ANC government "to deliver" on those promises.

Context matters here. South African's complaint about basic infrastructure is different from similar murmuring in a country like ours. All the metropolises and councils, including their *Umlazi* (villages), boast constant electricity, a potable public water supply, paved roads, Internet access, and regular Monday-morning visits by compactor trucks.

What they call failure includes scheduled load shedding (in some places) lasting one hour, and perhaps once in six months or a year. Also, not replacing ageing water pipes before they burst, or rehabilitating paved roads before the potholes. A Nigerian in Aboru, Agbado,Oke-Aro, Ayobo, Obada-Oko, Ile-Ife, Ilela, Dasham, Abiriba, Chibok, and so on – who lives, eats, and sleeps in real deprivation of basic amenities – is most unlikely to find these complaints of government failure tenable.

What struck me the most was that the people – young and old – still actively participated in the process of "fixing the wrong" of ANC. Their approach is more of a neighbour-to-neighbour campaign, not those noisome mass rallies of rented crowds that communicated nothing.

At my University of KwaZulu-Natal station, students dressed in the vests of parties like the ANC, the Democratic Alliance (DA), uMkhontoweSizwe (MKP), the United Democratic Movement (UDM), and ActionSA, etc., freely talk to passersby about their loyalty and what their parties would do differently if elected.

The Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) also implemented a flexible electoral system that truly values human worth. Ahead of D-Day (Wednesday), the preceding Monday and Tuesday were for special elections during which approximately 188,000 IEC officials went door to door and to special voting centres to reach those who would ordinarily be unable to come out and vote on election day. By Tuesday night, estimates indicate that more than 1.4 million of the expected 2.6 million special voters have already cast their ballots for their council representatives.

Election day (Wednesday) was a public holiday, not the dawn-to-dusk lockdown oddity we are used to in Nigeria. It tells us that an election is neither a war situation nor should it be militarised. The people of South Africa moved freely, with opportunitiesfor fun. Some bored neighbours iced their beers, loaded a cooler into the trunk, and headed for the beach. So much for election day!

In town, popular brands and outlets also played a role. For instance, Spur gave voters a free soft-serve ice cream with the purchase of any main meal. Wimpy and VovoTelo handed out a free Short Cappuccino or Short Hot Chocolate to those who voted. Krispy Kreme serveda free Original Glazed Doughnut; Hennies gave voters a complimentary drink after they cast their ballots.

Other local businesses, including Zuney Wagyu, The Millhouse Kitchen and SuperspарLevyvale, offered promotions and discounts to voters. The point is this: everyone has a role to play in a free and fair election, enhancing human worth and a better society.

The undercurrent is the clear interface between the premium a system places on citizens' lives and the pressure on the government to enhance it. It is readily apparent in how it conducts its elections and allows the people to freely have a voice despite the risk to the party in power.

Coming home, the democratic experience in Nigeria is different and horribly so. It neither enhances human dignity nor the active participation of the beleaguered citizenry. Comparatively, democracy has worked better for the political class than for average Nigerians. For the people, it has delivered more underdevelopment, stagnation, poverty and regularising the minds to the pains of everyday violence, killings and want.

There is no accounting for progress in the delivery of the basic amenities – electricity, potable water, road infrastructure, and care services – that fellow Africans are taking for granted. What is worse is that political dissent and opposition are silenced, if not crushed, by burdensome political and social authoritarians who leave no room for innovation or process.

South Africans have shown that the government should and can be held accountable for the basic services, and their example is worth referencing. Lest we forget, the rainbow nation has its own domestic problems like every other country, and it is a flawed democracy by all standards. However, the lesson is in the resilience and active participation of the people in the electoral process.

Back to the questions: will Nigerians brace up to make their voices heard in demanding accountability for years of misgovernance and subjugation of rights? Will they, for once, transcend stomach infrastructure psyche to demand higher human worth and dignity from the political class so elected for that purpose? Will the oppressed tell their oppressors that their lives also matter? Only time will tell.

Dr Oyebade teaches ethics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Opinion

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Two things, before Tinubu borrows the next dollar

By **Isaac Monehin**

I WRITE to express my concern about the Federal Government's growing reliance on foreign borrowing, particularly against the background of Nigeria's relatively weak revenue base and increasing debt-servicing obligations.

I recognise that Nigeria has enormous infrastructure and development deficits which cannot be addressed overnight through internally generated revenue alone. Strategic borrowing is, therefore, understandable and, in certain circumstances, necessary. However, the critical question is not simply whether Nigeria needs to borrow, but whether it can afford to borrow more, what it should borrow for, at what cost and with what capacity to repay.

Nigeria's public debt has continued to rise. As of the latest official reporting, the country's total public debt stood at approximately 152 trillion, equivalent to about US$100 billion, while the public-debt-to-GDP ratio was approximately 38%. These figures are already substantial for an economy with a comparatively narrow revenue base. An increasingly significant proportion of government revenue is committed to debt servicing, and the Debt Management Office's projections of a potentially rising debt-service-to-revenue ratio are particularly concerning. This is a warning that deserves more than routine budgetary attention.

Your Excellency, Nigeria now has little, if any, comfortable fiscal leeway for additional borrowing. Any further debt should, therefore, be treated as exceptional and justified only by a clearly demonstrated capacity to repay. Borrowing headroom cannot be assessed by the debt-to-GDP ratio alone; the country's weak revenue mobilisation, foreign-exchange risks and heavy debt-service burden must also be taken into account.

I believe there are important lessons to be drawn from the United States, which carries the world's largest public debt. America's ability to sustain such substantial indebtedness rests on structural advantages: the international reserve-currency status of the dollar, deep and liquid capital markets, enormous productive capacity, a diversified economy and strong revenue mobilisation institutions.

Nigeria does not yet enjoy these advantages. Consequently, comparing our debt-to-GDP ratio with that of the United States and concluding that we have sufficient borrowing headroom would be misleading. A country's borrowing capacity must be determined not merely by the size of its economy, but by its capacity to generate revenue and service its obligations.

I respectfully suggest that the Federal Government adopt a more disciplined national borrowing strategy built around the following principles:

Establish clear borrowing limits. Nigeria should work towards keeping public debt below a prudential ceiling of 40% of GDP, with a medium-term target of 35%. More importantly, debt servicing should progressively decline to below 40% of government revenue. These should be fiscal policy targets, not automatic entitlements to additional borrowing.

Change the composition of borrowing. Prioritise concessional multilateral and bilateral financing, deepen the domestic long-term debt market and substantially restrict expensive commercial external borrowing, including Eurobonds. Commercial foreign loans should be contracted only where their economic justification and repayment capacity are demonstrable.

Borrow principally for productive investments. Priority should go to electricity and energy security, agricultural transformation, transportation infrastructure, industrial development and human capital. Borrowing to finance routine recurrent expenditure, administrative overheads and poorly prioritised projects should be discouraged.

Apply a rigorous marginal borrowing test. Before approving another loan, government should establish that the expected economic and fiscal returns justify its full financing cost, including interest, fees and foreign-exchange risks. Every loan should have clearly defined deliverables, implementation timelines and measurable performance indicators.

Mobilise alternative financing. Public-private partnerships, pension funds, infrastructure bonds and private institutional capital should be deployed more aggressively, particularly for commercially viable infrastructure projects.

Improve domestic revenue mobilisation and reduce the cost of governance. Nigeria's greatest fiscal challenge is its weak revenue-generating capacity. Government must concentrate on plugging revenue leakages, improving tax compliance, expanding productive activities and eliminating wasteful expenditure. Borrowing cannot indefinitely substitute for fiscal reform.

Strengthen transparency and accountability. Every significant foreign loan should be accompanied by public disclosure of its terms, purpose, repayment obligations and expected economic returns. Nigerians deserve to know what they are borrowing for and what benefits they can expect.

Your Excellency, I am not advocating an end to foreign borrowing. That would be unrealistic given our development requirements. I am advocating a transition from debt-driven expenditure to productivity-driven borrowing.

There is also an important intergenerational consideration. Every dollar borrowed today becomes an obligation for future taxpayers. We must ensure that future generations inherit productive infrastructure, stronger institutions and a more prosperous economy, rather than an overwhelming burden of debt accumulated to finance today's consumption and inefficiencies.

The fundamental lesson from America's experience is that a strong, diversified and productive economy can sustain substantial debt, but even economic strength has its limits. Nigeria should aspire to America's productive capacity, revenue strength and institutional credibility, not merely its capacity to borrow.

My humble recommendation, therefore, is that before the Federal Government borrows another dollar, it should be able to demonstrate four things: what additional economic value that dollar will create, how much additional revenue it will generate, what it will cost to repay, and whether future generations will be better off because it was borrowed.

The success of your economic reforms should ultimately be measured not by how much financing government can attract, but by how much productive capacity, employment, household prosperity and poverty reduction those resources deliver. Nigeria needs to borrow to develop, not borrow to survive.

Monehin is an economist and former executive director of Energy Bank Ghana and a former Senior Special Assistant on PPP to Governor Mimiko of Ondo State. He can be reached on monehinisaac@gmail.com.

Power devolution as catalyst for university stability: Lessons from FUOYE

By **Abiodun Olusoga Fanoro**

THE struggle for power has remained one of the troubling realities of university administration in Nigeria. In an environment where institutions are expected to nurture knowledge, promote intellectual freedom and produce solutions to society's problems, the quest for leadership positions has, in some instances, become a source of division, bitterness and avoidable institutional crises. Positions that ought to provide opportunities for service are sometimes pursued with such desperation that makes the larger interests of the university to become secondary.

In extreme cases, such struggles have been accompanied by intimidation, ethnic and religious sentiments, and actions capable of undermining the peace and academic stability in the affected institutions. Unfortunately, when the pursuit of power becomes an end in itself, teaching, research, innovation and institutional development often suffer.

The intensity of these struggles was particularly noticeable during the era when vice-chancellors of federal universities could serve two terms of four years each. The desire to secure a second term sometimes heightened political manoeuvring within university communities, creating divisions among staff and other stakeholders. Government eventually intervened by introducing a single five-year tenure for vice-chancellors, partly to reduce the tensions associated with tenure renewal and give university leaders greater opportunity to concentrate on their responsibilities.

Although the intervention addressed an important aspect of the problem, the struggle for power has not disappeared. In some institutions, attention has merely shifted from securing a second term to influencing succession arrangements. What was intended to bring stability has, therefore, not completely removed the underlying problem.

Perhaps this explains why the conversation about leadership stability in Nigerian universities must now move beyond the tenure of vice-chancellors to the manner in which authority is distributed and exercised within the institutions themselves. If too much power is concentrated around a single office, competition for access to that office may become unnecessarily intense. But what happens when meaningful responsibilities are deliberately shared among competent academic leaders while the Vice-Chancellor retains overall institutional authority?

This is the interesting question that the Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE), Ekiti State, appears to be addressing through a new administrative arrangement introduced under the leadership of its Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joshua Olalekan Ogunwole.

Since assuming office in February 2026, Ogunwole has demonstrated an interest in strengthening the university's administrative structures and creating opportunities for a more coordinated approach to institutional development. One of the notable expressions of this thinking is the introduction of what the university describes as a near-collegiate model, an arrangement designed to bring administration closer to the faculties, distribute responsibilities more effectively and reduce unnecessary dependence on the office of the vice-chancellor for routine decisions.

Under the arrangement, FUOYE's academic structure has been reorganised into five colleges, each headed by a provost. They are the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Environment; College of Arts, Social and Management Sciences; College of Education, Communication and Multidisciplinary Studies; College of Sciences; and College of Medicine and Pharmacy. The Faculty of Law retains its distinct status in recognition of its peculiar professional and regulatory requirements.

The existing faculties and their deans remain important components of the academic structure. However, they now operate within a broader arrangement in which provosts provide coordination, supervision and leadership at the college level, while remaining responsible to the vice-chancellor. This creates an additional administrative link between the faculties and the central administration, with the intention of improving communication, strengthening oversight and ensuring that matters requiring attention are addressed more promptly.

What makes the arrangement particularly interesting is that it is not merely about creating new offices or giving additional titles to senior academics. Its real significance lies in the willingness of the university's leadership to distribute meaningful responsibilities and allow other officers to participate more actively in institutional governance. In a system where authority can sometimes be closely guarded, such an approach offers a different understanding of leadership.

Ordinarily, the vice-chancellor is expected to attend to an enormous range of responsibilities, from academic planning and personnel matters to financial administration, infrastructure development, research partnerships and relationships with government and other external stakeholders. The demands become even greater in a growing university such as FUOYE, with its expanding academic programmes and operations across different campuses. When routine matters consistently require attention at the highest administrative level, delays can become inevitable.

The near-collegiate model seeks to reduce this burden by allowing provosts to take greater responsibility for matters within their colleges. Depending on the scope of authority formally delegated to them, this could include coordinating academic activities, facilitating budget preparation, supervising the implementation of approved programmes and making certain administrative decisions without referring every issue to the Vice-Chancellor.

It is also envisaged that defined levels of financial and administrative responsibility, exercised within the university's established regulations, will enable provosts to respond more quickly to the needs of their colleges. Such an arrangement could considerably improve the speed of decision-making, particularly where delays might otherwise affect academic activities, staff responsibilities or the welfare of students.

Beyond the convenience of faster decisions, however, the arrangement reflects a more important philosophy: a university should not become administratively helpless simply because its vice-chancellor is away on official duty.

Explaining the thinking behind the initiative, Professor Adebola Aderibigbe, Senior Technical Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor, described the restructuring as a deliberate attempt to build an institution capable of sustaining its operations without unnecessary interruption. "This restructuring, termed the near-collegiate model, will put the university on auto-pilot, where no policy or official decision will suffer or get stuck because of the prolonged official absence of the vice-chancellor, who may be outside the country sourcing support for the university," he explained.

The expression "auto-pilot" is particularly instructive. It does not suggest that the university should function without leadership or that the vice-chancellor should surrender his statutory responsibilities. Rather, it speaks to the importance of building dependable systems in which properly authorised officers can discharge their duties, decisions can be made at appropriate levels and institutional activities can continue without unnecessary disruption.

A vice-chancellor who is constantly occupied with approving routine matters may have limited time to pursue opportunities that could substantially change the fortunes of the institution. Yet universities today require leaders who can attract research funding, negotiate international partnerships, build relationships with industry, mobilise resources and position their institutions for greater national and global relevance.

By reducing the volume of routine matters requiring his direct intervention, the new arrangement could provide Ogunwole with more time to concentrate on these strategic responsibilities. In practical terms, a university stands to gain when its chief executive can devote greater attention to securing opportunities for institutional growth while capable officers manage responsibilities appropriately delegated to them.

There is also the important question of leadership development. One of the possible reasons competition for top university positions becomes so intense is that meaningful administrative authority is often concentrated in relatively few offices. When opportunities for substantial leadership experience are limited, the struggle to occupy those offices may become more pronounced.

The appointment of provosts under FUOYE's near-collegiate arrangement creates additional opportunities for experienced academics to participate in institutional leadership. It allows them to coordinate several faculties, manage complex administrative relationships, develop strategic priorities and contribute more directly to university-wide decisions. In the process, the institution may be preparing a broader generation of academics with the experience required for higher administrative responsibilities.

Fanoro is a Senior Information Manager at Federal University, Oye, Ekiti.

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

FG seeks fresh investments as $500m deal shifts social protection burden to states

From Joseph Chibueze, Abuja

THE Federal Government is seeking to leverage an additional $500 million in financing for the Nigeria Community Action for Resilience and Economic Stimulus (NG-CARES) programme to attract further investments from the private sector, development partners and capital markets, as it moves to strengthen social protection for economically vulnerable Nigerians.

Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, Abubakar Bagudu, said the government intended to use the additional financing as proof of concept to demonstrate the effectiveness of targeted economic interventions and unlock larger pools of funding to address poverty, food insecurity and the disproportionate effects of economic reforms on vulnerable households.

Speaking at the NG-CARES Additional Financing Technical Workshop in Abuja, Bagudu said effective implementation of the $500 million facility could demonstrate that well-designed social protection interventions deliver measurable results and attract additional resources from domestic and international financing sources.

He said the government recognised that ongoing economic reforms would affect some Nigerians more severely than others, making targeted support necessary to help vulnerable households and businesses adjust and participate in the changing economic environment.

"We are not unmindful that reforms will affect others disproportionately," the minister said.



Executive Vice President, Integrated Power, Axxela, Olufisayo Duduyemi (left); Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Ibilola Kasunmu; Team Lead, Sustainability, Ibile Oil & Gas, Abiola Ibine and Partner, Energy and Natural Resources Practice Group, Bloomfield LP, Dr Ayodele Oni, at the Lagos Energy Summit held in Lagos.

NRS flags trillions in potential illicit financial flows from imports

From Collins Olayinka, Abuja

NIGERIA has identified trillions of naira in potential illicit financial flows (IFFs) arising from import transactions between 2020 and 2024, raising concerns about trade misinvoicing, revenue leakages and the country's capacity to safeguard wealth generated through international commerce.

Preliminary findings from an analysis of Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) transaction-level import data, using the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Price-Filter Method+, indicate significant exposure to import under-invoicing and over-invoicing, with attendant risks to customs duties and value-added tax (VAT) revenues.

Speaking yesterday in Abuja at a media workshop on evidence-based reporting of illicit financial flows in Nigeria, Head of Anti-Corruption at the Nigeria Revenue Service (NRS), Muhammed Idris Abdullahi, described the exercise as a significant step towards measuring and tackling financial leakages.

He, however, cautioned that the estimates represent potential values at risk, not confirmed cases of fraud, established criminal proceeds or verified government revenue losses.

According to him, the methodology identifies transactions whose declared unit values fall outside statistically established admissible ranges and flags them for further examination.

He explained that variations in product quality, contractual arrangements, packaging, related-party pricing and measurement errors could also account for some of the anomalies.

Abdullahi urged journalists to distinguish between statistical anomalies and proven financial crimes to avoid sensationalism and misinformation.

He identified trade misinvoicing, tax evasion, aggressive profit shifting, concealment of beneficial ownership, corruption and cross-border movement of criminal proceeds as major challenges undermining Nigeria's economic development.

Import under-invoicing, he explained, could conceal the actual value of goods, thereby reducing applicable customs duties and tax obligations. Over-invoicing, conversely, could facilitate the illegal transfer of funds abroad through inflated payments for imports.

He added that multinational corporations could exploit differences in national tax systems and manipulate related-party transactions to shift profits across jurisdictions, weakening the domestic tax base.

To tackle the challenges, Nigeria is implementing reforms under the Nigeria Tax Act 2025 and Nigeria Tax Administration Act 2025, including relevant provisions of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Pillar Two framework, which establishes a 15 per cent effective minimum tax for qualifying multinational enterprises.

Other measures include tighter transfer pricing oversight and plans to establish a National Transfer Pricing Intelligence Centre.

Abdullahi said the country was also strengthening beneficial ownership transparency through the Corporate Affairs Commission's Persons with Significant Control framework, established under the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020.

He disclosed that the NRS was developing beneficial ownership and social network analytics to identify individuals behind corporate entities and examine relationships that could facilitate financial crimes.

The agency is also planning a joint NRS-NCS-Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) Trade Analytics Task Force to improve information sharing and detect suspicious trade patterns.

He also identified the National Action Plan for 2027–2030 as a framework for consolidating the country's interventions, improving institutional coordination and introducing periodic measurement of illicit financial flows.

In a separate presentation, a former Director of Prosecution at the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Adedayo Kayode, said Nigeria's efforts to mobilise revenue for economic development, infrastructure expansion and job creation were being undermined by illicit financial flows.

Luno boss seeks stronger connectivity to drive cross-border payments

By Benjamin Alade

CHIEF Executive Officer of Luno Nigeria, Ayotunde Alabi, has called for stronger financial connectivity among African markets to reduce the high costs and inefficiencies associated with cross-border payments.

He said greater regulatory collaboration, currency interoperability and more efficient settlement infrastructure would be necessary to unlock the full potential of cross-border trade and digital financial services across the continent.

Speaking at a stakeholder convergence on the future of digital financial infrastructure in Africa, Alabi said fragmented financial systems continued to create significant challenges for businesses transferring money across national borders.

According to him, stablecoins and other digital payment technologies could improve the speed and cost of international transactions but would not, on their own, resolve the structural challenges confronting Africa's financial system.

"Stablecoins present a significant opportunity to make cross-border payments faster, cheaper and more efficient, but they are not, on their own, the solution to Africa's fragmented financial systems," he said.

Tax reforms delivering results, says CITN

By Gloria Nwafor

THE Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria (CITN) has said the Federal Government's tax reforms are beginning to deliver their intended benefits, with reliefs provided under the new tax laws already operational.

The institute, however, acknowledged that the scale of the reforms made it unrealistic to expect a seamless implementation from the outset, stressing that emerging concerns were being addressed through legislative and administrative interventions.

President of CITN, Innocent Ohagwa, said this in Lagos at the opening of the institute's November 2026 Pre-Induction Orientation Programme, where he urged tax professionals to support the reform agenda through ethical practice, voluntary compliance and public enlightenment.

According to him, employees and business owners were already benefiting from various tax reliefs provided under the new laws, while the reforms had also stimulated wider public interest in taxation.

"All the reliefs that were embedded in the laws have already become operational. Everybody, whether you are a businessperson or an employee, has already seen them," he said.

The CITN president described the implementation process as relatively smooth, noting that legislative interventions, including the Finance Act, had been introduced to address emerging issues.

He cautioned against attributing Nigeria's rising cost of living solely to taxation, arguing that removing taxes entirely would not resolve the country's economic challenges because several other factors contribute to the cost of goods and services.

"Even if you waive taxes from top to bottom, can the entire problems of the nation be solved? Tax is not the only attribute that constitutes the cost of prices," he said.

Ohagwa also defended progressive taxation, insisting that individuals and businesses with greater financial capacity should contribute more towards national development.

"Those who have the capacity to pay more should pay more for the benefit of the country," he said.

Weak fiscal controls threaten project delivery, public sector efficiency, FRC warns

From Joseph Chibueze, Abuja

NIGERIA'S ability to translate rising government revenue into infrastructure development, economic growth and improved living standards is being undermined by weak fiscal controls, poor enforcement of financial regulations and persistent accountability gaps across federal government institutions.

The Fiscal Responsibility Commission (FRC) has warned that its capacity to enforce fiscal discipline across ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) remains severely constrained by inadequate funding, staff shortages and limited enforcement powers, calling for an urgent amendment of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) 2007.

The Commission said strengthening its institutional and enforcement capacity was critical to ensuring that public resources were properly accounted for, government revenues fully remitted and expenditure efficiently deployed to address the country's enormous development needs.

Acting Chairman of the Commission, Charles Chukwuemeka Abana, made the call in Abuja during the public presentation of the 2026 Fiscal Responsibility Index (FRI).

Abana disclosed that despite its operational constraints, the Commission had contributed to increasing independent revenue from about N300 million in 2010 to more than N2 trillion annually through the monitoring of operating surpluses and other internally generated revenue.

He, however, warned that the gains could be undermined without stronger institutional support to deepen fiscal accountability and ensure compliance with statutory financial management requirements across government institutions.

According to him, Nigeria's development challenges cannot be addressed through revenue mobilisation alone without corresponding improvements in expenditure management, procurement transparency, budget implementation and institutional accountability.

"The growing demand for public infrastructure, social services, economic development and improved citizens' welfare makes it imperative that every naira of public revenue is properly accounted for and efficiently deployed," he said.

He identified inadequate enforcement powers, insufficient funding, staff shortages and the lack of suitable accommodation, despite more than 16 years of the Commission's establishment, as major obstacles to the effective discharge of its responsibilities.

Abana urged the Federal Government to strengthen the Commission through increased funding, improved institutional capacity and amendments to the Fiscal Responsibility Act to expand its enforcement and monitoring powers.

The concerns highlight a major weakness in Nigeria's public finance management system, where increased revenue mobilisation does not necessarily translate into better infrastructure or public services. Poor budget execution, weak procurement oversight and inadequate monitoring can undermine the impact of public spending, delay critical projects and leave development priorities unfunded.

The Fiscal Responsibility Index, developed through collaboration between the FRC and the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), is designed to assess and rank federal MDAs based on their compliance with statutory fiscal responsibility requirements.

The assessment examines institutional performance in budgeting, procurement transparency, revenue remittance and other public financial management obligations under the Fiscal Responsibility Act.

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WOLE OLANIPEKUN: AN ODYSSEY OF LAW, PHILANTHROPY AND IMPECCABLE CHARACTER.

By **Kolawole Igandan.**

If you have ever met Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, in chambers, you met Jurisprudence in a perfectly tailored suit. If you have ever met him in Ikere, his native abode in Ekiti State, on a Sunday morning after service, you met something even rarer — a humble village boy who never left home, even when he left to conquer the world.

TODAY, we celebrate not just a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, not just a former President of the Nigerian Bar Association, former Chairman of the Body of Benchers, Life Bencher, Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council of the University of Lagos — his alma mater — and Chancellor of BOUESTI, Ikere, but a complete man whose life has become a textbook of how to be great and still be good.



The law knows him as the Colossus. For 50 years since his Call to Bar in 1976, and 34 years since he took silk in July 1991, he has been the advocate judges stay awake to listen to. His briefs are epic. His oral advocacy is orchestral. It is why President Bola Ahmed Tinubu will on November 19 unveil his six-volume compendium, "Wole Olanipekun: Through The Cases", with forewords by the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Hon. Justice Kudirat Kekere-Ekun, and the Attorney-General, Prince Lateef Fagbemi, SAN. The book distils Inakoju v. Adeleke, presidential election petitions from 2007 till date, and hundreds of landmark cases where his arguments became law. It is a celebration of a mind that has literally written Nigerian law through the cases.

But beyond law, there is a mystique that court records do not capture.

First, his style. Chief Olanipekun dresses like law itself should dress — immaculate, authoritative, timeless. His colleagues whisper about his epicurean taste: the shoes, always hand-finished, gleaming even after a 12-hour day; the wristwatches, not for show but for precision — a man who respects time because time respects industry. He is a sartorial statement that elegance is discipline.

Second, his work ethic. He is a delightful workaholic. He wakes when most men still negotiate with sleep, his table already littered with files. He works late into the night, and no draft, no address, no legal opinion leaves Wole Olanipekun & Co. until he has approved it with his own eyes and his pen. Those who have worked closely with him know the legend: a junior may have passed a brief as "perfect", only for Oga to pick a misplaced comma on page 73, a wrong citation on page 41, and ask, "My dear, is this our best?" He pays attention to the ridiculous detail because he believes excellence is not an act, but a habit. It is no wonder his sons are taking after him. Dr. Oladapo Olanipekun, SAN, scholarly and cerebral, and Olabode Olanipekun, SAN, whom the Bar already hails as "the next big thing to happen to law," are not just inheriting a name; they are inheriting a standard.

Third, and most important, is his heart. This is the part no one sees — his generosity that is silent, surgical, and often anonymous. Chief does not empower for applause; he empowers because he cannot sleep if his neighbour is hungry. Ask the market women of Ikere whose shops were recapitalized without a press release. Ask the young lawyers across Nigeria whose NBA dues and law school fees were quietly paid from his pocket. Ask the families of his drivers, his secretaries, his staff, whose children he sends to school as his own.

Ikere-Ekiti adores him not because he is Asiwaju of Ikere Kingdom, but because he made Ikere his personal corporate social responsibility. He did not just build a mansion there; he built an economy of hope. He established Newcruse 92.7 FM, the first private radio station outside Ado-Ekiti, which commenced full broadcast on April 14, 2020, not as a business, but as a solution to youth unemployment and to put Ikere on the world map. Today the station's signal reaches Ondo, Osun, Kwara, Kogi, Edo, Oyo, and Lagos — Ikere's voice to the world.

And then, the crown: the Newcruse Mother and Child Maternity Complex, a 35-bed state-of-the-art facility built within the State Specialist Hospital, Ikere-Ekiti, commissioned in May 2026 by Governor Biodun Oyebanji to the applause of President Tinubu, the Ooni of Ife, Oba Enitan Ogunwusi, former Governor Bisi Akande, Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa, and the Coordinating Minister of Health. It is today adjudged the best in the South-West, with cutting-edge delivery suites, neonatal care, and — typical of Chief — a fully furnished, fully stocked Pharmacy to ensure no mother has to run to town to buy drugs while in labour. He thought of everything. That is Olanipekun: thorough even in charity.

His philanthropy is indeed global in reckoning — over 3,019 students on scholarship since 1996 through the Wole Olanipekun Scholarship Scheme, over 800 widows and elderly on direct support through the Wole Olanipekun Foundation, law auditoriums donated to University of Lagos, University of Ibadan, Babcock University, Ajayi Crowther University; courtrooms and NBA Bar Centres built; and most recently the Chief Wole Olanipekun Digital Centre at Amoye Grammar School, his alma mater.

Yet for all this, his private life is worthy of emulation. Humble to a fault, deeply Anglican, devoted to Erelu Princess Omolara Olanipekun — whom he adores openly and honours in every fora — he has proven that a man can conquer the Supreme Court and still be conquered by love at home. All four children — Dapo, Tope, Bukola, and Bode — are lawyers because he modelled, not mandated, excellence.

At 75, Chief Wole Olanipekun teaches us that the wig and gown are temporary, but character is permanent. "Wole Olanipekun: Through The Cases" will sit in law libraries for centuries. But the man — personable, impeccably dressed, watchful, kind, exacting, ever-present — will sit in our hearts even longer.

Happy 75th birthday to the Asiwaju, the Oracle, the Colossus who still corrects the comma.

Kolawole Igandan is a media consultant based in Lagos State.

A LEGACY BEYOND THE LAW

CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN, SAN

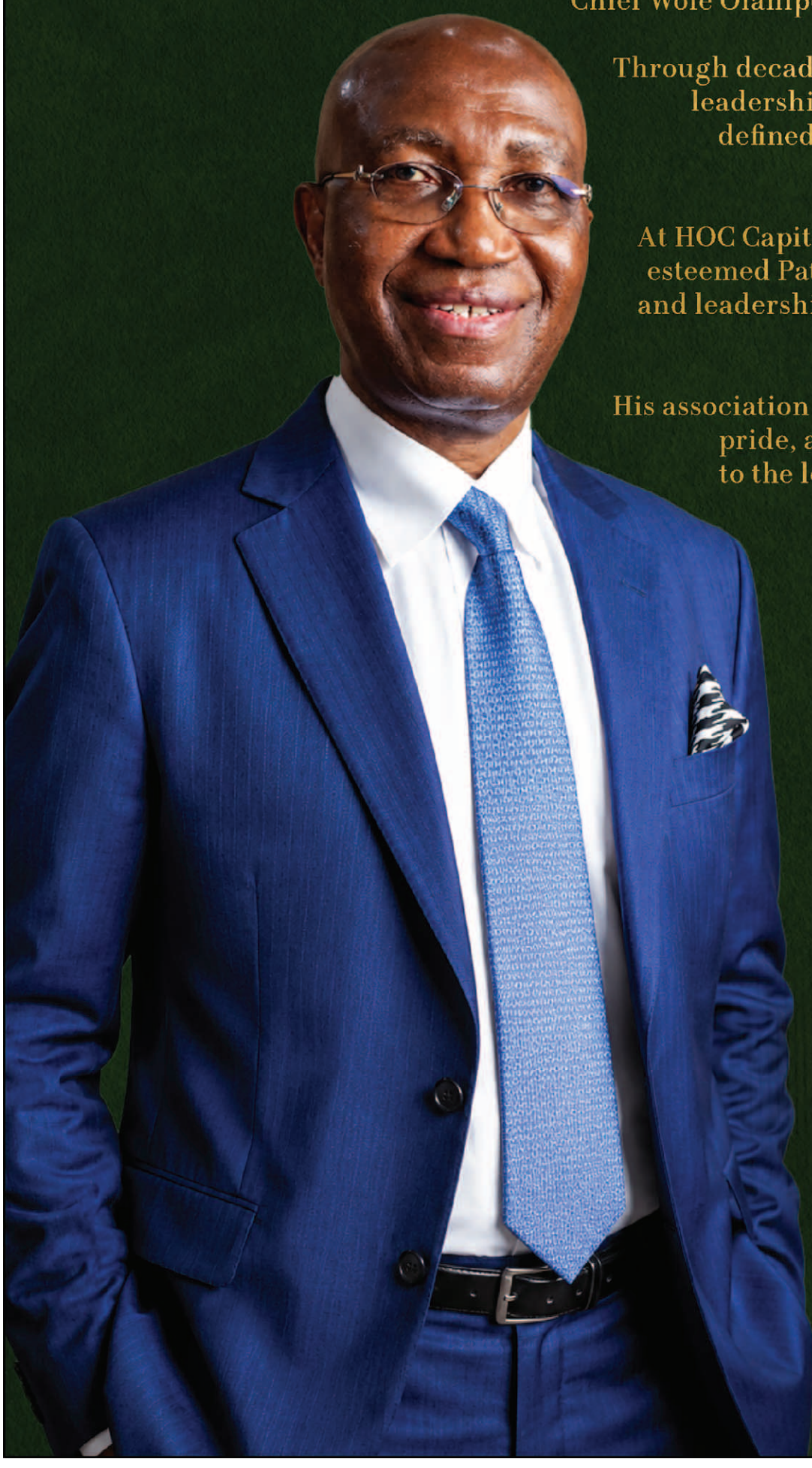
Few individuals leave a legacy that transcends their profession. Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, is one such distinguished figure.

Through decades of exemplary legal practice, institutional leadership and national service, he has built a legacy defined by excellence, integrity and an unwavering commitment to justice.

At HOC Capital Club, we are honoured to have him as our esteemed Patron. His remarkable achievements, wisdom and leadership embody the values we uphold and inspire generations beyond his profession.

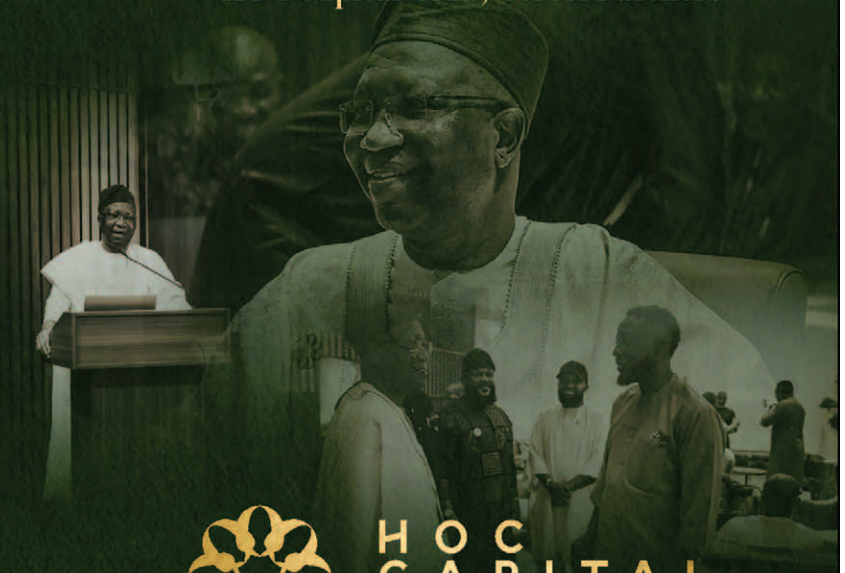
His association with the HOC family is a source of immense pride, and we celebrate his enduring contributions to the legal profession, nation building and society.

A legacy of distinction. A patron of honour. An inspiration across generations.



Signed:

Olufemi Owolabi Badejo
Chairman/Founding Partner,
HOC Capital Club, Cersei Partners



HOC CAPITAL CLUB



HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS!!!

We celebrate an outstanding legal icon, a foremost advocate, a mentor to generations of lawyers, and a steadfast champion of the rule of law, justice, and professional excellence.

CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN SAN, CFR, OFR

Life Bencher Former President, Nigerian Bar Association
Former Chairman, Body of Benchers. Pro-Chancellor & Chairman of Council, University of Lagos

On the Auspicious Occasion of his 75th BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY

today, 18 November 2026

and the unveiling of
"WOLE OLANIPEKUN THROUGH THE CASES"
A Six-Volume Compendium Chronicling Landmark Cases and 50 Years of Distinguished
Legal Practice and Jurisprudential Contributions tomorrow, 19 November 2026.

May the Almighty continue to grant you good health, wisdom, strength, and many more years of fruitful service to the Bar, the Bench, and the nation.

Signed:

HRM Oba (Dr) Samuel Adejimi Adu Alagbado, Agirilala II, Ogoga of Ikere Kingdom
H.E. Chief (Mrs.) Monisade Christianah Afuye, Deputy Governor, Ekiti State
H.E Surv. Abiodun Aluko, Fmr. Deputy Governor, Ekiti State
H.E. Prof. Kolapo Olusola-Eleka, Fmr. Deputy Governor, Ekiti State
Mr. Femi Ekundayo, DFIOD, FCIB
Prof. Dele Olowokudejo, National President, Ikere Development Forum
Engr. Tunde Fakoyede
Engr. Lucas Ijasan
Omooba Niyi Fabikun, FCA
Mr. Tunde Arifayan
Mrs. Oluyemisi Adefarati
AIG(Rtd.) Tunde Ogunsakin Bashorun of Ikere
Prof. Babatola Ayodele, Vice Chancellor, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti
Prof. Bayode Popoola, Vice Chancellor, Adeyemi Fed. Univ. of Education, Ondo
Prof. Pius Deji Olanrewaju
Prof. Tayo Ajayi
Engr. Bolanle Ayodele
Chief Sola Adewumi, FCA, Otunba of Ikere
Dr. Kemi & Wole Oluyede
Hon. (Sqdr. Ldr (Rtd) Olu Egbejoda Adamolekun, Chairman, Ikere LGA
Mr. Bimbo Ogundipe
Mr. Ola Olanipekun, SAN
Mr. Dayo Akinlaja, SAN
Mrs Rhoda Ojo, Chairperson, Ekiti State TESCOM
Prince Feyi Ogoji, FCA
Otunba Sola Tunji Ajifa, FCA
Chief Akintunde Afuye, Asoju Oba of Ikere
Chief (Prof.) Damilola Olajide, Baale of Ilupeju, Ikere
Mr. Olubunmi Atobiloye, FCA
Pastor Boluwaji Alabi
Barr. Niyi Idowu
Mr. Kola Alabi
Mr. Foluso Alaba
Pastor 'Tope Orolu
Mr. Temitope Ajayi, SSA to the President
Chief (Engr) Ayodele Igbekele, Aare Atuluse of Ikere
Mr. Kolawole Ayeni, FCA
Dr. Tunde Olujobi
Mr. Harrison Niyi Alonge
Mr. Oladayo Orolu, FCA

W'Bank communications director visits Nigeria as group targets $10.7b climate investment

By Isaac Chibuife and Abigail Ikhaghu

THE World Bank Group's Director of Regional Stakeholder Engagement, Communications and External Relations, Edith Jibunoh, is visiting Abuja, Lagos and Accra to engage stakeholders on job creation, investment, youth development and public trust.

The visit is aimed at strengthening dialogue with media practitioners, business leaders, communications professionals, academics and young people, according to a statement by the Bank.

In Abuja, Jibunoh will represent the World Bank Group at the 13th World Public Relations Forum (WPRF), scheduled for November 15 to 21, where she is expected to participate in discussions on responsible communication, public trust and sustainable development.

She will also meet media and communications leaders to discuss how development institutions can improve transparency and public engagement.

In Lagos, Jibunoh will hold discussions with business leaders and entrepreneurs on investment, enterprise growth and job creation. She will also engage students and faculty members of the School of Media and Communication, Pan-Atlantic University, on the role of evidence and transparency in building public trust.

Her visit to Accra, Ghana, will focus on youth employment, entrepreneurship, skills development and economic opportunities. A session with young people and other stakeholders will examine opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), skills acquisition and the creative economy.

According to the organiser, the engagements will provide an opportunity for the World Bank Group to listen to stakeholders, understand their expectations and incorporate their perspectives into its communication and engagement strategies across West and Central Africa.

Jibunoh oversees stakeholder engagement and communications across the Bank's regional offices, including its Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) mandate and corporate operational policies.

Meanwhile, the World Bank Group has unveiled climate-related investments expected to attract an additional $10.7 billion in private capital, alongside more than $6.9 billion in investment, with a focus on job creation, industrial growth and infrastructure development across several countries.

The investments, announced at the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya, Türkiye, cover agriculture, manufacturing, renewable energy, water, sanitation, urban transport and global supply chains.

Access Pensions hails pension reforms

THE Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of Access Pensions, Sa'adu Jijji, has joined other pension industry leaders in recognising President Bola Tinubu's interventions in the pension sector as the National Pension Commission (PenCom) unveiled new measures to improve retirees' welfare.

The recognition took place at the Presidential Pension Security Initiatives Launch held at the State House, Abuja, where the President received the Presidential Pension Legacy Award from the pension industry.

Tinubu was represented at the event by the President of the Senate, Godswill Akpabio, while the award was presented by PenCom's Director-General, Omolola Oloworaran, and Jijji.

The event, organised by PenCom, also featured the unveiling of the Minimum Pension Guarantee (MPG), which provides for a minimum monthly pension of N52,500 for eligible retirees under the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS), and PenCare, a healthcare initiative designed to provide low-income retirees with free access to essential medical services.



Spokesman of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Osagie Edward (left); Spokesman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, (EFCC), Dele Oyewole; Spokesman of the Nigerian Defence headquarters, Major General Samaila Mohammed Uba and Former Force Public Relations Officer, (FPRO) Deputy Commissioner of Police Muyiwa Odejobi at the ongoing world Public Relations Forum in Abuja.

Africa loses up to $125 billion yearly to illicit financial flows, says AU

By Isaac Chibuife

AFRICA loses between $80 billion and $125 billion annually to illicit financial flows, depriving governments of resources needed to finance infrastructure, social services and economic development, the African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AUABC) has said.

The board's chairperson, Kwami Edem Senanu, disclosed this yesterday in Abuja at the first General Assembly of the African Asset Recovery Practitioners' Forum (AARP-F).

Senanu said the losses represented about 25 per cent of the continent's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and nearly half of its domestic revenue mobilisation capacity.

He said United Nations partners estimated Africa's annual losses from illicit financial flows at about $80 billion, while other stakeholders put the figure as high as $125 billion.

According to him, recovering stolen assets could provide African countries with substantial resources to address infrastructure and social development needs, including the construction of hospitals, schools and roads.

He urged governments to move beyond policy commitments and declarations to sustained efforts to trace, recover and return stolen assets.

Senanu said the Forum was established to strengthen cooperation among asset recovery experts, prosecutors and anti-corruption agencies across the continent in tackling illicit financial flows and recovering proceeds of crime.

The Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Lateef Fagbemi (SAN), called for a common continental standard operating procedure to guide the tracing, freezing, seizure, confiscation, return and management of stolen assets.

He said the framework should respect the laws and sovereignty of individual countries while establishing minimum standards, clear procedures for mutual legal assistance, secure information-sharing mechanisms and safeguards for due process and third-party rights.

Fagbemi also called for greater transparency in beneficial ownership records, improved capacity to trace digital assets, professional training for practitioners and independent reporting on the management and use of recovered assets.

Underwriter links workplace wellness to insurance awareness

By Bankole Orimisan

NEM Insurance has intensified efforts to promote workplace wellness and deepen public awareness of insurance protection through an employee fitness initiative in Lagos.

The exercise, which formed part of the company's workplace wellness programme, involved staff members walking from its head office in Obanikoro, along Ikorodu Road, to Maryland and back at the weekend.

Beyond promoting physical activity, the initiative provided an opportunity for the insurer to engage members of the public on the importance of protecting their lives and properties through insurance, while reinforcing its customer service philosophy, NEM Care.

The programme also featured aerobics, table tennis competitions and other recreational activities designed to encourage healthy lifestyles, improve employee engagement and strengthen workplace relationships.

The company also recognised employees celebrating birthdays during the period as part of efforts to promote staff appreciation and team bonding.

Speaking at the event, Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of NEM Insurance Plc, Andrew Ikekhua, stressed the importance of regular physical exercise, describing employee health and wellbeing as critical to productivity and corporate performance.

"Regular fitness is no longer an option; it is a necessity for longevity and peak performance. At NEM, we believe that our greatest asset is our people, and their health remains our top priority," he said.

PalmPay takes fraud prevention campaign to communities

By Adeyemi Adepetun

PALMPAY is taking its fraud prevention campaign beyond digital platforms through community outreach and public education as it marks another edition of its Fraud Awareness Week.

The initiative, which the fintech company has supported for three consecutive years, forms part of its broader PalmPay Dey for You campaign aimed at helping customers and members of the public recognise potential threats, protect their accounts and make safer financial decisions.

As digital fraud tactics continue to evolve, the company said combining technology with continuous public education had become essential to protecting consumers.

It noted that while security tools remained important, helping people understand how fraud occurs and how to respond to suspicious activities was equally critical.

Over the years, PalmPay has used Fraud Awareness Week to strengthen collaboration with industry stakeholders and take fraud prevention discussions beyond its digital platforms through campaigns, public engagement and community outreach.

A major highlight has been its annual Fraud Awareness Walk, which has developed into a community engagement platform for taking fraud prevention education directly to residents.

By engaging business owners, commuters and other members of the public, the walk provides opportunities to share practical safety tips and encourage individuals to take an active role in protecting themselves.

The initiative reflects the company's position that building a safer digital financial ecosystem requires shared responsibility among financial institutions, customers, industry stakeholders and the wider public.

FirstBank opens new self-service banking centre in Lagos

By Isaac Chibuife

FIRSTBANK Nigeria has expanded its digital banking network with the opening of a 24-hour self-service centre in Festac Town, Lagos, allowing customers to conduct routine transactions outside conventional banking hours.

The Digital Xperience Centre (DXC), commissioned yesterday, provides facilities for cash withdrawals and deposits, fund transfers, account opening, card requests, statement generation and customer complaints.

Speaking at the commissioning, the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Olusegun Alebiosu, said the centre would remain accessible on Sundays and at other times when conventional banking halls were closed.

He said customers could also update personal details, including phone numbers, National Identification Numbers (NIN) and Bank Verification Numbers (BVN), as well as block ATM cards and stop transactions when they suspected unauthorised access to their accounts.

Alebiosu explained that the cash deposit machine counts notes according to their denominations and issues a teller as confirmation of the transaction.

He said the facility would allow customers to deposit cash securely without having to carry it home or wait for conventional banking hours.

He said the bank chose Festac because of its large population and the presence of a regional branch, adding that improved security in the area had also supported the decision.

$4tr finance gap threatens MSMEs in developing countries, says report

MICRO, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across developing countries face a $4 trillion financing gap, limiting their ability to expand, trade, compete and create jobs, the World Bank Group has said.

The challenge, according to the Bank's newly released Finance and Prosperity 2026 report, persists despite MSMEs accounting for 90 per cent of businesses and 75 per cent of workers in emerging market and developing economies (EMDEs).

The report identified poor access to credit and equity financing among the major constraints preventing smaller businesses from expanding their operations and contributing more significantly to economic growth.

It said access to formal loans could increase employment in MSMEs by an average of 12 per cent and boost sales and profits by about 18 per cent.

Between 2019 and 2023, the financing gap for MSMEs reached $4 trillion, according to the accompanying MSME Finance Gap report, which tracked country-level shortfalls and identified where financing constraints were most concentrated.

The assessment also examined barriers limiting financial service providers' ability to assess and serve MSMEs, particularly in countries eligible for financing from the International Development Association (IDA) and fragile and conflict-affected settings.

The World Bank warned that closing the financing gap was becoming increasingly urgent, with 1.2 billion young people in developing countries expected to reach working age over the next 10 to 15 years.

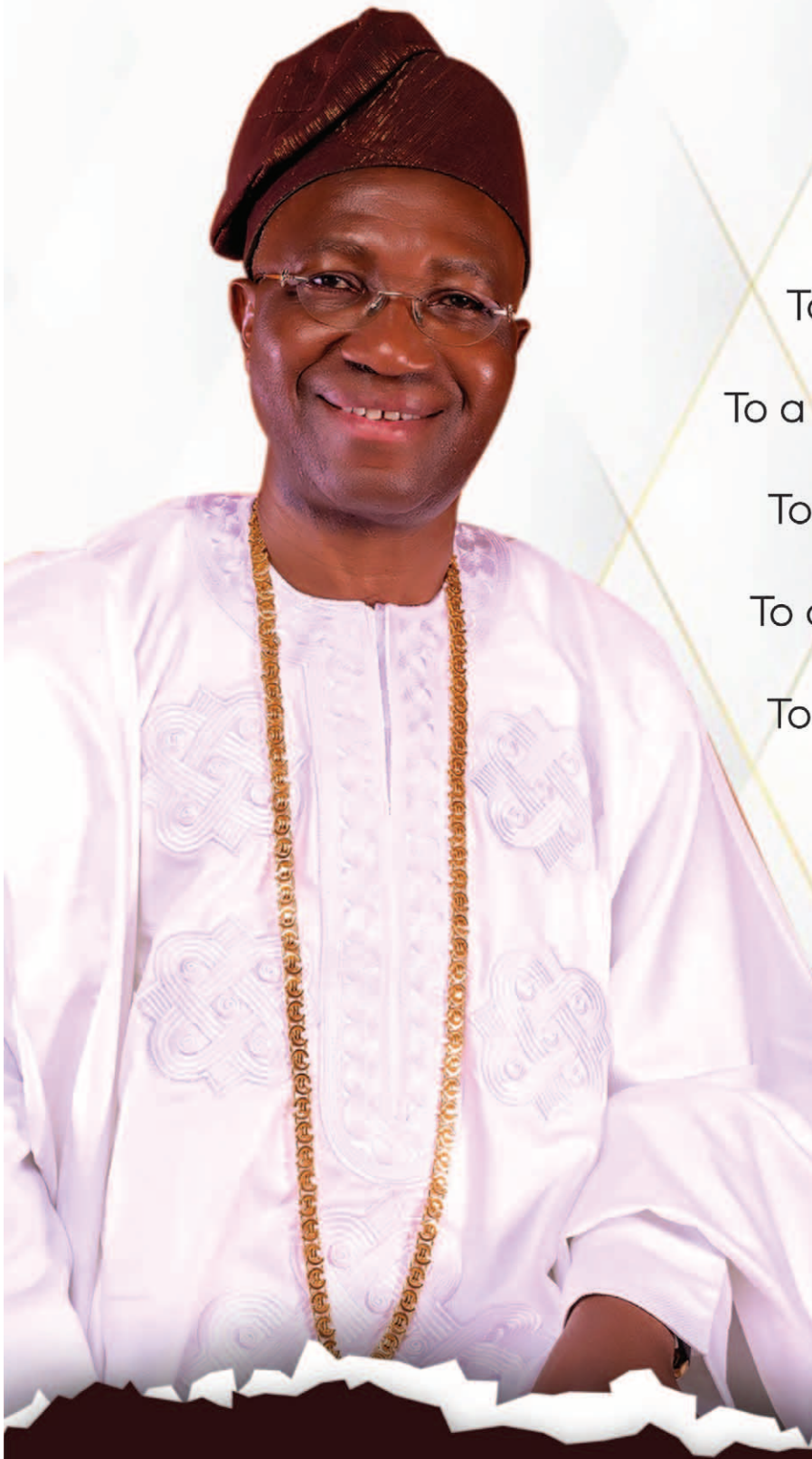
It said expanding access to finance would be critical to accelerating job creation and providing economic opportunities for the rapidly growing workforce.

"MSMEs face four major constraints to growth: they are invisible to financial systems because they lack a digital footprint of their transactions, disconnected from markets and services, burdened by regulatory complexity, and chronically underfinanced," World Bank Group Vice President for Prosperity, Pablo Saavedra, said.

The Finance and Prosperity Report also examined the overall performance of financial sectors across EMDEs.

It noted that the conflict in the Middle East had contributed to rising commodity prices, tighter financial conditions and increased market volatility, exposing vulnerable developing economies to additional risks.

HEARTY CHEERS!



To a legendary titan of unrivalled distinction

To a father whose sternness is rooted in affection

To a mentor whose North Star gives direction

To a teacher whose life is a lesson in perfection

To a catalyst for divine purpose and elevation

To a custodian of values and inspiration

Happy
75th
Birthday, Sir!

CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN, CFR ,SAN

Akintola Makinde, SAN & Omotade Makinde



Congratulations

ON YOUR

75TH BIRTHDAY

CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN, SAN,CFR

The Governing Council, Senate, University Management, Staff and Students of Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo, heartily felicitate with Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and former Chairman of the Governing Council of the University, on the joyous occasion of his 75th birthday.

Your distinguished career at the Bar, exceptional leadership, commitment to justice and invaluable contributions to the development of education and national development remain a source of inspiration to generations.

Your enduring support for Ajayi Crowther University and your exemplary service to the institution are deeply appreciated and celebrated.

As you mark this remarkable milestone, we pray that Almighty God will continue to bless you with sound health, renewed strength, abundant grace, and many more fruitful years of impactful service to humanity.

May the years ahead bring you greater fulfilment, peace, and joy.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

AJAYI CROWTHER UNIVERSITY
SCIENTIA PROBITAS

Signed:

Prof. Ebunoluwa Olufemi Oduwole, FNAL, FCIA, FEMTAN
Vice-Chancellor,
Ajayi Crowther University,
Oyo.

TRIBUTE TO A LEGAL TITAN

75

It is with profound joy, immense respect, and deep admiration that we, the Management and Staff of **Afe Babalola & Co.**, join the global legal community, distinguished statesmen, and well-wishers in celebrating a legendary figure of the Nigerian Bar and Bench;
Chief Wole Olanipekun, CFR, SAN
on the historic milestone of his **75th Birthday Anniversary**.
For over five decades, Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, has stood as a towering colossus in Nigerian jurisprudence. From his record-setting elevation to the rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria at a remarkably young age to his meritorious stewardship as President of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and Chairman of the august Body of Benchers, his career has been a masterclass in advocacy, principled leadership, and unwavering dedication to the rule of law.
As a legal titan, Chief Olanipekun has exemplified the finest traditions of our noble profession with profound intellect, fearless advocacy, and an unyielding commitment to justice. His contributions have not only shaped Nigerian constitutional and commercial jurisprudence but have also inspired generations of advocates to pursue legal practice with honor and dignity.
As you attain the graceful age of **75**, it is our sincere prayer that the Almighty God continue to endow you with robust health, sound mind, peace, and wisdom as you continue to serve as a beacon of guidance for the legal profession and our great nation at large.

Happy Birthday



Chief
WOLE OLANIPEKUN, SAN,CFR

Signed:
Management
Afe Babalola & Co
Ibadan, Lagos, Abuja and Port-Harcourt Office



75 Years of Courage

Warmest birthday to a distinguished legal icon, idealist and accomplished professional whose life continues to exemplify excellence, integrity, service and compassion.

Beyond your professional accomplishments, your dedication and generosity in improving the lives of others remain a source of inspiration.

As you celebrate another glorious year, may Almighty God bless you with renewed strength, sound health, greater wisdom and abundance prosperity.



Chief
WOLE OLANIPEKUN, SAN, CFR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Signed:
PRINCE TOYE OYINLOLA

Happy 75th Birthday

Celebrating

Chief Oluwole Olanipekun

SAN, OFR, CFR, LL.D, D.LITT, FCIArb., FNIALS, FIMC

A life worth celebrating,
a legacy worth honouring
and a journey worth
applauding.



Wishes From

1 PRINCE LATEEF FAGBEMI,SAN
2 OYINKANSOLA BADEJO-OKUSANYA, SAN
3. HE.O.C. J OKOCHA, SAN, OFR
4. DR. OLISA AGBAKOBA, SAN, OON.
5. AUGUSTINE ALEGEH, SAN, CON
6. PAUL USORO, SAN & MFON USORO
7. MAZI AFAM OSIGWE, SAN
8. CHIEF AKIN OLUJINMI, CON, SAN
9. PRINCE ADETOKUNBO KAYODE CON, SAN
10. PROFESSOR YUSUF ALI, SAN
11. YAKUBU A H RUBA, SAN
12. OLADIPO OKPESEYI SAN, OFR
13. AKINTOLA MAKINDE, SAN
14. SAID SANUSI, SAN
15. DR. CHUKA AGBU, SAN
16. AYO OLORUNFEMI, SAN
17. CHUKWUMA EKOMARU, SAN
18. OLUWOLE IYAMU, SAN
19. SAMMIE SOMIARI, SAN
20. AHMAD USMAN EL-MARZUQ, LIFE BENCHER
21. OLAJIDE SALAMI, SAN
22. ABDUL MOHAMMED RAFINDADI, SAN
23. ADE IPAYE ESQ
24. ADEBAYO OBA ADELODUN, SAN
25. DAYO AKINLAJA, SAN
26. PROFESSOR ADEWALE OLAWOYIN, SAN
27. AKIN OSINBAJO, SAN
28. SENATOR ADENIYI ADEGBONMIRE, SAN
29. DR. MURITALA ABDUL-RASHEED, SAN
30. PROFESSOR ABIOLA SANNI, SAN
31. CHUKWUDI ADIUKWU, SAN
32. SAMUEL TOMI OLOGUNORISA, SAN
33. SUNUSI MUSA, SAN
34. ADELEKE AGBOLA, SAN
35. CHIEF AYOTUNDE OGUNLEYE, SAN
36. RA LAWAL -RABANA, SAN
37. RASHEED OKIKI ADEGOKE, SAN
38. CHIEF ABIODUN OWONIKOKO, SAN
39. DR. ALEXANDER IZINYON, SAN, OFR
40. CHIEF YOMI ALLIYU, SAN
41. HAKEEM OLATUNDE AFOLABI, SAN
42. PROF YEMI OKE, SAN
43. CHIEF JOE-KYARI GADZAMA, OFR,MFR,SAN
44. CHIEF (DR.) CHARLES UWENSUYI-EDOSOMWAN, SAN
45. ADERIBIGBE ADE ADEDEJI, SAN
46. ADEYEMI AJIBADE, SAN
47. DR JOSEPH NWOBIKE, SAN
48. PROFESSOR OLUKAYODE OLATOKE, SAN
49. PROFESSOR TAIWO OSIPITAN, SAN
50. DEACON DELE ADESINA, SAN
51. OLUMUYIWA ADUROJA, SAN
52. SIR STEVE ADEHI, SAN
53. ALHAJI TAJUDEEN OLASENI OLADOJA, SAN
54. ADESEGUN AJIBOLA, SAN
55. PROFESSOR BANKOLE SODIPO, SAN
56. ALIYU M. ABDULLAHI, SAN
57. ADENIJI KAZEEM, SAN
58. PROFESSOR OLANREWAJU FAGBOHUN, SAN
59. TAYO OYETIBO, SAN
60. DR.FUNMILAYO ADUNNI QUADRI, SAN
61. DR. WAHAB SHITTU, SAN
62. TEMILOLU ADAMOLEKUN, SAN
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64. CHIEF UMEH KALU, SAN
65. CHIEF MIKE IGBOKWE, SAN
66. OLALEKAN OJO, SAN
67. OLUSEGUN FABUNMI, SAN
68. CHUKWUKA IKWUAZOM, SAN
69. OLUMIDE SOFOWORA, SAN
70. UTHMAN ABDULHAKEEM MUSTHAPHA, SAN
71. KEHINDE OGUNWUMIJU, SAN, OFR
72. AYOOLA AJAYI, SAN
73. PROF MAMMAN LAWAN YUSUFARI, SAN.
74. SENI ADIO, SAN
75. ABDUL ADAMU FAGGE, SAN
76. DR KAYODE AJULO, OON, SAN
77. DADA AWOSIKA, SAN
78. SENATOR VICTOR NDOMA-EGBA CON, SAN
79. SOLOMON E. UMOH, SAN
80. DR. REMI OLATUBORA, SAN
81. DR. ONYECHI IKPEAZU, OON, SAN
82. MR TUNDE AFE-BABALOLA, SAN
83. MOYOSORE ONIGBANJO, SAN
84. CHIEF EMMANUEL UKALA, SAN
85. ANDREW ODUM, SAN
86. ADETUNJI OYEYIPO, SAN
87. CYRIL TOYIN PINHEIRO, SAN
88. KOLADE OBAFEMI, SAN
89. ABIMBOLA AKEREDOLU, SAN
90. ADEMOLA ABIMBOLA, SAN
91. CHIEF CHRIS UCHE, SAN
92. MUTALUBI OJO ADEBAYO, SAN
93. ISHAQ MAGAJI, SAN, RG.
94. OLUWAKEMI BALOGUN, SAN
95. DR ADEOLA OMOTUNDE, SAN
96. CHIEF FELIX O FAGBOHUNGBE, SAN
97. BIRIYAI DAMBO, SAN
98. JIBRIN SAMUEL OKUTEPA, SAN
99. JOE AGI, SAN
100. DR. MUIZ A BANIRE, SAN, OON
101. MARCEL ORU, SAN, FCIArb(UK)
102. SHUAIB AGBARERE MUSTAPHA, SAN
103. LAWAL PEDRO, SAN
104. OLUSEUN ABIMBOLA, SAN
105. CHIEF EMEKA OBEGOLU, SAN
106. MUMUNI ISHOLA HANAFI, SAN
107. CHIEF AYODEJI ADEDIPE, SAN
108. MUSIBAU ADETUNBI, SAN
109. CHIEF EMEKA NGIGE, SAN, OFR
110. PAUL HARRIS OGBOLE, SAN
111. CHIEF IFEDAYO ADEDIPE SAN
112. MRS FOLASHADE ALLI, SAN
113. CHIEF ANTHONY MALIK, SAN
114. CHIEF ADENIYI AKINTOLA, CON, SAN
115. OLUMIDE OJEDOKUN, SAN
116. ASIWAJU YEMI ADESHINA SAN
117. LESLIE OLUTAYO NYLANDER, SAN
118. BAMIDELE IBIRONKE, SAN
119. CHIEF ANTHONY IDIGBE, SAN
120. CHIEF GEORGE. C IGBOKWE, SAN
121. SENATOR SURAJUDEEN AJIBOLA BASIRU
122 DR. MONDAY UBANI, SAN
123. ABIODUN.A. OLATUNJI, SAN
124. HE. MOHAMMED ABUBAKAR, SAN
125. OLUKAYODE ENITAN, SAN
126. LUKMAN FAGBEMI, SAN
127. ALEX MUOKA, SAN
128. CHIEF BOLAJI AYORINDE SAN, OFR
129. KEMI PINHEIRO, OFR; SAN
130. ADAMSON ADEBORO, SAN
131. DR. DAPO OLANIPEKUN, SAN
132. BODE OLANIPEKUN, SAN
133. FEMI FALANA, SAN, CON
134. KAZEEM ADEKUNLE GBADAMOSI,SAN
135. EMEKA OZOANI, SAN
136. OLUWOLE AFOLABI, SAN
137. CHIEF DURO ADEYELE,SAN
138. JONATHAN GUNU TAIDI, SAN
139. ADESINA ADEGBITE ESQ
140. CHIEF PAUL C. OBI, SAN.
141. ADEOLA ADEDIPE, SAN
142. OLA OLANIPEKUN, SAN
143. MICHAEL J. NUMA SAN
144. DAYO OSHODI, SAN
145. **BABATUNDE OGALA, OFR, SAN**

Pompeo urges Washington to honour pledge as attacks on Christians continue

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

curity engagements, fresh attacks in Plateau State have reportedly claimed at least 14 lives across Mangu, Riyom, Barkin Ladi and Bokkos local government areas.

According to a report by *persecution.org*, the killings occurred between Sunday, November 15, and Monday, November 16, with armed attackers reportedly targeting rural settlements and ambushing residents travelling between communities.

The latest violence came barely days after Tinubu visited Jos on Saturday, November 14, for an All Progressives Congress political rally, where he apologised to residents for failing to visit communities affected by violence during an earlier trip to the state.

He promised to rebuild destroyed communities and facilitate the return of internally displaced persons to their ancestral homes.

"Forgive me if you didn't see me in the hinterland, but I saw the devastation. I got the report from the governor. I saw horror in the faces of our people," he said.

The President also disclosed that 1,000 forest guards were undergoing training, while surveillance cameras earlier promised to the state had been procured to strengthen security monitoring and early warning operations.

However, the report said nine people were killed when armed men invaded the Zwagal community in Jipal District, Mangu Local Government Area, at about 9:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Other killings were reported in Sho village in Barkin Ladi, Sambak and Jol communities in Riyom, and Bokkos Local Government Area, where a unit commander of the state-owned security outfit, Operation Rainbow, and another person were reportedly killed in an ambush.

The Berom Youth Moulders Association condemned the recurring attacks, urging the Federal Government, Governor Caleb Mutfwang and security agencies to strengthen deployments in vulnerable communities and prosecute those responsible.

Community sources cited in the report alleged that Fulani ethnic militias were behind the attacks and linked the violence to attempts to displace indigenous populations. However, the allegations and motives behind the attacks have not been independently established.

Scholars warn against security dependence

MEANWHILE, security and international relations scholars have raised concerns over the implications of U.S. military involvement in Nigeria's counterterrorism operations, warning that foreign assistance must strengthen rather than weaken the country's security institutions.

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

Sunbeth acquires controlling stake in Livestock Feeds Plc

CONTINUED FROM PAGE I

Sunbeth's long-term strategy to build an integrated protein business spanning animal nutrition, poultry and cattle production, and meat processing. We will pursue this strategy through disciplined, phased investment, with a clear focus on strengthening Livestock Feeds and supporting the growth of Nigeria's livestock industry."

Sunbeth has also announced the appointment of five new directors to the Board of Livestock Feeds Plc, effective 17 November 2026.

The newly appointed directors are Mr Sam Okuwlehi, Mr Seyi Ebenezer, Professor Franklin Nnaemeka Ngwu, PhD, Mrs Mary Mulili, and Mr Farrukh Siddiqui. They will join three existing directors who will continue to serve on the Board: Mr Joseph I.D. Dada, Mr Adegboyega Adedeji, and Mr Abayomi Adeyemi.

Employees remain central to the company's future. Sunbeth intends to work collaboratively with the Livestock Feeds team, drawing on its experience and knowledge as the business enters its next phase.

For customers, distributors and suppliers, the priority is to sustain trusted relationships, maintain product quality and strengthen supply reliability. Future improvements will be introduced through a structured and carefully managed process.

As the majority shareholder, Sunbeth is committed to supporting sound governance, operational resilience and disciplined investment to build lasting value for Livestock Feeds Plc and all its shareholders.

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LAGOS OFFICE:
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07069747993

PUBLIC NOTICE
OF CHANGE OF NAME
FORMER NAME:
KIDS KASTLE INTER-AMERICAN SCHOOL LIMITED
NEW NAME:
HERITAGE KASTLE SCHOOLS LTD
Notice is hereby given to the general public that KIDS KASTLE INTER-AMERICAN SCHOOL LIMITED has changed its name to HERITAGE KASTLE SCHOOLS LTD.
All existing certificates, credentials, records, documents, rights and obligations of the School remain valid and unaffected by this change of name.
The general public, parents, guardians, students, relevant authorities and all stakeholders are hereby advised to take note of this change.
SIGNED:
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
HERITAGE KASTLE SCHOOLS LTD

ALWAYS ADVERTISE ON THIS PAGE EVERY WEDNESDAY

PUBLIC NOTICE
SUBSCRIBERS WHO HAVE PURCHASED ANY THREE BEDROOM UNITS ON THE NINE FLOOR DEVELOPMENT AT JENKINS COURT, PLOT 1388A, OLOSA STREET, VICTORIA ISLAND, LAGOS FROM GRAND DESIGNS SAGE HOMES LIMITED SHOULD PLEASE CONTACT THE SOLICITORS TO THE LANDOWNERS (JEHEN NIGERIA LIMITED).
KOFO COKER & COMPANY
LEGAL PRACTITIONERS & TAX CONSULTANTS
45, ADEMOLA STREET, OFF AWOLOWO ROAD, SOUTH-WEST IKOYI, LAGOS
TEL: 08035004433, 08055883344

Geomatics Nigeria Limited



75 YEARS
OF SERVICE
INTEGRITY
EXCELLENCE AND
ENDURING LEGACY

As Chief Wole Olanipekun, CFR, SAN, LL.D., D.Litt., FCIArb., FNIALS, marks his 75th birthday on November 18, 2026, the Management and Staff of Geomatics Nigeria Limited (GNL) heartily felicitate this distinguished legal luminary, astute leader, philanthropist and exemplary nation-builder.

We have seen Chief Wole Olanipekun's distinguished legal career, unwavering integrity and lifelong commitment to service reflect the enduring principles of responsible stewardship: protecting institutions, nurturing people, and leaving society stronger for future generations. His legacy of excellence, mentorship and nation-building continues to inspire our profession and our pursuit of sustainable impact.

As you attain this remarkable milestone, we celebrate not only your years, but the legacy of excellence you continue to build, the lives you have touched and the generations you continue to inspire.

Happy 75th Birthday, Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, CFR!
May your golden legacy continue to shine brightly, and may the years ahead bring you abundant joy, peace and fulfilment.
Congratulations!!!

Signed
Festus Funso Akindunni, PhD
Managing Director
On behalf of the Management and Staff of Geomatics Nigeria Limited.

IN THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIGERIA
IN THE LAGOS JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT LAGOS
ON TUESDAY THE 10TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2026
BEFORE THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE MUSA KAKAKI
JUDGE

SUIT NO: FHC/LAG/PET/52/2026

IN THE MATTER OF

THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 2020
AND

IN THE MATTER OF
AN APPLICATION UNDER SECTION 715(3) OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 2020;

CORONATION INSURANCE PLC ..... PETITIONER

MRS A. M. TOPONOMO-ADEGBITE
CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
ASST. CHIEF EXEC. OFFICER
FEDERAL HIGH COURT
IKOYI, LAGOS
DATE

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

ENROLMENT OF COURT ORDER

UPON THIS PETITION dated and filed on the 29th day of October, 2026 coming before this Honourable court and praying for the following orders.

1.1. **An Order of this Honourable Court** approving the scheme of arrangement between the Petitioner and holders of its fully paid-up ordinary shares under section 715 of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020 (the "**Scheme**").

1.2. **An Order of this Honourable Court** granting leave to the Petitioner to carry out all actions incidental and consequential to the implementation of the Scheme.

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1. **BACKGROUND AND PARTICULARS OF THE PETITIONER**

2.1 The Petitioner is a public limited company with RC No. 1647 incorporated under the laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and duly licensed to carry on insurance business in Nigeria. **Attached herewith and marked as Annexure 1 is a copy of the Petitioner's Memorandum and Articles of Association.**

2.2 The registered office of the Petitioner is at 119, Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria.

2. **OBJECTS OF THE SCHEME**

3.1 The Scheme involves the acquisition and transfer of shares held by the Scheme Shareholders of the Petitioner (hereinafter referred to as the "Scheme Shares") to Coronation Capital (Mauritius) Limited which is the majority shareholder in the Petitioner (the "Core Shareholder") in exchange for consideration for the Scheme.

3.2 Settlement of the consideration for the Scheme to which each Scheme Shareholder is entitled under the Scheme will be implemented in full in accordance with the Scheme without regard to any lien, right of set-off,

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Core Shareholder may otherwise be, or claim to be entitled, against such Scheme Shareholder.

3.3 As from and including the Effective Date:

(i) the share certificates representing the Scheme Shares shall cease to be valid for any purpose;

(ii) in respect of the Scheme Shareholders holding the Scheme Shares in uncertificated form, CSCS shall be instructed to transfer such shares to the Core Shareholder;

(iii) the Petitioner's Register of Members will be updated to exclude the names of the Scheme Shareholders; and

(iv) the Petitioner's shares will be wholly owned by the Core Shareholders and the Remainder Shareholders.

The full details of the Scheme are contained on pages 23 to 27 of the Scheme Document dated 26 June 2023 (the "Scheme Document"). **Attached herewith and marked as Annexure 2 is a copy of the Scheme Document.**

3. **COURT-ORDERED MEETING OF THE PETITIONER AND RESULTS THEREOF**

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4.1 By an order made by this Honourable Court in Suit No. FHC/L/CS/1137/2023 - *Re: Coronation Insurance PLC* on 26 June 2023 (the "**Order**"), it was ordered that the Petitioner should convene a meeting of the holders of its fully paid ordinary shares for the purpose of considering, and if thought fit, approving (with or without modification) the Scheme. **A certified copy of the Order made in Suit No. FHC/L/CS/1137/2023 is herein attached as Annexure 3.**

4.2 The Order made in Suit No. **FHC/L/CS/1137/2023** directed that Mr. Mutiu Sunmonu, the Chairman of the Petitioner's Board of Directors should act as Chairman of the meeting or failing him, Mr. Olusegun Ogbonnewo.

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4.3 In compliance with requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the Petitioner subsequently dispatched an addendum to the notice of the meeting on 1 December 2023, including additional information such as the Scheme Consideration. The addendum to the notice of the meeting of the Petitioner was advertised in the national newspapers. **Copies of the publications made in the said newspapers are attached hereto as Annexures 4a and 4b respectively.**

4.4 Pursuant to and in the manner directed by the Order, a meeting of the holders of the fully paid ordinary shares of the Petitioner was duly convened and held on

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December 22, 2023. The Petitioner's meeting was held at The Lagoon Restaurant, 1C Ozumba Mbadiwe Avenue, Victoria Island, Lagos. The Chairman of the 1st Petitioner's Board of Directors acted as Chairman of the meeting.

4.5 At the meeting of the Petitioner so held, 97.88 % (ninety-seven point eight *percent*) of the shareholders of the Petitioner present and voting at the meeting voted in favour of the Scheme and the resolutions approving the Scheme were passed without any modification. Ms. Mary Agha, the Company Secretary of the Petitioner has duly reported the outcome of the said meeting. **A copy of the extract of the said meeting of the Petitioner is attached to this Petition as Annexure 5.**

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

4.6 The Petitioner has provided a report made by Ernst & Young, the independent scrutineer at the meeting of the Petitioner on the result of the voting at the said meeting. **Attached and marked as Annexure 6 is a copy of the Scrutineer's reports in respect of the meeting of the Petitioner.**

4. **DEVELOPMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE SCHEME**

4.1 On 27 December 2023, following the court ordered meeting and resolutions being passed in favour of the Scheme, the Petitioner applied to the SEC for formal approval of the Scheme. However, the SEC noted its

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inability to proceed with the review due to 3 (three) pending litigation matters all of which have now fully and finally concluded with no pending appeals:

4.1.1. Suit No. FHC/L/CS/1657/2023 (Hyacinth U. F. Enuha vs. Coronation Insurance & 13 Ors) was formally discontinued and struck out by the Court on March 25, 2026.

4.1.2. Suit No. FHC/L/CP/1637/23 (Chief Akinsanya Adeolu & 2 Ors vs. Coronation Insurance Plc & 3 Ors) was struck out for lack of diligent prosecution on March 12, 2026.

4.1.3. Suit No. FHC/L/CS/1469/2023 (Chief Aderemi Egunjobi & 4 Ors vs. OANDO PLC & 11 Ors) was dismissed in its entirety by the Court on September 18, 2026, with costs awarded in favour of the Company. **Attached and marked as Annexure 7a is the email correspondence from the SEC to the Petitioner (through its Financial Adviser).**

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

4.2 Accordingly, the Petitioner wrote to the SEC on 22 September 2026, to inform it of this development and to request formal approval of the Scheme. By an email dated 7 October 2026, the SEC requested that a formal application for approval of the Scheme be submitted together with the requisite supporting documents. **Attached and marked as**

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Annexure 7b and 7c are the correspondence between the Petitioner (through its Financial Adviser) and the SEC.

4.3 The Petitioner re-engaged the Core Shareholder and other related shareholders regarding the Scheme and the ongoing developments and received confirmation of their continued intention in carrying out the Scheme in accordance with the applicable laws. **Attached and marked as Annexures 7d and 7e are copies of the formal letters exchanged between the Petitioner and the Core Shareholder.**

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4.2. Accordingly, on 16 October 2026, the Petitioner, through its advisers, submitted an application for formal approval of the Scheme to the SEC, together with the required supporting documents including a proposed cautionary notice to the SEC for review prior to its publication on the Nigerian Exchange Limited ("NGX").

5. **AUTHORITY AND APPROVALS FOR THE SCHEME**

5.1. In an email dated 22 October 2026, the SEC confirmed that it had no objection to the content of the proposed cautionary notice, subject to the inclusion of a statement that the consideration price would be the highest trading price recorded

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during the six months preceding the date of notification on the NGX's portal. The financial advisers on behalf of the Petitioner accordingly made this amendment. On the same day, the SEC granted its formal approval of the Scheme subject to the Petitioner meeting certain additional requirements including the sanction of the Scheme by this Honourable Court. (the **"SEC Final Approval"**). **Attached and marked as Annexure 8 is a copy of the SEC Final Approval.**

5.2. The Petitioner has accordingly taken steps towards obtaining the requisite regulatory approval and seeks the sanction of this Honourable Court for the Scheme in accordance with section 715 of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020.

5.3. In the opinion of the Directors of the Petitioner, the Scheme is of benefit to all concerned and, in their opinion also, all things precedent to sanctioning the Scheme by this Honourable Court and required to be done by the Petitioner have been done. The Board of Directors of the Petitioner have also given their approval to the Scheme. **A Copy of the resolution of the Board of Directors of the Petitioner approving and recommending the Scheme is respectively attached and marked as Annexure 9.**

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6. **THE PRAYERS**

6.1. The Petitioner therefore humbly prays that the Scheme as set out on pages 23 to 27 of the Scheme Document marked Annexure 1, be sanctioned by this Honourable Court so as to be binding on the Petitioners and the respective holders of their fully paid-up ordinary shares.

6.2. In consequence of such sanction, the Petitioner further prays this Honourable Court to grant the orders sought on the face of the Petition in order to carry the Scheme into effect that:

6.2.1. the Scheme Shares be transferred to Coronation Capital Mauritius Limited, without further act or deed;

6.2.2. that holders of the Scheme Shares who do not wish to remain as Shareholders of the Petitioner, be paid the Scheme Consideration (defined in Para.7.2.6) for the transfer of the said Scheme Shares;

6.2.3. that the Directors of the Petitioner be mandated to forthwith appoint Coronation Registrars Limited as the Nominee;

6.2.4. that Coronation Registrars Limited be required to aggregate and represent the beneficial interests of the shareholders who opt to remain as shareholders

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of the Company through the Nominee arrangement as signified by completion of the Election Form;

6.2.5. that Coronation Registrars Limited be granted leave to hold the Remainder Shares in trust for the Remainder Shareholders that opt for the Nominee Arrangement.

6.2.6. that further to the determination of the Financial Adviser that the highest trading price recorded during the six months preceding the date of notification on the NGX's portal was ₦2.88, and in compliance with the SEC's requirement, the cash consideration for the transfer of the Scheme Shares be increased to ₦2.88, and all references to the cash consideration payable to the holders of the Scheme Shares in the Scheme Document be deemed to be references to ₦2.88 (the "Scheme Consideration").

6.2.7. That the NGX and the CSCS be notified and requested to terminate trading in the shares with effect from the Eligibility Date and no trading or transfer of the Petitioner's shares shall be registered after that date.

6.2.8. that upon the Scheme becoming effective, the Petitioner's shares be de-listed from NGX on the Eligibility Date and following that date, all the share certificates representing the interests of the

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Scheme Shareholders (as defined in the Scheme Document) and in the case of dematerialized share certificates, all the shares of the Petitioner that were lodged with the CSCS shall cease to be valid or to have any value.

(i) The Petitioner further prays this Honourable Court to make such incidental, consequential and supplemental orders as are necessary to ensure that the Scheme be fully and effectively implemented.

AND for such further Order or other Orders as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make in the circumstances

UPON READING the affidavit in support of Motion Ex-Parte and the Exhibits attached thereto sworn to by, Mr. Olamide Olajolo, Adult, Male, Nigerian Citizen of 119, Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, Lagos and filed at this court Registry.

AND AFTER HEARING Olayemi Adebo Esq Counsel for the Petitioner move in terms of the motion paper.

AND THE COURT, having carefully considered the application.

THE COURT DOTH MADE THIS ORDER:

1. An Order of this Honourable Court is hereby granted that the Scheme as set out on pages 23 to 27

HONOURABLE JUSTICE
MUSA KAKAKI
JUDGE

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of the Scheme Document marked Annexure 1, be sanctioned by this Honourable Court so as to be binding on the Petitioners and the respective holders of their fully paid-up ordinary shares.

i. An Order of this Honourable Court is further granted sought on the face of the Petition in order to carry the Scheme into effect that:

ii. The Scheme Shares be transferred to Coronation Capital Mauritius Limited, without further act or deed;

iii. That holders of the Scheme Shares who do not wish to remain as Shareholders of the Petitioner, be paid the Scheme Consideration (defined in Para.7.2.6) for the transfer of the said Scheme Shares;

iv. That the Directors of the Petitioner be mandated to forthwith appoint Coronation Registrars Limited as the Nominee;

v. That Coronation Registrars Limited be required to aggregate and represent the beneficial interests of the shareholders who opt to remain as shareholders of the Company through the Nominee arrangement as signified by completion of the Election Form;

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vi. That Coronation Registrars Limited be granted leave to hold the Remainder Shares in trust for the Remainder Shareholders that opt for the Nominee Arrangement.

vii. That further to the determination of the Financial Adviser that the highest trading price recorded during the six months preceding the date of notification on the NGX's portal was ₦2.88, and in compliance with the SEC's requirement, the cash consideration for the transfer of the Scheme Shares be increased to ₦2.88, and all references to the cash consideration payable to the holders of the Scheme Shares in the Scheme Document be deemed to be references to ₦2.88 (the "Scheme Consideration").

viii. That the NGX and the CSCS be notified and requested to terminate trading in the shares with effect from the Eligibility Date and no trading or transfer of the Petitioner's shares shall be registered after that date.

ix. That upon the Scheme becoming effective, the Petitioner's shares be de-listed from NGX on the Eligibility Date and following that date, all the share certificates representing the interests of the Scheme Shareholders (as defined in the Scheme Document) and in the case of dematerialized

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share certificates, all the shares of the Petitioner that were lodged with the CSCS shall cease to be valid or to have any value.

2. An Order of this Honourable Court is hereby made to the Petitioner to make such incidental, consequential and supplemental orders as are necessary to ensure that the Scheme be fully and effectively implemented.

ISSUED AT LAGOS under the seal of the Court and by the Hand of the Presiding Judge this 10th day of November, 2026.

NKWUEKE NDIDIAMAKA MARIA
REGISTRAR

MRS A.M. TOFOWOMO-ADEGBITE
CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
ASST. CHIEF EXEC. OFFICER
FEDERAL HIGH COURT
IKOYI, LAGOS
DATE 3-11-26

FEDERAL HIGH COURT
Cashier's Office
LAGOS

2015-3941-2120

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CHANGE OF NAME

ABIGAEL: I, formerly known as Adeyemo Eniola Abigael now wish to be addressed as Adeyemo Eniola Sikemi All former documents remain valid . General public take note

ADDITION OF NAME : I , formerly known as Onolumenosen Veronica now wish to be known and addressed as Onolumenosen Veronica Agboiguina. All former documents remains valid. General public take note.

ADDITION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Itual Lawal now wish to be addressed as, Itual Lawal Alfred. All former documents remains valid. General public take note.

ADDITION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Stephen Chinwedu now wish to be addressed as Stephen Chinwendu Esther. My DOB is 16-04-2006 not 06-04-2003. Former documents remain valid. Public note

ADDITION OF NAME : I, Ojulari Aditu now wish to be addressed as Ojulari Aditu Adeleke , My DOB is 1989/10/13 not 1989/7/7. All former documents remain valid. General Public take note.

ADDITION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Tochukwu Anthony Muonagolu now wish to be addressed as Tochukwu Chike Anthony Muonagolu. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ADDITION OF NAME: I, Okache Felix Ogar, now wish to be addressed as Okache Felix Michael Ogar. All former documents remain valid. General public, please take note.

ADDITION OF NAME: I, Okache Felix Ogar, now wish to be addressed as Okache Felix Michael Ogar. All former documents remain valid. General public, please take note.

ADDITION OF NAME:: I, formerly known as Annette Ofunne Akinsete now to be known as Annette Ofunne Olufunmilayo Akinsete. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ADEDEJI: I, formerly known as Osasumwen Anne Osahon now wish to be addressed as Osasumwen Anne Adedeji . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

ADEGEYE: I, formerly known as Adetunji Solomon Adegeye wish to be addressed as Adetunji Olukolade Solomon Adegeye. All other documents remain valid. Public note.

ADEKUNLE: I, Fakorede Oluwabukola Temitope now wish to be addressed as Adekunle Oluwabukola Temitope . All former documents remain valid . General public take

ADEYEMI: I, formerly known as Ogunfuwa Zacheaurs Opeyemi now known as Adeyemi Beulah Opeyemi . All former documents remain valid general public take note

ADEYEMI: I, formerly known as Oladiran Ruth Abidemi now wish to be addressed as Adeyemi Ruth Abidemi . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

AGHEDO: I, formerly known as Sonia Iyobosa Aghedo, now wish to be addressed as Sonia Iyobosa Ogbeide . All former documents remain valid, public, take note.

AJAO: I,formerly known as Adeyemi Wuraola Victoria now wish to be addressed as Ajao Wuraola Victoria all former documents remain valid . General public take note

AJIDE: I, formerly known as Ajide Dare Oluwanifemi now wish to be address as Audu Saheed Oluwadamilare. All former document remains valid, General public take note.

ALEX : I, formerly known as Miss Alex Vivian Onyiyechi, now wish to be known as Mrs. Enujekor Vivian Onyiyechi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ALOAYEH: I, formerly known as Aigbadumah Olere Samuel now wish to be addressed as Aloayeh Samuel Olere . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

AMAKA : I, formerly known as Amaka Lilian Eke now wish to be addressed as Uchenna Ndiribe Lilian Uzoamaka. All former document remains valid, General public take note.

AMINAT: I, formerly Ayotunde Aminat Odunuga now wish to be known as Ayotunde Esther Odunuga. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

ANIMASHAUN: I, formerly known as Animashaun Raheemat Tobiloba now wish to be addressed as Salako Raheemat Tobiloba. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

CHUKWU: Formerly known as Chukwu Linda Anachebe Onyinye now wish to be addressed as Chukwu Linda Onyinye Anachebe . All former document remains valid, General public take note.

CHUKWUKAMADU : I, formerly known as Odogwu, Isioma Chukwukamadu Kieran now wish to be addressed as Odogwu, Isioma Kieran.All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CHUKWUNENYE: I, formerly known as Chukwunenye Somto Kingsley now wish to be addressed as Amobi Somto Pedro. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: I, Chinedu Nwanne Uzozie, declare that I am the same person known as Chinedu Uzozie. All former documents remain valid. Banks and general public take note.

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: That Tina Oyoms and Edionwele Marvelous is same person now addressed as Edionwele Marvelous Ebehiremen. My DOB is 16-01-2000 not 16-01-1998. Former documents remains valid, Public note

CONFIRMATION OF NAME : That Omo-Abu and Omo-Abu Edison Omoneli is same person now wish to be addressed as Omo-Abu Edison Omoneli. All former documents remains valid. Public note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I,formerly known as Lepe Olusola now wish to be addressed as Lepe Sola Paul . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, Aremu Pastor Isaac Olusegun now wish to be addressed as Aremu Isaac Olusegun . All former documents remain valid. (NIS), (NIMC), general public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Ebose Innocent now wish to be addressed as Ebose Innocent Jerry . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, Iwuchukwu Ogochukwu Chiemela now wish to be addressed as Chiji Iwuchukwu Ogochukwu Chiemela. US Immigration Office, NYSC, FGC Enugu, .General Public take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, Oluka Lucky Shioma Now wish to be addressed as Akpoyibo Lucky Ishioma all former documents remain valid. Steel House Engineering Limited and general public take .

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, Orakaeze Victory Chinweuba Now wish to be addressed as Orakaeze Victory Chinwuba all former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, Rosemary Awele now wish to be addressed as Azenabor Rosemary Awele . All former documents remain valid. Ardova Plc and general public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I,formerly known as Salban Olawale Oluwatosin now wish to be addressed as Sauban Olawale Opeyemi . All former documents remain valid general public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, Iwuchukwu Chijioke Chidiebube now wish to be addressed as Chiji Iwuchukwu Chijioke Chidiebube US Immigration Office and General Public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME : I, formerly known as Maxwell Temitope Akinsola now wish to be addressed as Temitope Maxwell Akinsola . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME I, formerly known as Aboubakar Nabil Ben Bachir Nabil now wish to be addressed as Aboubakar Nabil Ben Bachir . All former documents remain valid general public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME I, Uchenna Obiego Chiazam now wish to be addressed as Obiego Uchenna All former documents remain valid . General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: My correct name is Onifade Olumide Sulaimon and not Onifade Olumide Suliamon. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME: My name was wrongly captured as Yayah Olayinka Akeeem instead of Yayah Olayinka Akeem. All former documents remain valid. NIS & General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: my name was wrongly captured as Anyanwuocha Chinasa, instead of Anyanwuocha Chinasa Juliann, All former documents remain valid. General public take note

DAVIESON: I, formerly known as Davieson Christopher Goziem now wish to be addressed as Christopher Marvelous Davieson . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

DEBORAH: I, formerly known as Michael, Tega Deborah now wish to be known as Obi, Tega Deborah. All former documents remain valid. Public notice.

EDUWA: I ,formerly known as Chioma Edith Nnorom now wish to be addressed as Chioma Edith Eduwa . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

EFETOBO: I, Chidi-Daniel Oluwabukunmi Blessing now wish to be addressed as Efetobo Oluwabukunmi Blessing . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

EGBEYEMI: I, formerly known as Alabede Funmilayo Feranmi now wish to be addressed as Egbeyemi Funmilayo Feranmi . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

EMEM: I ,formerly known as Emem Joseph Nkan now wish to be addressed as Emem Idongesit Edet . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

ESEGINE : I, formerly Esegine Victor now wish to be addressed as Eseghene Victor. My DOB is 03/04/1995 not 10/04/1994. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ETTAH : I, formerly known as Miss Maureen Bassey Ettah now wish to be addressed as Maureen Hosea Ozah. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

IFEANYI-UMENZE : I,formerly known as Obiageli Ogechukwu Ifeanyi-Umenze, now wish to be addressed as Obiageli Ogechukwu Ejiofor. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ILELABOYE : I, formerly Miss Toheebat Oluwaseyi Ilelaboye now wish to be known as Mrs Toheebat Oluwaseyi Ilelaboye-Abdullahi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

MAFIMIDIWO: I, Babatunde Esther Oluwapelumi now wish to be addressed as Mafimidiwo Esther Oluwapelumi . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

MIRACLE: I, Miracle Ihemrochi Onyebuchim now wish to be addressed as Miracle Onyebuchim Ihemrochi . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

MONDAY : I, formerly known as Usifoh Nosa Monday now wish to be known and addressed as Usifoh Joshua Nosakhale. All former documents remains valid General public take note.

MUNSE: I, Ezinne Chinetugo Chukwu now wish to be addressed as Ezinne Chinetugo Munse All former documents remain valid (NIMC) and general public take note

OBIALOR: I,formerly known as Iwuchukwu KingDavid Obialor now wish to be addressed as Chiji Iwuchukwu KingDavid Obialor all former documents remain valid . General public take

OGUN: I, formerly Precious Ogun, now wish to be addressed as Precious Ogun-Michael. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OGUNBAMISE : I, Oluwakemi Oluwafunmilayo Ogunbamise now wish to be addressed as Oluwakemi Oluwafunmilayo Oluwabamise . All former documents remain valid. MDCN, general public take note

OGUNGBE: I formerly known as Mohammed Aisha now wish to be addressed as Ogungbe Humayra Aisha . All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OGUNGBE: I, formerly known as Ogungbe Opeyemi Miracle now wish to be addressed as Ogungbe Senami Opemipo Miracle .All former documents remain valid . General public take note

OJO: I, formerly Richard Ojo Ogunleye now wish to be addressed as Richard Olutosin Ogunleye. All former documents remain valid. Public note.

OKORIE: I,formerly known as Chiemezuo Peace Nwachi now wish to be addressed as Chiemezuo Peace Okorie .All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OKORO: I, formerly known as Chidi Ihuoma Kalu Okoro now wish to be addressed as Chidi Ihuoma Iweala. All former documents remain valid. Public take note

OKOR : I, formally known as Okor Chinwe Lucy, now wishes to be address as Ogudu-Okor Chinweizu Lucy, All formal documents remain valid. General public take note.

OLANREWAJU : I formerly known as Miss. Olanrewaju Deborah Opeyemi now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Ogunlusi Deborah Opeyemi. All former documents remain valid . General public take note

OMOWUNMI : I, formerly known as Quinta Omowunmi Apeji, now wish to be address as Quinta Oiza Apeji. All former document remains valid, General public take note

ONANIYI: I, Oluwabukunmi Olajumoke Onaniyi now wish to be addressed as Oluwabukunmi Olajumoke Mogbonjubola All former documents remain valid . General public take note

ORIAKHI: I formerly known as Miss Blessing Eseohe Oriakhi, now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Blessing Eseohe Michael Oigiangbe. All former documents remains valid . General public note.

OSOEGY: I formerly known as Agabi Faiza Osoegy now wish to be addressed as Agabi Faiza Osogye. My DOB is 01-04-2007, not, 01-01-2003. Former documents remains valid note.

OZO : I, formerly known as Obioma Ude Ozo, now wish to be addressed as Obioma Ude Ighodalo-Eromosele. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

RAJI: I, formerly Mrs Raji Basheerat Feyintola Idowu now addressed as Mrs Abdullahi-Raji Fehintola Basheerat Idowu. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

SOPEJU: I,Formerly known as Ajigboye omotunde Christiana now wish to be addressed as Sopeju Omotunde Christiana . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

TIMI: I, formerly known as Makanjuola Jeremiah Timilehin now wish to be addressed as Makanjuola Olamiposi Timi . All former documents remain valid . General public take note

USIANENE : I , formerly known as Usianene Rose now wish to be known and addressed as Imiare Rose. All former documents remains valid . General public take note.

YOHANNA: I,formerly known as Obadiegwu Anthonia Ngozi now wish to be addressed as Yohanna Anthonia Ngozi , All former documents remain valid . General public take note

Akpabio threatens candidates with disqualification as Senate probes violence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

confrontation involving the presidential motorcade, the APC campaign council raised concerns over alleged threats and violence against some of its members and supporters in the South-East. It claimed that some APC members in the region were being threatened and labelled saboteurs for refusing to support the presidential ambition of Peter Obi, whom the statement identified as the NDC presidential candidate.

Responding, the ADC Presidential Campaign Council has accused the APC of attempting to blame the opposition for Nigerians' growing dissatisfaction with the Tinubu administration. The Council said the ruling party should take responsibility for the economic hardship confronting Nigerians rather than portray public anger as an opposition plot.

In a statement by its Director of Strategic Communication, Phrank Shaibu, the ADC rejected APC's allegation that it sponsors young Nigerians to disrupt campaign events. The Council argued that a party controlling the Federal Government could not accuse its opponents of arming people and organising violence without producing evidence.

It accused President Bola Tinubu of implementing policies that had made food, fuel and basic survival increasingly expensive over the past three and a half years. The Council also questioned conflicting accounts by the Presidency and the APC campaign council concerning the alleged stoning of the President's motorcade. It further challenged the APC to explain why those allegedly detained were released if there was evidence linking the ADC to the incident.

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$1.24 trillion 6G threatened by spectrum shortages

By **Adeyemi Adepetun**

NCC mulls 15-year spectrum licences to drive broadband expansion

SIXTH-generation (6G) networks could inject $1.24 trillion into the global economy by 2040. However, nearly half of the projected gains are at risk, with a looming global spectrum shortage threatening to wipe out $520 billion or 42 per cent of the technology's potential economic value.

The warning is contained in a new report by the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA), which cautioned that inadequate access to critical radio frequencies could undermine the economic benefits of next-generation mobile networks even before they reach commercial maturity.

The stakes extend beyond faster mobile downloads to key sectors of the global economy, including manufacturing, financial services, construction and artificial intelligence (AI)-driven industrial automation. While 6G is expected to power autonomous robotics, integrated sensing, and next-generation AI systems, these applications will require massive, uninterrupted wireless capacity.



Without sufficient radio frequencies to support the growing volume of data traffic, the productivity gains promised by 6G could be constrained by an invisible infrastructure bottleneck.

To avert the potential loss, telecom industry leaders are urging governments to establish clear national spectrum roadmaps and release critical mid-band and low-band frequencies, including the upper 6 GHz and 600 MHz bands, ahead of commercial deployment.

However, competing demands from unlicensed Wi-Fi users and delays in regulatory decisions have left mobile operators uncertain about access to the frequencies required for future network expansion.

The GSMA, in its report, *Vision 2040: The Economic Benefits of 6G*, provides an economic assessment of the potential impact of next-generation mobile technology across industries and regions. It estimates that 6G will generate significant additional economic value beyond what mobile networks would deliver if 5G remained the most advanced technology.

The gains are expected to come from advances in AI, integrated sensing, industrial automation, immersive digital services and ubiquitous connectivity.

However, realising the projected benefits will depend on governments making sufficient spectrum available in time to support deployment. With critical international spectrum decisions approaching at the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-27) in 2027, the GSMA is urging policymakers to act early to avoid constraining future economic growth.

Chief Regulatory Officer at the GSMA, John Giusti, said: "6G represents a $1.24 trillion opportunity for the global economy. The next generation of mobile technology will help power AI, transform industries and unlock new levels of productivity across the economy. But these benefits are not guaranteed. More than $500 billion of the economic value will depend on the spectrum decisions governments make today to fully realise the economic potential of 6G in the decades ahead."

According to the report, manufacturing and financial services will be the two largest beneficiaries of 6G, accounting for 20 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively, of its additional economic contribution in 2040. Construction is projected to account for 13 per cent, while information and communications technology will contribute 12 per cent.

Unlike previous generations of mobile technology, 6G is expected to be AI-native, enabling networks not only to transmit data but also to sense their surroundings, support intelligent decision-making and integrate terrestrial and satellite connectivity.

The report identified five major areas through which the technology will generate additional economic value. These include connectivity for future AI systems; industrial automation and robotics; enhanced mobile broadband and fixed wireless access; integrated sensing and communication; and non-terrestrial networks that extend connectivity to underserved locations.

Together, these capabilities are expected to help businesses improve productivity, develop new products and services, and extend digital innovation into sectors and locations that existing networks cannot adequately support.

The economic benefits are expected to cut across regions, with Greater China projected to record $390 billion in additional value by 2040. North America is forecast to gain $290 billion, while Europe's contribution is estimated at $225 billion.

However, the scale of the gains will depend on the pace of 6G adoption, national infrastructure readiness and the capacity of businesses to integrate the technology into their operations.

The GSMA identified mid-band spectrum as the most critical resource for delivering the projected economic benefits, estimating that it will account for 70 per cent of 6G's economic contribution in 2040. The low-band spectrum is expected to contribute approximately 25 per cent, providing essential coverage in rural communities, inside buildings, and in locations where higher frequencies have limited reach.

However, restricted access to these frequency ranges could reduce 6G's economic contribution by up to $520 billion in 2040. The association warned that the losses would be additional to the broader economic consequences of spectrum constraints on existing mobile networks, which rely on the same resources.

To secure the full economic benefits of 6G, the report outlined three priority actions for governments and regulators.

First, at least 2 GHz of mid-band spectrum should be made available by around 2030, with additional capacity released subsequently to accommodate growing demand. This should include the upper 6 GHz band, supported by further capacity in the upper 3.5 GHz, 4.5 GHz and 7 GHz bands.

Second, the 600 MHz band should be made available for 6G to strengthen rural and indoor coverage and support the widespread deployment of connected devices and services.

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

MTN subscriber base to hit 343m after Telkom takeover

By **Adeyemi Adepetun**

To complete IHS deal by December 17

MTN Group's subscriber base across Africa could rise to approximately 343 million if its renewed bid to acquire South African rival Telkom succeeds, potentially strengthening its position as the continent's largest telecommunications operator.

The pan-African telecoms group confirmed on Monday that it had reopened discussions to acquire 100 per cent of Telkom's issued share capital, four years after previous merger negotiations collapsed.

A successful transaction would add Telkom's more than 25 million mobile subscribers to MTN's existing 317.7 million customer base, significantly expanding its continental footprint. In Nigeria, MTN currently has 104.6 million mobile subscriptions and 86.5 million Internet subscribers, making the country its largest operating market.

Beyond expanding its subscriber base, the proposed acquisition could reshape South Africa's telecommunications market by creating a new industry leader. The combination would bring Telkom's mobile operations, Openserve fibre infrastructure and enterprise business under MTN's control, potentially strengthening its competitive position against Vodacom.

The deal could also provide MTN with additional spectrum resources and fixed-line infrastructure, improving its capacity to compete in mobile broadband and enterprise connectivity.

However, any agreement faces significant regulatory hurdles. A merger involving two of South Africa's major telecommunications operators is likely to attract close scrutiny from competition authorities over its potential implications for market concentration, consumer pricing, infrastructure access and smaller competitors, including Cell C and Rain.

Both companies stressed that discussions remained at an early stage and there was no certainty that a transaction would be concluded.

In its announcement, MTN said that, if successful, discussions with Telkom would result in an offer to acquire the entire issued share capital of the company.

"It is currently contemplated that the consideration will be settled in cash, with an alternative for Telkom shareholders to receive MTN shares," the company said.

It added that the terms of any transaction, including the form of consideration, remained subject to negotiations.

MTN also warned that the proposed transaction, if concluded, could have a material effect on the price of its securities. It consequently advised shareholders to exercise caution when dealing in its shares pending a further announcement.

The renewed discussions mark another attempt by MTN to acquire Telkom, following negotiations between the companies that collapsed in 2022 over disagreements about exclusivity arrangements and regulatory approval.

At the time, both companies explored a potential combination that would have brought two major players in South Africa's telecommunications industry under common ownership. However, MTN eventually withdrew from the negotiations after the parties failed to reach an agreement on exclusivity terms.



PCN, Sproxil explore digital tools to strengthen pharmacy regulation

By **Abigail Ikhaghu**

THE Pharmacy Council of Nigeria (PCN) and Sproxil Nigeria Limited are exploring digital solutions to strengthen the regulation of online pharmacies, verify operators and improve oversight of medicine sales across the country.

The initiative, which will deploy technology-driven systems to monitor electronic pharmacy operations and assess regulatory compliance, is part of a collaboration agreement signed by both organisations in Lagos.

The agreement was signed by the PCN Registrar and Chief Executive Officer, Ibrahim Babashehu Ahmed, and Sproxil's Chief Executive Officer, Ashifi Gogo, during a two-day technical workshop in Ikeja.

The partnership seeks to address regulatory challenges arising from the growing use of digital platforms for medicine sales, particularly the need to ensure that online pharmacy operators meet professional standards and protect consumers.

Speaking at the workshop, Sproxil's Head of Partnerships and Grants, Nurudeen Abubakar, said the collaboration would help bring electronic pharmacies under the PCN's regulatory supervision.

He explained that the proposed digital framework would support the monitoring of electronic pharmacy transactions and enable regulators to determine whether operators comply with established requirements.

The organisations also discussed the National Electronic Pharmacy Platform (NEPP/MedRail) and MedGate, which are expected to support operator verification, transaction monitoring and regulatory compliance checks.

Sproxil's Director of Technology, Iyaghe Ofunrein, said digitalisation could also address operational challenges arising from manual processes and fragmented information systems.

He noted that integrated digital tools would improve information sharing, regulatory monitoring and data management, making it easier for the Council to discharge its responsibilities.

Beyond online pharmacy regulation, the collaboration will also explore the application of digital tools to pharmacy inspections, regulatory audits and continuing professional education.

Both organisations are expected to work through a joint technical working group to identify implementation priorities and develop solutions for the proposed digital regulatory framework.

Tinubu seeks Kebbi voters' support, promises inland dry port, roads

•Shettima, Abbas, Barau, others rally electorate

From **Adamu Abuh**, Birnin Kebbi

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu has urged voters in Kebbi State to renew his mandate in the 2027 general elections, promising to complete the ongoing development projects in the state and address its infrastructure needs, including the proposed inland dry port.

Tinubu, who spoke yesterday at the All Progressives Congress (APC) presidential campaign rally at Haliru Abdu Stadium in Birnin Kebbi, said he returned to the state to appreciate residents for supporting his emergence as president in 2023 and to seek their votes for a second term.

Acknowledging the Kebbi voters' contributions to his electoral victory, he appealed to them to sustain their support for the APC at all levels, assuring them of his commitment to peace, stability and development.

Court rejects stay of proceedings, adjourns till Dec. 3 in Saraki, Ahmed, others' case

From **Mansur Aramide**, Ilorin

KWARA State High Court has adjourned proceedings to December 3, 2026, in the ongoing Offa robbery trial of former Senate President Bukola Saraki, former Kwara State Governor, Abdulfatah Ahmed, former Chief of Staff to Ahmed, Yusuf Abdulwahab, and Ahmed's former political aide, Alabi Olalekan, who are the 1st to 4th defendants.

Adjourning for their possible arraignment in Suit No. KWS/114C/2026, the presiding Justice Temitope Osuolale-Ajayi, also refused a request to defer proceedings pending the outcome of an appeal.

He further directed that the 1st and 2nd defendants be personally served with the charge before arraignment. This followed findings that they had not been personally served, according to the two affidavits deposed to by the chief bailiff, as the processes were served on their counsel.

This should be personally served with the charge, accompanying processes and notice of the arraignment date on or before November 20, 2026, it ordered, and in any event at least seven working days before arraignment. It added that an affidavit of service must be filed with the Registrar before the next adjourned date.

The court added that no application for substituted service was made or granted, as required under Section 383(5) of the ACJL.

Reps begin review of NYSC postings over rising threats

From **Joel Oladele**, Abuja

•Agency seeks stronger protection for corps members in North-East

THE House of Representatives is set to review the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) deployment policy to protect corps members from kidnapping, road accidents and other security threats associated with long-distance travel.

This followed the adoption of a motion of urgent public importance, sponsored by Yallema Makki, at plenary yesterday, in which he raised concerns about the growing risks facing young graduates who travel across the country for their mandatory national service.

This comes as the agency has called for stronger security collaboration with the Nigerian Army to protect corps members serving in the North-East, particularly in communities affected by insecurity.

The partnership is critical to securing orientation camps and protecting corps members travelling to their places of primary assignment in the region, the NYSC Area Director, North-East Area Office, Odoba Oche, said.

ADOPTING the motion, the House urged the NYSC management to work with relevant stakeholders on an immediate review of its mobilisation and deployment policy.

It also called for a more flexible posting framework that prioritises the safety of corps members, especially those whose journeys involve long distances through high-risk areas.

The House further mandated its relevant committees to engage the NYSC management and other stakeholders on the proposed reforms, examine the existing deployment arrangements, monitor compliance with the proposed measures, and report their findings and recommendations to the House.

Makki had noted that corps members often travel long distances from their states of residence to their states of deployment, sometimes passing through areas with serious security challenges.

The lawmaker expressed concern at the repeated abductions involving prospective and serving corps members, particularly during journeys to orientation camps and places of primary assignment.

Makki warned that such incidents, coupled with poor road conditions and insecurity along major highways, could weaken public confidence in the scheme's safety, insisting that the welfare of young Nigerians must remain a priority throughout mobilisation, orientation, deployment, and the service year.

Arguing that the scheme could achieve its objectives without exposing corps members to avoidable dangers, he proposed a more flexible deployment system that considers geographical proximity, prevailing security conditions and identified high-risk routes.

According to him, this would reduce their exposure to threats of kidnapping and road accidents.

MEANWHILE, speaking during a visit to the General Officer Commanding (GOC) 10 Division of the Nigerian Army, Major-Gen. Chinedu Nnebeife, in Jalingo, Taraba State, Oche, who oversees NYSC operations in Adamawa, Gombe and Taraba states, noted the military's contributions to securing orientation camps and protecting corps members.



Supply Chain Director, Nigerian Breweries Plc, Federico Agressi (left); Company Secretary/Legal Director, Uaboi Agbebaku; Digital and Technology Director, Phil Aneke; Managing Director, Thibaut Boidin; Human Resources Director, Nkechi Runsewe; and Corporate Affairs Director, Dr Uzo Odenigbo, during the celebration of Nigerian Breweries Plc @ 80 and the unveiling of the brands' festive season campaigns in Lagos on Monday

Kawu flays hardship, says APC's lavish rallies fueling anger in North

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

•Abbas tasks FG, others on benefits of reforms to citizens

SENATOR Kawu Sumaila has warned Northern leaders of the All Progressives Congress (APC) that lavish campaign rallies, political celebrations and displays of opulence are deepening public anger, urging them to redirect their campaigns towards grassroots communities ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Kawu, who represents Kano South Senatorial District, said APC leaders must stop celebrating in city centres while millions of ordinary Nigerians contend with insecurity, poverty, displacement and economic hardship.

Also acknowledging the hardship confronting Nigerians, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tajudeen Abbas, has charged government at all levels to urgently address the difficulties facing households and businesses.

However, Abbas cautioned the international community against defining Nigeria solely by its challenges, insisting that they should also recognise the country's economic potential and human capital development. IN an open letter to the Northern APC leaders in Abuja on Monday titled "A Clarion Call for Self-Reflection, Humility and Grassroots Reconnection," he challenged the party's northern leadership to acknowledge its growing disconnect from ordinary citizens and urgently change its political engagement strategy.

The senator said the party could no longer rely on elaborate rallies and political displays without directly engaging the people and explaining President Bola Tinubu's policies and ongoing reforms.

FG links Nigeria's negative image to low investment, job losses

From **Sodiq Omolaoye**, Abuja

THE federal government has warned that negative narratives, misinformation and damaging perceptions about Nigeria are taking a toll on the country's economy, discouraging investors, constraining businesses and driving skilled professionals abroad.

Giving the warning yesterday at the ongoing 2026 World Public Relations Forum (WPRF) in Abuja, the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister for the Economy, Taiwo Oyedele, identified public trust as a critical factor in attracting investments, sustaining businesses and securing citizens' support for government policies.

Oyedele, who spoke alongside the Comptroller-General of the Nigeria Customs Service, Bashir Adeniyi, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu, said Nigeria's economic prospects were being undermined by narratives portraying the country as hopeless and incapable of progress.

According to him, expressions such as "Nigeria is finished", "Nigeria is a scam" and "Nigeria happened to me" go beyond public relations concerns, as they could influence investment decisions, discourage business expansion and encourage talented Nigerians to seek opportunities elsewhere.

"Trust is the one currency that sits beneath all the other currencies," he said. "When trust is strong, citizens cooperate, capital flows, businesses invest, and reforms get a fair hearing. When trust is weak, even sound policies meet suspicion, and every explanation sounds like an excuse."

However, Oyedele acknowledged that citizens have the right to expose government failures, demand accountability and draw attention to their difficulties, stressing that responsible communication should not be mistaken for suppressing criticism.

Using the reported October 2026 inflation rate of 14.06 per cent, which he described as the lowest in six years, Oyedele said the disconnect between official economic figures and citizens' everyday experiences had contributed to public distrust.

Military foil attempted terrorist attack on Monguno, others

From **Njadvara Musa**, Maiduguri

CHIEF Whip of the Senate, Mohammed Monguno, alongside some All Progressives Congress (APC) stalwarts, have reportedly escaped Boko Haram's attempted attack in Kukawa Local Government Area of the state.

Security sources said Monguno, who represents Borno North Senatorial District, and a former governor, Maina Lawan, were among others at Kukawa in continuation of their 2027 campaign tour.

Monguno had earlier joined Governor Babagana Zulum at the campaign launch in Monguno town last Sunday, before the governor returned to Maiduguri on Monday.

Other security sources said some politicians, including Sen. Monguno, returned to Kukawa to canvass for votes, during which the terrorists attempted to dislodge the community.

It was also reported that, based on intelligence, troops of Operation Hadin Kai foiled attempts to attack the campaign entourage.

LASG, FCTA share planning reforms, devt control innovations

By **Victor Gbonegun**

A DELEGATION from the Development Control Department of the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA), Abuja, has paid a knowledge-sharing visit to the Lagos State Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development, Office of Physical Planning, to understudy the state's Electronic Physical Planning Permit System (e-PPPS), among others.

Welcoming the team, the Commissioner for Physical Planning and Urban Development, Dr Oluyinka Olumide, said the e-PPPS is among the state's major initiatives to modernise the planning permit process through technology, improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability, and make the approval process more accessible.

He said the transition from a paper-based system to an electronic platform reflected the state's commitment to improved service delivery and effective administration of physical planning.

Also, the Permanent Secretary, Office of Physical Planning, Olayinka Wasiu, said the programme would provide insight into the ministry's operations, responsibilities.

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2027 Africa Cup of Nations Qualifier

Wasteful Eagles walk tightrope as Tanzania hold Nigeria to goalless draw

By **Christian Okpara**

NIGERIA'S chances of qualifying for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations got slimmer yesterday in Zanzibar, where the Super Eagles missed the opportunity to narrow the gap between them and Group L leaders, Guinea Bissau, with a goalless draw against Tanzania in the qualifying series.

Nigeria, on six points, needed a win to keep Guinea Bissau (Seven points) within sight after yesterday's round of games, but the Super Eagles contrived to miss many chances in a game they dominated for 90 minutes.

The Super Eagles went into the encounter knowing that victory would take them to nine points and put pressure on the group leaders, but they struggled to break down the hosts despite enjoying more possession.

Nigeria's best opportunity arrived in the 33rd minute when Moses Usor delivered an excellent pass to Tolu Arokodare, but the striker's close-range effort struck the post.

Calvin Bassey also missed a promising opportunity in the 38th minute, sending his effort over the crossbar. Tanzania threatened at the other end in the 42nd minute, but their attempt also hit the woodwork.

Chelle introduced Alex Iwobi and Akor Adams in the 61st minute, replacing Awoniyi and Fisayo Dele-Bashiru in an attempt to improve Nigeria's attacking play.

Alhassan Yusuf and Tochukwu Nnadi subsequently replaced Usor and Wilfred Ndidi in the 73rd minute as the Nigerian coach made further adjustments.

However, the changes failed to produce a winning goal as Tanzania held on for a valuable draw.

The result takes Nigeria to seven points from four matches, leaving them second behind Guinea-Bissau, who have 10 points from and a superior goal difference.

Guinea-Bissau defeated Madagascar 2-0 yesterday to move to 10 points.

Only one team will qualify for the AFCON from Group L in the qualifying series, as Tanzania has already picked one of the slots as co-host of the championship.



Super Eagles' Abdullahi Bewene (left) takes on a Tanzanian star during their 2027 AFCON qualifier in Zanzibar yesterday.

23rd National Sports Festival

Enugu asks NSC to postpone sporting fiesta

By **Gowon Akpodonor**

HOST of the 23rd National Sports Festival, Enugu State, has requested national sports authorities to postpone the games to May 2027.

The Enugu State Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Local Organising Committee requested a message to the National Sports Commission (NSC) yesterday.

The state has specifically requested that the games be rescheduled to the first week of May 2027.

A statement issued by the PRO, Local Organising Committee (LOC) for the 23rd National Sports Festival, Enugu 2026, said: "The decision follows a fresh internal inspection and assessment of critical sporting facilities by the Ministry and the LOC, particularly the Nnamdi Azikiwe Stadium and the Awgu Games Village, to ascertain their level of readiness for the national sporting event.

"Although the contractors handling the projects expressed confidence that the facilities would be completed within the expected timeframe, the Enugu State Ministry of Youth and Sports and the LOC, after a careful assessment, observed that the level of work remaining raised concerns about the readiness of the stadium and Awgu Games Village to meet the required standards before the commencement of the Games."

He pointed out that "the Ministry and the LOC wish to clarify that other essential arrangements and facilities, including accommodation and related logistics, are ready for the hosting of the festival. However, the completion and full readiness of the stadium and Awgu Games Village remain critical to the successful hosting of the event."

Abia explains dissolution of Nwankwo-led Enyimba management

From **Gordi Udeaja**, Umuahia

THE Abia State Government, yesterday, explained that it dissolved the management structure and technical crew of Enyimba Football Club, Aba, to address the club's recent disappointing performances and identified administrative and structural challenges.

The state on Monday evening announced the dissolution of the club's management committee and also sacked the coaches following the team's recent bad results in both home and away games.

Signs of an imminent change in the club's leadership structure became clear on Sunday after the team's home loss to Ikorodu City in the EuroMatch Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL).

In a statement yesterday, Abia State Commissioner for Information, Prince Okey Kanu, said that the decision underscored the government's resolve to undertake a comprehensive restructuring of the two-time CAF Champions League winners, restore the club's competitive identity and reposition it for sustainable success in Nigerian and continental football.

Arsenal fans celebrate as HFM brings Premier League trophy to Lagos

By **Gowon Akpodonor**

ARSENAL fans, yesterday, came together for an unforgettable celebration of football with the iconic Premier League Trophy in Lagos.

Brought by HFM, an official partner of Arsenal FC, hundreds of Arsenal fans were at the Landmark Events Centre in Victoria Island to celebrate the trophy, which the North London club had waited to win for over 22 years.

The trophy tour was a celebration of football, entertainment and Premier League history.

The event gave Arsenal supporters the opportunity to pose alongside the iconic trophy, capturing memorable moments and celebrating their shared passion for the game.

Beyond the trophy experience, attendees enjoyed a range of interactive football activations, engaging games and live entertainment, creating a lively atmosphere that reflected Lagos' vibrant spirit and love for football.

Former Fulham star urges Barcelona to beat Man United to Bassey's signature

CALVIN Bassey has emerged as an intriguing potential fit for Barcelona after former Fulham player Javi Pereira argued that the Nigerian defender possesses qualities missing from Hansi Flick's current defensive options, reports *barcauniversal*.

Bassey has been tipped as one of Mauricio Pochettino's first signings when he takes over Manchester United after the international break.

But speaking to Marca, Pereira made a strong case for the 26-year-old to join Barcelona, highlighting his physical strength, recovery speed and ability to carry the ball forward.

Although Bassey has not been established as a Barcelona transfer target, his profile addresses several of the requirements associated with the club's search for defensive reinforcement.

"I honestly believe that Barcelona don't have a centre-back like Bassey. He has a distinct physical and athletic profile, something Flick is lacking in important matches.

"He can play in a high defensive line, knows how to push forward, is aggressive in the opposition's half and has great top speed. He could play," Pereira said.

Pereira believes Bassey's athleticism would give Barcelona a different profile than the current options, particularly when defending with a high line.

Furthermore, the Fulham defender's versatility is another attraction. Having started his career as a left-back, he can operate in different defensive positions and potentially provide cover across the left side.



Bassey

United Friends All-Stars wins Ofugara Peace/Unity Cup, gets N10m

By **Gowon Akpodonor**

UNITED Friends All-Stars have emerged champions of the 2026 edition of the Ofugara Peace and Unity Football Tournament after defeating defending champions, Delta All-Stars International, 5–3 on penalties in a thrilling final at the Okotogbo Football Pitch, Effurun, Uvwie Local Government Area of Delta State.

The pulsating encounter, which attracted football enthusiasts, former internationals and dignitaries, ended goalless after regulation time, with debutants United Friends All-Stars demonstrating composure and determination to overcome the defending champions in the ensuing penalty shootout and claim the coveted trophy.

In the third-place playoff, former champions Corner-Lux International defeated Uvwie Ex-Players All-Stars 5–3 on penalties after both teams also settled for a goalless draw in regulation time.

The fourth edition, which was expanded to accommodate 32 veteran football teams from the three senatorial districts of Delta State, was organised to strengthen friendship, promote peaceful coexistence and provide a platform for retired footballers to reconnect through the unifying power of sports.

Solution

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Oluwafemi Adekoya

How many of the 103m electorate will show up in 2027?

NIGERIA enters the 2027 general elections with a paradox: an electorate that keeps expanding on paper, but one that has increasingly stayed away from the ballot box. The 2026 voter register now stands at 103,428,715 people (might be lower if AI incursion is addressed)—about 10 million more than before the 2023 elections—yet turnout in recent off-cycle polls has sometimes fallen below 15 per cent. The question is therefore not whether Nigerians care about their country, but whether they will believe that voting is safe, worthwhile and capable of producing change.

Earlier this month, Americans, during the 2026 midterms, turned out in near-record numbers despite deep polarisation: at least 123.5 million people voted, or 49.1 per cent of the voting-eligible population, the second-highest midterm turnout since 1914. It is apparent that citizens do not necessarily withadraw from politics when they are angry; they may vote precisely because they want to punish, reward or redirect power.

Nigeria must learn the constructive part of that lesson: credible institutions, secure polling environments and parties that mobilise rather than intimidate can convert frustration into participation. But it must reject the destructive part—normalised threats, inflammatory speech and violence—which is already threatening to depress turnout in 2027.

Nigeria's turnout trajectory is alarming. In 2011, 53.68 per cent of registered voters participated in the presidential election; by 2015 it was 43.65 per cent, in 2019 it was 34.75 per cent, and in 2023 only 26.71 per cent. In practical terms, fewer than three in 10 registered voters cast a ballot in the last presidential election. There are concerns that the number may sink lower in 2027.

The 2023 figure was even starker in absolute terms: more than 93 million Nigerians were registered, but just over 25 million voted—about 28.63 per cent. Voter turnout has declined almost continuously since 2007, despite repeated increases in registration.

If the 2023 participation rate were mechanically applied to the new register, roughly 27.6 million people would vote in 2027, leaving about 75.8 million registered voters without a recorded vote. That is not a forecast; political campaigns, security conditions and electoral credibility can change outcomes. But it illustrates the scale of the democratic deficit Nigeria faces.

Recent state elections confirm that registration does not equal participation. Turnout in eight off-cycle governorship elections ranged from about 10.2 per cent in Anambra in 2021 to 43.2 per cent in Osun in 2026. Even in Osun, the best-performing example, more than half of registered voters did not cast a recorded vote.

Why Nigerians shun the polls

It is easy—and often unfair—to describe low turnout as apathy. Many Nigerians are not indifferent; they are discouraged, excluded or afraid.

The 2023 experience exposed logistical failures that directly discouraged voters. Election materials arrived late in some places, causing people who had waited for hours to leave polling units. The European Union observer report also found that public confidence fell after information gaps, security and logistical lapses, and the failure to make presidential results publicly accessible on INEC's IReV portal.



INEC Chairman, Joash Amupitan

Economic hardship adds another barrier. Transport costs, lost daily earnings and long distances to polling units can make voting expensive for citizens already struggling with inflation and insecurity. Many Nigerians see spending a full day travelling to and waiting at a polling unit as a civic act they can do without.

There is also a crisis of trust. Citizens who believe elections will not change governance, that results may be manipulated, or that complaints will not be fairly addressed have little reason to brave queues, heat, transport costs and possible danger. Various analyses of the 2023 election identified weak voter education, poor logistics, doubts about INEC's capacity, election violence and disillusionment with the state as major reasons for low participation.

Today, the most urgent threat to 2027 elections is the rising use of violence and violent rhetoric as political tools, followed by AI abuse. This is not merely a security problem for the police; it is a direct attack on the right of citizens to choose freely.

Since campaigns for the 2027 elections began on August 19, 2026, there have been reported attacks on political convoys and party secretariats, disruptions of rallies and meetings, and intimidation of political opponents and supporters. The National Peace Committee recorded 109 breaches of the National Peace Accord across 26 states and the Federal Capital Territory in just 10 weeks.

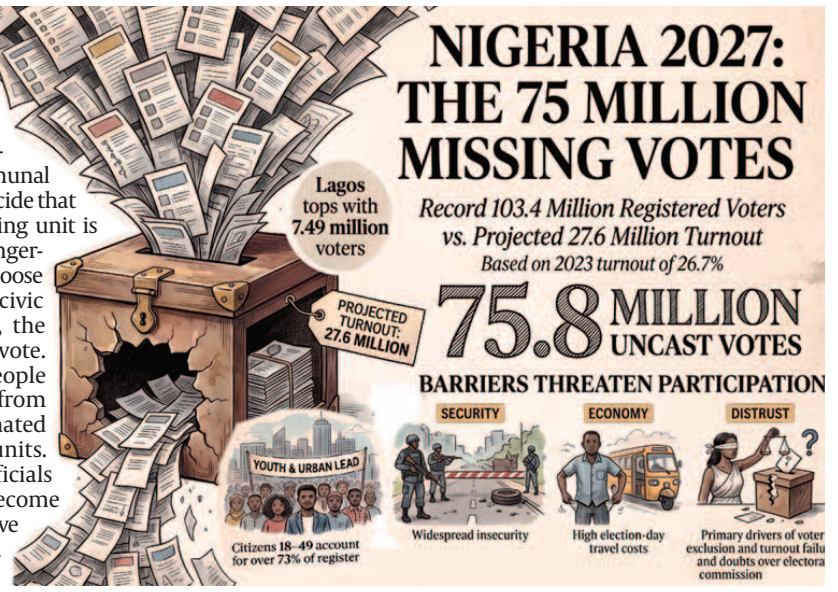
The numbers are grim. Between January 1 and October 27, 2026, monitors recorded 70 physical election-related attacks across 19 states and the FCT, resulting in 27 deaths in 20 incidents. These are not abstract statistics; each death, injury and destroyed campaign vehicle narrows the space in which citizens can organise, campaign and vote.

The pattern is bipartisan and nationwide. Reports have documented attacks or disruptions involving supporters of the Nigeria Democratic Congress, African Democratic Congress and Peoples Democratic Party in states including Enugu, Benue, Delta, Edo and Sokoto. In November 2026, suspected political thugs attacked NDC supporters in the Oregun area of Lagos.

CDD-West Africa's Election Security Tracker found that although overall security incidents fell by 22 per cent in October, election-specific incidents rose by 14 per cent, from 14 to 16. Eleven of those 16 involved direct attacks on campaign gatherings or convoys, producing two fatalities in Enugu and Ebonyi, injuries, destroyed vehicles and restricted political assemblies.

Violent rhetoric compounds the physical danger. Threats, ethnic and religious baiting, misinformation and intimidation can make citizens retreat before a single stone is thrown. The National Peace Committee reported that 57 of the 109 recorded breaches—52 per cent—did not involve physical attacks, but involved intimidation, misinformation, restrictions on expression, divisive rhetoric and voter inducement.

This matters because violence can achieve its political objective even when it does not determine the result. A voter in a community affected by banditry, insurgency or communal conflict may decide that going to a polling unit is simply too dangerous and will choose safety over civic duty. After all, the dead cannot vote. Displaced people may be far from their designated polling units. Electoral officials may also become reluctant to serve in volatile areas.



The U.S. midterms demonstrate that high turnout is possible even in a divided society. Americans did not vote because politics had become calm or consensus had broken out; they voted because the stakes were clear, parties mobilised intensely and citizens believed their choices could alter the balance of power. Democrats won control of both chambers of Congress, while turnout reached 49.1 per cent of the voting-eligible population.

The lesson for Nigeria is not that Nigerians should copy American campaign style. It is that political competition can be vigorous without becoming violent. Parties can disagree sharply over the economy, security, corruption and federalism while still protecting opponents' right to campaign. Governors can become more tolerant of opposition campaigns.

The U.S. election also shows the value of institutional resilience. Despite a highly contentious political environment, Americans could participate through established electoral machinery, and the result produced a clear shift in congressional power. Nigeria's challenge is to make its own institutions similarly dependable: timely distribution of materials, transparent result management, accessible polling units and rapid response to complaints. All eyes are already on INEC, notwithstanding the very low expectations they have of the umpire.

Nigeria cannot afford to treat polarisation as a campaign strategy. When political identity becomes ethnic, religious or regional warfare, violence becomes easier to justify and harder to contain. Nigeria still has time to prevent 2027 from becoming another election of abandoned polling units and fearful citizens. The response must begin now, not in the final days before voting.

First, INEC and security agencies should conduct an early security and voter-access audit. They should identify local government areas where insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, communal tension or past electoral violence could prevent citizens from reaching polling units. Security plans should be threat-based, with clear command structures, rapid-response teams and protection for voters, officials and transport routes.

> "It is easy—and often unfair—to describe low turnout as apathy. Many Nigerians are not indifferent; they are discouraged, excluded or afraid"

Second, political parties must be held accountable for the conduct of their agents and supporters. Candidates should publicly condemn attacks, dismiss aides who incite violence and cooperate with investigations. The National Peace Committee's call for enforceable peace commitments is sound: peace accords must not end at a photo opportunity.

Third, INEC must rebuild confidence through transparency. Nigerians should be able to follow the process from accreditation to result collation without confusion. The failures around IReV in 2023 damaged trust; the commission cannot allow a repeat. Voter education must also move beyond slogans and reach communities through local radio, community leaders, markets, motor parks and languages people actually understand.

Fourth, the state must distinguish apathy from exclusion. Urging citizens to "come out and vote" is insufficient where roads are unsafe, polling units are inaccessible or displaced voters do not know where to vote. Lawful, transparent arrangements for internally displaced persons and hard-to-reach communities are essential.

Finally, political leaders must stop treating inflammatory rhetoric as harmless mobilisation. Words that portray opponents as enemies, foreigners, traitors or religious enemies can become permission slips for thugs. The National Orientation Agency's plan to work with INEC, security agencies, the media and community structures across all 774 local government areas is welcome, but it must be matched by consequences for those who incite or finance violence.

Nigeria's 103.4 million registered voters represent an extraordinary democratic opportunity. But numbers alone will not save the election. If insecurity, economic hardship, logistical failure and political violence persist, 2027 could produce another record register and another disappointing turnout.

The U.S. midterms are a reminder that citizens will show up when they believe participation matters. Nigerians will show up when they can travel safely to polling units, trust the process, see credible results and believe that their vote can change their lives. The burden lies not only with voters, but with INEC, security agencies, political parties, candidates, traditional institutions, civil society and the media.

Democracy is not sustained by registration figures. It is sustained by citizens who feel safe enough to vote, confident enough to believe their ballots count, and respected enough to campaign without fear. Nigeria's 2027 election will test whether the country can move from a democracy of registered voters to a democracy of participating citizens.

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