



INEC deploys team to track illegal campaign spending

NEWS PAGE 3

Reps probe N802b audit breaches in NNPC, INEC, give HYPREP seven-day ultimatum

NEWS PAGE 3



FG, Lagos launch 24/7 power zone to end electricity outage

NEWS PAGE 7

Tinubu orders probe of NAF plane crash amid safety record concerns P6



The Nigerian Air Force (NAF) ATR-42 aircraft (left) that crashed in Igbokoda, Ondo State, and its aftermath of wreckage and a horde of sympathisers, yesterday.



Police detain Kano Assembly aspirant over display of firearm

NEWS PAGE 9

FG donates N250m to miners' bereaved families, assures justice as toll rises to 38

NEWS PAGE 9



Zamfara bids to change perception on Sharia, insecurity, emerge as top minerals destination

NEWS PAGE 9

SSANU issues FG fresh 14-day ultimatum over unpaid arrears

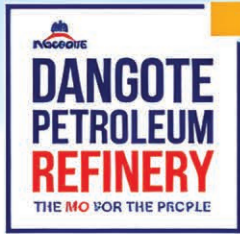
NEWS PAGE 8

Teachers' Day: NUT laments non-implementation of special salary scale

NEWS PAGE 5

Court orders INEC to recognise Hashim as Accord Party's presidential candidate

NEWS PAGE 5



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News

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2027: Peace panel, RULAAC, Sani warn against election violence, anarchy

60 election-related incidents recorded already

From Sodiq Omolaoye, Abuja

BARELY three weeks after the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) opened the public campaign period for the 2027 presidential and National Assembly elections, the National Peace Committee (NPC) yesterday said it has recorded 60 election-related incidents across the country, raising concern over the conduct of political actors less than four months to the January 2027 polls.

The Rule of Law and Accountability Advocacy Centre (RULAAC) called on President Bola Tinubu, INEC, Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Department of State Services (DSS) and other security agencies to take immediate steps to prevent political violence and intimidation ahead of the 2027 general elections.

This was as Kaduna State Governor, Uba Sani, accused some politicians of instigating poor and vulnerable Nigerians to cause violence and anarchy, warning that such actions could undermine democracy and peace in the country.

The NPC, chaired by former Head of State, Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar (rtd) and convened by Most Rev. Matthew Kukah, therefore warned Tinubu, former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, Peter Obi, and other political actors against inflammatory and inciting campaigns ahead of the 2027 general elections.

In a statement jointly signed by Abubakar and Kukah yesterday, the committee raised the alarm over 60 election-related incidents recorded across the country within one month, including political violence, intimidation, threats, attacks on political activities and misinformation.

INEC's timetable provides for public campaigns for the presidential and National Assembly elections from September 23, 2026, with the elections scheduled for January 16, 2027.

The committee's Election Security Information (ESI) Hub documented the incidents between August 19 and September 19, 2026, barely a month after political parties and other stakeholders signed the first National Peace Accord for the 2027 electoral cycle on August 18.

According to the NPC, misinformation and disinformation accounted for the largest share of the incidents, with 24 cases representing 40 per cent of the total.



Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu (left); President Bola Tinubu; Chairman, Lagos All Progressives Congress (APC), Cornelius Ojelabi; Speaker, Lagos State House of Assembly, Mudashiru Obasa and APC gubernatorial candidate for Lagos, Dr Obafemi Hamzat during the President's departure to Abuja, yesterday.

INEC deploys team to track illegal campaign spending

From Sodiq Omolaoye, Abuja

HEAD of the January 16, 2027 general election, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has deployed a joint financial monitoring mechanism with relevant anti-graft and financial intelligence agencies to track illegal campaign spending.

This came as the commission disclosed that the number of registered voters rose to more than 103 million.

Also, INEC said it acquired 57,000 new Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) machines as part of measures to strengthen the technological infrastructure for the 2027 elections.

It disclosed its target of commencing voting simultaneously across all polling units nationwide during the elections.

INEC Chairman, Prof. Joash Amupitan, disclosed these yesterday in Abuja while delivering a keynote at a strategic workshop with media

- Acquires 57,000 BVAS as registered voters hit 103m
- Targets simultaneous voting across polling units in 2027 polls

executives organised by the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) in collaboration with the commission.

Amupitan said the commission was determined to prevent money from undermining the credibility of the elections.

He said INEC was collaborating with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) to monitor campaign financing and identify suspicious expenditure.

According to Amupitan, the teams will track illegal campaign spending, strengthen surveillance around polling units to detect attempts to influence voters through financial inducements.

While warning political actors that violation of the Elec-

toral Act would attract arrest and prosecution, Amupitan said elections must be decided by the conviction of the voter, not the depth of a candidate's pocket.

The chairman disclosed that the National Register of Voters had surpassed 103 million, following the completion of the three-phase Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise.

The exercise, he added, produced 10,772,421 new registrants, comprising 2,611,266 in the first phase, 4,121,835 in the second phase and 3,867,997 in the third phase, subject to final verification, completing completed eight of the 14 major statutory activities contained in its timetable for the 2027 elections.

The electoral umpire said the final Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) cleanup was complete, and

the preliminary register was displayed for claims and objections.

"In line with Section 10 of the Electoral Act 2026, the first phase of the CVR commenced on August 25, 2025 and ended on December 10, 2025, registering 2,611,266 voters; Phase II commenced on January 5, 2026, and ended on April 17, 2026, registering 4,121,835 voters; and Phase III commenced on May 11, 2026 and ended on July 26, 2026, registering 3,867,997 voters. The total new registration stands at 10,772,421, subject to the ABIS verification being concluded," he added.

Earlier, President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE), Eze Anaba, called for a credible and transparent electoral process that would ensure voters, rather than the courts, determine the outcome of elections.

Why Tinubu 'endorsed' Wike's Rainbow Coalition, by ex-gov

From Leo Sobechi and John Akubo, Abuja

PLOTS by state governors to ambush President Bola Tinubu's re-election and call the shots in the immediate post-2027 general election informed the President's decision to accept the proposed electoral collaboration with the nationwide Rainbow Coalition, *The Guardian* has learnt.

Also, a member of the House of Representatives, Abdulmumin Jibrin, defended the political activities of the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, saying the Rainbow Coalition is aimed at strengthening the President's chances of winning the 2027 presidential election.

Meanwhile, the opposition

- Coalition strategic, not threat to President, says Rep
- Wike's resignation bet won't save Tinubu in FCT, NDC fires back
- 2027 will be easier for Tinubu than 2023, Wike boasts

Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) has turned Wike's resignation vow into a political challenge, telling the minister to prepare his resignation letter rather than attempt to dictate how Abuja residents will vote.

But Wike has described the African Democratic Congress (ADC) presidential ticket of Atiku Abubakar and former Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Amaechi as a joint ticket of corruption, boasting that Tinubu's re-election will be easier than his election in 2023.

Suspense arose within the All Progressives Congress (APC) following disagreements over

the modalities for the political collaboration between the leadership of the Progressives Governors' Forum (PGF) and the leader of the coalition, Wike.

Wike had explained that the decision to expand the coalition into a nationwide support platform for Tinubu's re-election was informed developments in the polity, including the sidelining of some prominent political leaders in the ruling party.

But, the PGF, umbrella caucus of state governors elected on the platform of APC, rejected the coalition, stressing that by creating a parallel po-

litical structure, Wike and his group wanted to create confusion in APC to prepare the grounds for the revival of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Reps probe N802b audit breaches in NNPC, INEC, give HYPREP seven days ultimatum

From Joel Oladele, Abuja

THE Public Accounts Committee of the House of Representatives will today question officials of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) over alleged financial breaches totalling more than N802.19 billion.

The House also gave the HydroCarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) seven days to explain audit queries involving more than N400 billion.

Similarly, Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) demanded full disclosure of the reported N11.2 trillion oil-backed loans, warning against using future crude production to ease present financial pressures.

The allegations are contained in reports of the Auditor-General of the Federation (AuGF) covering the 2021, 2022 and 2023 financial years, which raised queries over procurement procedures, revenue management, payments and compliance with financial regulations by government agencies.

Chaired by the member representing Ede North/Ede South/Ejigbo/Egbedore Federal Constituency of Osun State, Bamidele Salam, the Public Accounts Committee is empowered under Sections 85, 88 and 89 of the Constitution as well as Order 20, Rule 6 of the House Rules, to examine public accounts and investigate issues relating to revenue losses, non-remittance of statutory funds and breaches of financial regulations.

A member of the committee, who requested anonymity because he was not authorised to speak, said the AuGF's reports raised questions against the NNPC in its 2021, 2022 and 2023 audits.

He added that INEC would also be required to provide explanations on issues raised in the AuGF's 2022 and 2023 reports.

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News Analysis

How poor leadership, policy flip-flops bequeath iron wealth, steel poverty

Nigeria has almost everything it needs to be a steel powerhouse: vast iron ore deposits, a huge domestic market, energy resources, skilled labour, and an economy that consumes steel at scale. Yet the steel sector remains comatose because of policy inconsistency, poor leadership and sundry shenanigans, reports ERNEST NZOR.

WHY Nigeria has remained heavily dependent on imported steel despite its huge iron ore deposits, large domestic market, human capital, energy resources, and other requisites for a steel hub is a puzzle the country has yet to solve.

Even with over three billion tonnes of identified iron ore resources, including deposits at Itakpe and Agbaja, the country spends about \$5 billion annually importing over eight million metric tonnes of steel yearly.

Such a contradiction captures the biggest failure of industrial policy – the lack of capacity to build and sustain the institutional, financial, technical and political framework required to convert advantages into a functional industrial ecosystem.

At the heart of the problem is Ajaokuta Steel Company, conceived as the foundation of the country's industrialisation drive, but which has failed to operate at the scale envisaged by its founders decades after its establishment.

Successive administrations have announced revival plans, negotiated with investors, established committees and made political commitments. Yet, the sector has repeatedly returned to the same cycle of promises and delays.

The consequence is not merely that a steel plant remains underutilised; the major casualty is the country's truncated or aborted industrialisation ambition.

One of the questions surrounding the steel crisis is why the country has been unable to achieve what other countries with comparable or even fewer natural resources have accomplished.

At the 5th African Natural Resources and Energy Investment Summit (AFNIS 2026), the Minister of Steel Development, Shuaibu Abubakar Audu, described steel as “the backbone of industrialisation.”

Steel is fundamental to construction, transportation, machinery, manufacturing, defence, energy infrastructure and technological development. A country that cannot produce sufficient steel locally will inevitably expose several parts of its economy to external shocks.

A civil and environmental engineer, Mr Caius Ikem Umekesiobi, offered a blunt assessment of the problem, describing it as a “case of leadership failure.”

Umekesiobi, who is also the National Chairman of the Nigerian Institution of Environmental Engineers, regretted the repeated failure of leaders to deliver on their promises, emphasised that every abandoned project and unfulfilled promise carries a cost that worsens the country's economic plight.

For the steel industry, those costs have been particularly severe because the sector requires long-term planning as a steel plant cannot be established, abandoned and revived repeatedly without enormous financial and technical consequences.

Assistant Director and Head, Regional Geophysics at the Nigerian Geological Survey Agency (NGSA), Dr Godwin A. Alo, blamed the situation on poor coordination, inconsistency and lack of long-term commitment.

Alo, however, noted that Nigeria's mining industry, once regarded as a dying sector, has begun to show



measurable improvement after successive governments introduced reforms and maintained a degree of policy continuity.

He said that the lesson for steel is obvious: industrial development does not happen within the lifespan of a single administration.

“A steel plant may require billions of dollars, years of construction and commissioning, dedicated infrastructure, guaranteed raw material supply and stable energy before it reaches commercial maturity.

Frequent policy changes, therefore, create more than administrative inconvenience. They increase investment risk, he added.

An investor considering a multibillion-dollar steel project must be confident that the rules

governing taxation, mining rights, energy supply, import duties, local content, foreign exchange and market access will not change dramatically after a change of government. Unfortunately, Nigeria has historically offered the opposite assurance. Ajaokuta has become synonymous with the country's unresolved industrialisation question.

The plant was intended to anchor an integrated steel industry capable of generating demand for iron ore mining, transportation, engineering, fabrication and manufacturing. Yet, the country continues to import steel as the plant struggles to achieve sustained commercial production.

Also, an integrated steel industry requires a chain of interconnected components such as reliable iron ore supply, beneficiation, energy, transportation, water, technology, skilled manpower, financing, industrial consumers and a stable regulatory framework.

According to Alo, if one component fails, the entire system is weakened. “This explains why simply ‘reviving Ajaokuta’ cannot be the entire solution. The plant must be connected to a functioning raw material and industrial ecosystem.”

But raw materials are not the problem; Nigeria's mineral endowment further exposes the contradiction, as the country boasts over three billion tonnes of iron ore resources, including major deposits at Itakpe and Agbaja, yet does not have the capacity to produce steel.

Alo stressed the importance of geological data and proper resource assessment before steel plants are established.

He pointed out that steel pro-

duction requires not only iron ore but also other essential inputs such as coal and dolomite, adding that investors must be certain that sufficient raw materials are available to sustain operations.

“Nigeria's steel strategy must therefore move from simply identifying mineral deposits to developing bankable geological data, beneficiation capacity, logistics networks and reliable feedstock arrangements. The country cannot build a sustainable steel industry on assumptions about raw materials,” Alo added.

The establishment and strengthening of the Ministry of Steel Development under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration represents a significant attempt to give the sector dedicated political attention.

The Audu-led ministry says it is pursuing the revival of Ajaokuta, National Iron Ore Mining Company (NIOMCO), Delta Steel Company and other strategic assets.

According to the Minister, a technical audit of Ajaokuta is ongoing, and the government is in advanced discussions with China over the plant's revival.

The government also says that five mini-Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plants are being developed around Ajaokuta to support industrial gas supply, with projected investment of over \$500 million.

There is also an agreement between the Ministry, Ajaokuta Steel Company, the Ministry of Defence, and the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) to produce materials for military hardware.

Beyond Ajaokuta, Premium Steel and Mines Limited, formerly Delta Steel Company, has submitted a plan to invest \$450 million and resume production within 18 months of financial closure.

The ministry also disclosed a \$400 million investment in an integrated steel project at Ewekoro, Ogun State,

while a proposed \$1 billion partnership with India's Rashmi Metaliks covers mining, ductile iron pipe production and critical mineral processing.

The developments suggest that the government is attempting to move beyond the traditional Ajaokuta-centred approach and build a broader steel value chain.

But this is where the administration will face its biggest test.

The real measure of success will not be the number of memoranda signed, groundbreaking ceremonies conducted or investment announcements made. It will be the tonnes of steel produced, the mines supplying the plants, the factories consuming the products and the jobs created.

The government's strategy contains several encouraging elements, particularly its emphasis on mining-to-metals linkages, local value addition, private investment, technology transfer and industrial clusters.

The proposed Nigeria Metallurgical Industry Bill could also provide a stronger legal and regulatory framework for the sector if successfully enacted and effectively implemented.

The country's previous industrial experience demonstrates that institutions can be created without achieving their intended objectives.

The annual \$3 billion to \$5 billion steel import bill is often presented primarily as a foreign exchange challenge, and every tonne of steel imported is potentially a tonne that could have been produced domestically, creating demand for iron ore, energy, transport services, engineering and labour.

A functional steel industry will have a multiplier effect across the economy. It will stimulate mining, rail transportation, power generation, engineering, construction, fabrication and manufacturing. Consequently, failure to develop the sector has contributed to wider industrial weakness.

But according to Audu, the challenge is not peculiar to Nigeria, as no African country featured among the world's top 10 steel producers in 2025, despite the continent's enormous deposits of iron ore and other steelmaking minerals.

Globally, crude steel production was estimated at 1.849 billion tonnes in 2025, with the top 10 producers accounting for 84 per cent of output.

For Umekesiobi, beyond the effect of importation on foreign exchange, the high cost of steel has ripple effects on infrastructural development.

“We have a problem of leaders failing in their campaign promises, and this affects the economy, industry and even the practitioners in our various fields.

“Whatever political promises have not been fulfilled always come at a cost. Some of them have multiple ripple effects across the economy and society.

“As professionals and advocates, we urge our leaders to live up to their promises. We are ready to collaborate with the government to fulfil their promises to the people”, he said.

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



Umekesiobi



Alo

Teachers’ Day: NUT laments non-implementation of special salary scale

From **Iyabo Lawal** (Lagos) and **Andrew Oota** (Abuja)

THE National Union of Teachers has decried the failure of the Federal Government to implement the special salary scale for teachers in basic and secondary schools approved under the administration of the late President

Tinubu returns to Abuja after six-day Lagos stay

From **Terhemba Daka**, Abuja

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu will return to Abuja this evening after a six-day stay in Lagos, where he marked Nigeria’s 66th Independence anniversary and participated in a series of engagements.

The President arrived in Lagos on Tuesday, September 29, following an extended working vacation in Europe, during which he spent time in London and Paris.

His return to Lagos, the nation’s former capital and his political stronghold, came as the administration entered a critical phase of preparations for the 2027 General Elections, with the President expected to intensify engagements on the implementation of his Renewed Hope Agenda and the country’s economic and political priorities.

On October 1, Tinubu addressed Nigerians in a nationwide broadcast to commemorate the 66th anniversary of independence, highlighting the administration’s reform programme and its efforts to move the country from economic stabilisation to greater prosperity.

2027: Presidency warns politicians against over-rating social media

From **Terhemba Daka**, Abuja

AS political activities gather momentum ahead of the 2027 General Elections, the Presidency has cautioned politicians against confusing social media visibility with genuine electoral support, warning that the politics of perception could prove vastly different from the reality at the polling booth.

The warning was conveyed by the President’s media aide, Tunde Rahman, who said politicians seeking electoral advantage must look beyond the popularity they appeared to enjoy on digital platforms and reconnect with voters at the grassroots.

Rahman said the growing dominance of social media in political communication had created a new dimension in electoral politics, where trending hashtags, viral posts, large followership and coordinated online campaigns could create an exaggerated impression of political strength.

He, however, stressed that such digital visibility did not necessarily translate into votes.

Muhammadu Buhari.

The NUT National Deputy President, Kizito Kalu, spoke in Abuja yesterday while delivering the 2026 World Teachers Day address at Eagle Square.

The NUT’s theme for the 2026 WTD is “Standing with teachers: 60 years of protecting the profession, advancing the status and shaping our futures.”

Kalu said: “Teachers must receive remuneration that reflects the importance of their responsibilities and the prevailing economic realities in the country. We wish to recall that the Federal

- **As ADC salutes teachers, condemns APC’s neglect**
- **UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF call for stronger support**

Government, under former President Muhammadu Buhari, approved the implementation of a special salary scale for teachers in basic and secondary schools in the year 2022 alongside other welfare packages.”

Kalu also called for improved working conditions, noting that teachers could not be expected to perform optimally in environments characterised by “overcrowded classrooms, inadequate furniture, insufficient instructional materi-

als.”

World Teachers Day was inaugurated on October 5, 1994, at the 44th session of the International Conference on Education in Geneva.

MEANWHILE, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and Education International have called for stronger professional sup-

port, better working conditions and enhanced status for educators.

In a joint message to commemorate the event, the four organisations called on governments and partners to stand with teachers by advancing the status of the teaching profession and empowering every tutor to contribute to more inclusive, peaceful and sustainable societies.

According to the organisations, every learner deserves a teacher who is well prepared, well supported and empowered to thrive in the profession, stressing that

the way societies value teachers reflects the value they place on future generations.

The organisations identified quality initial teacher education, continuous professional learning and safe and supportive working environments among the conditions required for teachers to perform effectively.

They also called for greater trust in teachers’ professional judgement, and meaningful participation of their experience in shaping education policy through social dialogue.



Niger State Governor, Mohammed Bago (left), with Vice President, Kashim Shettima, during the condolence visit to the bereaved families and the people of the state over the death of 37 suspected miners in Niger State, yesterday.

Melaye cites Germany’s fuel relief to support Atiku’s call for respite

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

AFRICAN Democratic Congress presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar, has cited Germany’s decision to cut taxes on petrol and diesel to strengthen his argument that governments can intervene to cushion citizens from severe energy-price shocks, former Kogi West Senator Dino Melaye has said.

Dino Melaye made the comparison in an intervention titled, “Like Germany... Like

Keyamo says subsidy removal funded \$500m Lagos airport rebuild

Atiku,” arguing that Germany’s response to rising fuel costs showed that government intervention in the energy market was not necessarily incompatible with economic reform.

Germany announced a reduction of about €0.17 per litre in taxes on gasoline and diesel as part of measures to ease the pressure of rising fuel prices on households and businesses.

For Melaye, the German

intervention provides a useful reference point for Atiku’s proposal to use government policy to reduce the burden of high fuel prices on Nigerians.

He argued that fuel costs extend far beyond motorists, affecting transportation, food distribution, manufacturing, small businesses and other economic activities.

Atiku had maintained that he would reintroduce a form of fuel subsidy if elect-

ed in 2027, but has sought to distinguish his proposal from the former import-subsidy regime.

MEANWHILE, the removal of fuel subsidy has enabled the Federal Government to raise about \$500m for the reconstruction of the Lagos airport and other aviation infrastructure, the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, has said.

Court orders INEC to recognise Hashim as Accord Party’s presidential candidate

From **Seye Olumide** (Lagos) and **Amech Ochojila, Sodiqi Omolayo** (Abuja)

JUSTICE Mohammed Garba Umar of the Federal High Court in Abuja has ordered the Accord Party and the Independent National Electoral Commission INEC to immediately uphold Dr Gbenga Olawepo-Hashim as Accord Party’s Presidential candidate for the 2027 general election.

The judge ordered the party to submit the candidate’s name to the electoral umpire in line with the provisions of Section 86 of the Electoral Act 2026 and that it should be accepted by INEC.

Hashim dedicates court victory to God, urges Accord members to unite

Justice Umar, in a judgment yesterday in the suit against Accord Party and INEC, held that Section 86 of the Electoral Act was violently violated by the refusal to submit the plaintiff’s name to INEC after emerging victorious in the May 30 primary election as the sole aspirant.

Although Accord Party denied ever conducting any primary election, Justice Umar dismissed the claim because of the evidence that Olawepo-Hashim paid N50m for expression of interest and nomination forms and accepted from him.

The judge held that most of the claims of Accord Party in respect of the disputed primary election were contradictory and unbelievable in the face of the law.

Olawepo-Hashim, through his counsel, Henry Akunebu, SAN, had urged the court to direct Accord Party to immediately upload his name to INEC’s nomination portal as its presidential candidate and compel the electoral body to recognise and accept the nomination.

The senior lawyer challenged the authenticity of documents tendered by the party and INEC, particularly

a letter allegedly cancelling the party’s presidential primary.

He had argued that the document lacked the party’s official stamp and was addressed to the INEC Chairman but was received by an unnamed national commissioner.

Akunebu argued that political parties were bound by the Electoral Act, their constitutions and INEC guidelines in the nomination of candidates, adding that a party that conducted a valid primary has a statutory duty to submit the winner’s name to INEC.

Research offers new hope for blindness, brain disorder treatments

By **Glory Sunday**

SCIENTISTS are exploring new treatment possibilities for blindness and brain disorders following a Nobel-winning discovery that allows selected nerve cells to be switched on or off using light.

Karl Deisseroth of Stanford University in the United States; Peter Hegemann of Humboldt University of Berlin; and Georg Nagel of the University of Würzburg in Germany won the 2026 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine on Monday for discoveries concerning light-gated ion channels and optogenetics.

The Nobel Assembly at the Karolinska Institutet said the scientists had laid the foundation for a method that enables researchers to control nerve cells using light, providing a more precise way to study individual nerve cells and brain circuits.

FRSC hands over Safeline Microfinance Bank to Robopay

FEDERAL Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has officially transferred ownership of Safeline Microfinance Bank to Robopay Nig. Ltd. This move aims to enhance the bank’s competitiveness, drive technological changes, and promote sustainable growth.

The handover event took place yesterday at the Safeline Microfinance Bank location in Abuja.

Safeline Microfinance Bank originated from the FRSC cooperative societies and commenced official microfinance operations in March 2010.

During the ceremony, Ibrahim Babagana, the Chairman of the Bank’s Board and a retired Deputy Corps Marshal, explained that the decision to sell came after reviewing the current regulatory environment and new government policies impacting the microfinance banking sector.

Tinubu orders probe of NAF plane crash amid safety record concerns

From **Olusegun Koiki** (Lagos), **Sodiq Omolayo**, **Joke Falaju** (Abuja), and **Adewale Momoh** (Akure)

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu yesterday ordered an investigation into the Nigerian Air Force aircraft crash in Ondo State, as the latest accident brought renewed scrutiny to the military's decade-long record of aviation losses and safety concerns.

"The Chief of Air Staff has briefed me, and I have directed the Nigerian Air Force to immediately commence a thorough investigation into the cause of the crash to prevent future occurrences," Tinubu said in a statement by his Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga.

The President also expressed condolences to the families of the 25 passengers and seven crew members aboard the aircraft and prayed for the repose of the souls of the officers.

"This is a painful moment for our Armed Forces and for the entire nation. Our Air Force personnel put their lives on the line every day to secure Nigeria. Their sacrifice will never be forgotten," he said.

Tinubu prayed "for the repose of the souls of the gallant officers and for Almighty God to grant their families and the Nigerian Air Force the fortitude to bear the unfortunate loss."

The President confirmed fatalities in the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) ATR-42 aircraft crash in Igbokoda, Ondo State, although the Air Force is yet to disclose the number of people killed.

He said the aircraft was on a routine mission from Benin to Lagos when the accident occurred, while commending the NAF for activating an immediate search and rescue operation.

He also commended first responders and the Ondo State Government for their response at the crash site, assuring the NAF of his administration's continued support.

Despite the President's reference to the repose of the souls of the officers and the unfortunate loss, neither the Presidency nor the NAF has disclosed an official death toll.

The NAF had said the aircraft was carrying 25 passengers and seven crew members, bringing the total number of people aboard to 32.

Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, said the aircraft, identified as NGR 931, lost radio contact at about 9:13 a.m., before its wreckage was located near the Naval Base in Igbokoda.

- 32 passengers, crew aboard, wreckage found in Ondo coastal community
- NAF launches search, rescue, yet to disclose death toll
- Residents recount panic, report seeing remains at crash site
- 16 military aircraft crashes in decade, 40 lives recorded
- NSIB offers technical support, awaits formal NAF invitation
- Aiyedatiwa deploys emergency agencies, orders crash site secured
- Tinubu condoles with officers' families, Nigerian Air Force

The minister said: "While the control and regulation of military aircraft are completely outside the authority of the Ministry of Aviation and the Civil Aviation Authority, I have just spoken to the Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Sunday Kelvin Aneke, and pledged our total cooperation and assistance in the search and rescue efforts ongoing."

The Director of Public Relations and Information, NAF, Air Commodore Ehimen Ejodame, who confirmed the crash in a statement, said rescue operation was being conducted in coordination with relevant authorities and emergency response agencies.

"The Nigerian Air Force has activated an immediate Search and Rescue operation following an ATR-42 aircraft accident in the Igbokoda area of Ondo State on 5 October 2026," Ejodame said. The ATR-42 is a twin-engine turboprop aircraft used for regional operations.

The NAF operates ATR-42 aircraft for specialised missions, including surveillance and maritime patrol.

Igbokoda residents recount panic, search for survivors after aircraft crash

THE Olu of Igbokoda, Oba Afolabi Odidiomo, expressed concern over the crash of a Nigerian Air Force

aircraft in the coastal community, saying he initially feared that a commercial aircraft was involved because of the potential number of casualties.

Odidiomo said he was in court when the incident occurred and directed palace officials to visit the crash site after reports emerged that an aircraft or helicopter had gone down.

He said the aircraft crashed into a river and swampy area during rainfall, leaving the terrain waterlogged.

"Our first thanks to Almighty God is that it did not happen inside the town; otherwise, the casualties would have been so many," he said.

According to the traditional ruler, the aircraft did not catch fire, although a substantial part of it had gone into the water.

"We cannot describe the exact situation for now, but from my investigation and what we have gathered so far, there was no survivor," he said.

A resident, Akintan Toluwase, said residents rushed to the scene after the crash and saw human remains, but were unable to help because the aircraft had gone into the swamp.

He said Navy personnel arrived at the scene around 10:00 a.m.

Another resident, Abel Bamidele, said the crash

occurred during the morning rainfall after residents heard a loud sound and learnt that something had fallen from the sky.

He said some local residents who could swim entered the water in an attempt to search for survivors but could not locate anyone.

As of press time, the aircraft remained submerged in the swamp, with no part of its body visible from the surface. Residents were seen paddling canoes around the area, while clothes, shoes and other personal effects believed to belong to victims floated on the water.

A resident identified as Kunle said the sound of the crash caused panic in the community.

"When we heard the sound, we ran out. People were running in different directions. The Navy brought boats and went towards the scene. We are praying that lives will be saved," he said.

Another resident, who identified herself simply as Funmilayo, said the incident had left the community frightened and confused.

"We have never witnessed anything like this before. Everyone is confused," she said.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson, Ondo State Police Command, Abayomi Jimoh, confirmed the crash in a statement, stressing that

details surrounding the incident are still emerging.

"The command urges members of the public, particularly residents of Igbokoda and adjoining communities, to remain calm and refrain from circulating unverified information. The public will be duly informed as soon as further credible information becomes available," Abayomi stated.

Concerns as military records 16 aircraft crashes in 10 years

CONCERNS over the safety of Nigeria's military aviation fleet have resurfaced following the crash of a Nigerian Air Force (NAF) ATR-42 aircraft in Ondo State yesterday, bringing to 16 the number of military aircraft crashes recorded in the country since 2016.

The crashes have claimed at least 40 lives according to a review of military aviation accidents over the period.

The latest incident occurred at Igbokoda, Ilaje Local Government Area of Ondo State, after the aircraft, with registration number NGR 931, disappeared from radar at about 9:13 a.m. while travelling from Benin to Lagos.

The latest crash has added to a decade-long record in which military aircraft have been lost in combat operations, training flights, routine missions and other operations.

The incidents reviewed by *The Guardian* focused on actual aircraft crashes or aircraft losses and excluded minor mishaps and emergency landings where the aircraft was not considered to have crashed.

The review shows that the

military recorded no crash in 2016, before an NAF Agusta 109 Light Utility Helicopter went down in the Borno River on July 6, 2017.

The helicopter had developed a technical fault while on a liaison mission, forcing the pilot to bring it down in the river. No life was lost.

The following year, two NAF F-7NI fighter aircraft collided around Katampe Hills, Abuja, during rehearsals for Nigeria's 58th Independence anniversary celebrations.

One person died in the September 2018 crash.

The military recorded three crashes in 2019. An Mi-35M helicopter crashed near Damasak, Borno State, on January 2 while supporting ground operations, killing its five-man crew. On August 17, an RV-6A Air Beetle crashed near Kaduna, killing its pilot.

A training helicopter subsequently crashed at the NAF Base in Enugu on November 14 after returning from a routine training exercise. No life was lost.

Four aircraft were lost in separate incidents in 2021.

On February 22, 2021 a Beechcraft King Air 350i crashed shortly after take-off from Abuja while heading towards Minna, Niger State.

The aircraft was carrying seven military personnel, all of whom died.

On March 31, 2021 an Alpha Jet conducting operations in Borno State disappeared from radar.

The aircraft was later confirmed to have crashed, while its two pilots remained unaccounted for after the wreckage was located in Sambisa Forest.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33



Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Power, Dr. Mahmuda Mamman (left); Special Adviser to the President on Power, Rilwan Babalola; Minister of Power, Joseph Tegbe; Governor of Lagos State, Babajide Sanwo-Olu; his Deputy, Dr Obafemi Hamzat and Commissioner for Energy and Mineral Resources, Biodun Ogunleye, during the ministerial implementation retreat with Federal Authorities on the Clean Lagos Electricity Market (CLEM), at the Lagos House, Marina, yesterday.

FG, Lagos launch 24/7 power zone to end electricity outage

By **Waliat Musa**
THE Federal and Lagos State Governments have agreed to work jointly to deliver stable and reliable electricity across the Lagos

Aiyedatiwa hails security forces over elimination of ISWAP commander, Ohida
From **Adewale Momoh, Akure**

ONDO State Governor, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, has commended security agencies over what he described as their gallantry, cooperation, and intelligence-led operations, which led to the elimination of a senior Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) commander, Abdussamad Ohida, also known as Anwar, in the Owo forest axis of the state.

Ohida was reportedly killed alongside several other members of the terrorist group during a joint operation involving the Nigerian Army, Department of State Services (DSS), and the Western Nigeria Security Network, also known as the *Amotekun Corps*.

Ohida, who was said to have previously served as deputy to ISWAP Central Nigeria leader Abu Ikrimah, also known as Abu Uwais, had assumed a leadership role in the group's activities following Ikrimah's arrest in 2023.

Sources alleged that Ohida was planning major terrorist attacks in parts of southern Nigeria, including attacks targeting civilians during the forthcoming festive period.

In a statement by the state's Commissioner for Information and Orientation, Idowu Ajanaku, Aiyedatiwa commended the security agencies for the swift intelligence and the commitment to protecting the lives and property of the people of Ondo State.

Achudume urges youths to be confident, focused, embrace entrepreneurship

THE Lead Pastor of Victory Life Bible Church International (VLBC), Apostle Lawrence Achudume, has urged Nigerian youths to cultivate confidence, remain focused and take advantage of emerging opportunities, saying the future of the country's economy depends largely on their capacity to translate ideas, skills and talents into productive ventures.

A statement yesterday noted that Achudume gave the charge during an entrepreneurship empowerment programme organised by the church.

Achudume was quoted as saying that the growing difficulty of securing conventional employment makes it imperative for young people to look beyond white-collar jobs and develop entrepreneurial capacities capable of creating livelihoods and employment opportunities.

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

corridor under the 24/7 Energy Zones pilot approved by President Bola Tinubu.

The agreement was reached yesterday during a high-level technical session between the Minister of Power, Joseph Tegbe, and Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu at the Lagos House, Marina, as both sides moved to address persistent electricity supply challenges affecting households, businesses and industries in the state.

The Lagos corridor is the first of the three areas listed under the pilot scheme, which will also cover the Abuja-Kaduna-Kano and Enugu-Port Harcourt corridors, creating a framework for extending more reliable electricity supply

ply to major commercial and industrial centres nationwide.

Tegbe said the Federal Ministry of Power had engaged the electricity distribution companies operating along the Lagos corridor and secured their commitment to offtake more electricity and provide steady and reliable supply to customers.

He also expressed the ministry's readiness to collaborate with the Lagos State Government across the four ministerial priority areas approved by the President, grid stabilisation, market liquidity, grid expansion, and governance and regulatory harmonisation.

The minister said the collab-

oration would be anchored on practical measures to address the technical, commercial and regulatory challenges that have continued to constrain electricity supply.

Sanwo-Olu, in his remarks, commended the federal delegation for what he described as its seriousness in tackling the challenges confronting the power sector.

The governor said Tegbe had, since assuming office as Minister of Power, demonstrated the willingness and capacity to address lingering problems in the sector.

Sanwo-Olu said Lagos State was equally committed to the collaboration, stressing the need for both levels of government to develop pragmat-

ic solutions that would make the electricity market work for Nigerians, particularly residents and businesses in Lagos State.

He said the objective was to create a bankable, collaborative and competitive electricity market in Lagos.

However, as part of efforts to translate the agreement into concrete action, Tegbe announced the constitution of a joint technical committee to resolve outstanding issues and recommend the next steps required to implement the 24/7 energy zones initiative in Lagos.

He stressed that the committee would report to a steering committee headed by Sanwo-Olu and co-chaired by Tegbe.



Former Bishop of Ibadan Anglican Diocese, Prof. Bayo Obijole (left); Chief Judge of Oyo State, Justice Iyabo Yerima; Bishop, Ibadan Anglican Diocese, The Rt. Rev. Titus Olayinka; Deputy Chancellor of the Diocese, Bolaji Ayorinde (SAN), and representative of Oyo State Commissioner for Justice, Justice Bunmi Are, during the 2026/2027 Legal Year Service in Ibadan, yesterday. PHOTO: NAN

Ekiti government showcases scorecard on World Teachers' Day

From **Rotimi Agboluaje** (Ibadan) and **Ayodele Afolabi** (Ado-Ekiti)

EKITI State Government, yesterday, said that it recruited no fewer than 5,530 teachers into its public primary and secondary schools in the last four years.

The government gave the breakdown of those recruited to include 430 teachers into the Teaching Service Commission in 2022, 500 in 2023/2024, 1,600 in 2025/2026, SUBEB 1,500 in 2022/2023 session and another 1,500 in 2026.

This was just as the Ekiti State Governor, Biodun Oyebanji, gave out N70.5 million to outstanding teachers across the

- Says it recruited 5,530 teachers, equipped schools with ICT, CCTV cameras, others in four years
- Oyebanji rewards outstanding teachers with N70.5 million
- I'll put Oyo teachers first, transform education in 100 days, says Alli

16 local councils of the state.

The beneficiaries, who were recognised for outstanding performance and commitment to their responsibilities, were drawn from public primary and secondary schools, private schools and other administrative cadres in the education sector.

Oyebanji, who spoke yesterday during an event to mark World Teachers' Day 2026 held at the Ekitiparapo Pavilion, Ado-Ekiti, disclosed that all the 203 public secondary schools have ICT laborato-

ries, Interactive Boards, 5KVA inverter, while 125 of them have Internet facilities.

MEANWHILE, the All Progressives Congress (APC) governorship candidate in Oyo State, Sharafadeen Alli, has pledged to prioritise teachers' welfare and introduce reforms in the education sector within his first 100 days in office if elected governor in 2027.

Alli made the pledge in a goodwill message to teachers during the 2026 World Teachers' Day celebration,

promising improved welfare packages, faster promotion processes, better working conditions and increased investment in school infrastructure.

Oyebanji said: "Old school buildings were renovated/rehabilitated in all the schools and perimeter fencing was provided for 54 public secondary schools. Additional 48 public secondary schools were provided with CCTV cameras and 85 more schools will have theirs this month.

Adeleke signs Osun Park Management Bill into law

From **Timothy Agbor** and **Oluwale Ige, Osogbo**

OSUN State Governor, Ademola Adeleke, yesterday, signed into law the Park Management Bill recently passed by the House of Assembly.

A statement by Adeleke's Spokesperson, Olawale Rasheed, said the governor, while signing the Bill into law at the Government House, lauded the House of Assembly for its proactiveness and dynamism, calling the new law a major step towards modernising Osun State transport system and creating a worthwhile experience for commuters and

Yoruba group seeks Tinubu's intervention over escalating fatal attacks in Osun

operators across the state.

The statement read in part: "I applaud the House Speaker and members of the House for always acting in the best interest of the state. I have gone through the bill as passed by the House and I am convinced that it is the best solution to the perennial crisis and challenges facing the Osun transportation park system.

"Having signed this bill into law, I assure all stakeholders that implementation will commence in earnest. In line with the law, we will ensure that Osun people and other

interests are accommodated for efficient service delivery across the state."

Earlier in his remark, the Speaker, Adewale Egbedun, said the House complied with its standing rules to process and finalise the passage of the bill, assuring the governor and the citizenry that the new law provides answers to questions bordering the minds of most Osun people.

MEANWHILE, the Yoruba Progressives Forum has called on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to urgently intervene in the worsening

security situation in Osun State, expressing concern over recurring killings, suspected cult clashes and attacks that have claimed lives and left residents living in fear.

The group lamented that hardly does a week pass without reports of violent attacks and killings in different parts of the state, warning that the situation requires urgent and coordinated action by the Federal Government and security agencies to prevent further loss of lives.

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

Optometrists to mark World Sight Day in Lagos

Say 2.2b people worldwide are visually impaired or blind

By **Gbenga Salau**

THE Nigerian Optometric Association (NOA), Lagos State chapter, yesterday, said that it would take eye-health awareness directly into communities in the state to mark the 2026 World Sight Day.

The campaign awareness, themed "Love Your Eyes: Every Story Counts," will bring optometrists and members of the public together through rally and awareness walks across Ikeja, Alimosho, Lagos Island and FESTAC zones.

However, after the walk, free eye screenings will be offered in Ikeja, Alimosho and Lagos Island, while an awareness walk with a visit to persons living with blindness will be done in FESTAC.

In a statement, Chairperson, NOA Lagos chapter, Dr Ghenorhe Ehimen, said the theme championed globally by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) places people and their lived experiences at the centre of the eye-health conversation, highlighting how every individual's experience with good or poor vision contributes to the larger story of eye health.

Ehimen, while quoting the World Health Organisation (WHO) data, noted that about 2.2 billion people worldwide live with a near or distance vision impairment.

"Over one billion of these cases could have been prevented or are yet to be addressed. 4.2 per cent of Nigerian adults aged 40 are blind (about 1.13 million people). 4.25 million Nigerian adults aged 40 are visually impaired and blind.

Aiyedatiwa wins FG's award for education interventions

From **Owede Agbajileke, Abuja**

THE Federal Government has honoured Ondo State Governor, Dr Lucky Aiyedatiwa, with a Special Recognition Award for his administration's contributions to the development of education in the state.

Aiyedatiwa received the award yesterday during the 2026 World Teachers' Day commemoration and President's Teachers' and Schools' Excellence Awards held at Eagle Square, Abuja.

The governor, who received the award from the Minister of Education, Dr Tunji Alausa, dedicated the recognition to teachers in Ondo State, saying that their sacrifices remained central to the progress recorded in the education sector.

"I am deeply honoured to stand before you today as I receive this special recognition with humility, gratitude and a profound sense of responsibility.

"This honour is gratefully accepted, not as a personal award, but as a tribute to teachers of Ondo State," Aiyedatiwa said.

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

SSANU issues FG fresh 14-day ultimatum over unpaid arrears

From Owede Agbajileke, Abuja

MEMBERS of the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU) have issued a fresh 14-day ultimatum for the release and payment of arrears contained in the 2026 agreement with the Federal Government.

President of the association, Mohammed Ibrahim, stated

Group seeks end to unlawful tax collection in Anambra

Community market shut after five people die in inter-communal clash

From Lawrence Njoku, Enugu

THE International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law (Intersociety) yesterday called on the Anambra State Governor, Charles Soludo, to end the alleged indiscriminate collection of taxes and levies, as well as enforce laws and procedures on unified tax collection and sharing systems in the state.

The group also demanded a probe into the finances of the Onitsha South Local Council Area, especially within the last eight months, to enhance transparency and accountability.

The call, the organisation said, followed a series of allegations of unregulated charges imposed on residents by government officials.

Intersociety, in a petition sent to Soludo, said that the state government under him must also publicly account for alleged bloated taxes and levies collected through public issuance of yearly financial reports, eliminate abuse of public office and corrupt practices, in accordance with Section 15 (5) of the 1999 Constitution.

Niger Delta roads now national emergency, PANDEF tells Tinubu

From John Akubo, Abuja

THE Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) has called on President Bola Tinubu to urgently intervene in the deplorable condition of roads across the South-South, warning that the region's deteriorating road network has reached the level of a national emergency.

PANDEF made the call in a statement signed by its National Chairman, Amb. Godknows Igali, to mark Nigeria's 66th Independence Anniversary.

The forum congratulated Tinubu, the Federal Government and Nigerians on the anniversary, while commending governors and other leaders in the South-South for their contributions to infrastructure, human welfare and social development.

However, PANDEF said the deteriorating infrastructure in the Niger Delta could no longer be treated as a regional concern.

Union, NUT fault King's College concession plan

this at a news briefing in Abuja, where he read the resolutions of the association's national executive council meeting that was held at the Federal University Uyo at the weekend.

According to him, even when the 2026 agreement was clear on the modalities to resolve the lingering issues, payments for those arrears have been implemented haphazardly, and demands that the Federal Government complete the payment or risk an indefinite strike action.

The fresh move followed a stern warning issued last Thursday against delays, selective implementation and marginalisation in the rollout of the 2026 FGN/SSANU Agreement, and that the union "will not accept unnecessary delays, selective implementation, marginalisation or any attempt to diminish the financial and non-financial provisions of the agreement."

Delivering the State of the Union Address at the 56th National Executive Council (NEC) meeting at the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, National President of the union, Mohammed Ibrahim, said implementation had 'commenced in some universities' but

remained incomplete in others due to "funding and administrative challenges."

Insisting that the 2026 pact and NEC resolutions must yield measurable benefits, Ibrahim said: "Agreements and NEC resolutions must translate into concrete action and measurable benefits for our members."

He directed branches and zones to "continue to monitor implementation, maintain accurate and verifiable

membership records, document cases of non-compliance or victimisation, and provide timely reports to the National Secretariat."

Meanwhile, the association also rejected plans to concession King's College, Lagos.

The association's rejection of the concession had generated concerns over the ownership and management of the 117-year-old institution, after the Minister of Education, Tunji Alausa, announced, in August, that the school, set up in 1909 by the colonial gov-

ernment, had been transferred to the Old Boys Association in a 35-year concession plan.

ALSO, the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) has kicked against the planned concession, describing the arrangement as a threat to public education and the rights of teachers.

The NUT President, Titus Amba, made the position of the union known yesterday during the 2026 World Teachers' Day celebration in Abuja.

He was represented at the event by the Deputy National President of the union, Kizito Kalu.

Amba said that while the union recognised the contributions of old students and other stakeholders to the development of educational institutions, it strongly opposed the transfer of the management and operational responsibility of King's College to a private association.

Lesotho, Bayelsa explore economic cooperation

THE government of Lesotho and Bayelsa State have held talks on areas of economic cooperation, including agriculture, oil and gas, tourism, cold water development and textile warehousing.

The bilateral meeting between the country's Prime Minister, Ntsokoane Samuel Matekane, and the Governor of Bayelsa State, Douye Diri, was held on Sunday at the State House in Maseru, the capital city.

Diri, who recalled an earlier meeting with Matekane in Abuja, Nigeria, said Bayelsa was interested in exploring areas of economic benefits, particularly where it had comparative advantages.

He said the state is rich in crude oil and very large gas deposits, in addition to having the longest coastline in the country, placing it at a strategic position in the Gulf of Guinea.

Lesotho is one of the world's smallest, landlocked nations located in Southern Africa, and it is rich in diamonds and a leader in cold water production and export as well as textile production.

Coleman seeks stiffer penalties for substandard cable importers, distributors

Faults SON's weak prosecution, outdated penal code

By Adaku Onyenucheya

COLEMAN Technical Industries Limited (CTIL) has called for stiffer penalties for importers, manufacturers and distributors of counterfeit and substandard cables, saying weak enforcement is encouraging the growth of the illicit trade.

The Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, CTIL, George Onafowokan, made the call yesterday while responding to questions from journalists after a media tour of Coleman's factories in Sagamu, Ogun State.

Onafowokan said the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) should strengthen its enforcement efforts to protect genuine manufacturers and consumers from substandard products.

He argued that confiscating and destroying counterfeit cables without prosecuting those responsible would not serve as an effective deterrent.



Bayelsa State Governor, Douye Diri (left) and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Ntsokoane Matekane, during a bilateral meeting at the State House in Maseru.

2027: Anambra government, NDC bicker over Obi's presidential ambition

THE Anambra State Government has told the electorate to resist voting for the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) presidential candidate, Peter Obi, in the 2027 general election.

The state government made the call on its official X account, managed by the office of the New Media to Governor Charles Soludo, yesterday.

The government claimed that Obi destroyed the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) in the state while President Bola Tinubu defended it.

It wrote: "A betrayal alert for

APGA. Since 2014, Obi has had one mission: to destroy the party that made him.

"In 2015, while Tinubu stood with APGA, Obi backed the opposition to bury us. Do not be deceived by a man who abandoned his own house. Anambra is APGA. Ndi APGA, defend your home, resist the NDC."

Recall that in 2025, Soludo said that he was backing Tinubu ahead of the 2027 elections. He said his support is grounded in a 22-year friendship and the President's bold economic reforms.

Speaking with journalists after meeting Tinubu at the

Presidential Villa, Abuja, Soludo said his support remains firm despite not being a member of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

"Tinubu is my friend; he has been my friend for 22 years now and counting. I support him, and I'm impressed by the bold steps he has taken, particularly in the economy and structural reforms. We're taking the right steps, and we need to stay the course," he said.

The governor described Tinubu as "in high spirits, hale and hearty" and urged political parties that identify as progressives to form a

broad coalition to strengthen democracy and drive economic and social development.

MEANWHILE, the NDC's Director of New Media and Strategic Communications, Theo Abu Agada, yesterday insisted that the Anambra State Government is threatened by Obi's growing popularity.

Agada said the NDC would win big in Anambra State and that there is nothing Soludo and his APGA can do about it.

He accused the state government of resorting to cheap blackmail because it could not challenge Obi on his governance record.

Atiku calls for urgent rescue of abducted corps members

From Kehinde Olatunji (Lagos) and Rotimi Agboluaje (Ibadan)

FORMER Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, yesterday condemned the abduction of prospective National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members in Imo State, describing the incident as "heartbreaking" and calling on the federal and Imo State governments, as well as security agencies, to urgently secure the release of those still in captivity.

Atiku, who is the presidential candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) in the forthcoming general elections, made the call in a statement yesterday, drawing attention to the prolonged captivity of

Afenifere calls for NYSC reform

schoolchildren abducted from Mussa and Lassa communities in Borno State.

The former vice president's intervention came four days after gunmen attacked two commercial buses conveying prospective corps members along the Owerri-Onitsha Road in the Umunoha area of Mbaitoli Local Council Area of Imo State.

The victims were travelling from Ibadan, Oyo State, to the NYSC orientation camps in Abia and Akwa Ibom states when the attackers struck at about 6:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 1.

He wrote: "The abduction of 20 travellers, including prospective corps members,

in Imo State is heartbreaking. Some have been rescued, but others remain in captivity.

"I urge the federal and Imo State governments, and all security agencies, to act with urgency and bring everyone still being held home safely."

Recall that the Imo State Police Command initially announced that 10 passengers had been rescued and the two buses recovered, while other passengers remained missing. Subsequent accounts from families indicated that 20 corps members were all being held by the abductors.

The police and military have since intensified the search for the victims. The Inspector-

General of Police, Olatunji Disu, deployed the Deputy Inspector-General of Police in charge of Operations, Shehu Nadada, alongside two commissioners of police, to coordinate the rescue operation.

The Imo State Commissioner of Police, Audu Bosso, later disclosed that security operatives had traced the suspected kidnappers to a hideout in the bush using intelligence gathering and drone surveillance.

MEANWHILE, the pan-Yoruba socio-political organisation, Afenifere, has expressed dismay over the abduction of NYSC members, sympathising with families of the victims and proffering ideas on how to put a stop to such incidents.

Planners seek reforms, census to tackle housing crisis

By Chinedum Uwaegbulam and Victor Gbonegun

NIGERIA'S housing sector needs urgent reforms, including housing policies, the Land Use Act and access to mortgage finance, to make housing accessible to more citizens, the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (NITP) has said.

NITP President, Dr Chime Ogbonna, gave the message to mark World Habitat Day (WHD), themed "Adequate Housing for All," as the world reflects on the state of towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter.

This comes as the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr António Guterres, called for stronger investment in adequate housing provision and to transform informal settlements to reduce poverty, tackle inequality, and foster peaceful and inclusive societies.

Noting that adequate housing is the foundation of dignity, security, and opportunity, he lamented that over three billion people are yet denied this universal human right.

Among others, the United Nations stated that adequate housing requires an inclusive approach that responds to the needs of lower-income households, people experiencing homelessness, communities affected by crises and disasters, and those at risk of displacement.

Turaki, Datti, others task NASS on good governance

From Rauf Oyewole, Bauchi

STAKEHOLDERS at the Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed Colloquium in Bauchi State yesterday called on the National Assembly (NASS) to entrench good governance to fast-track Nigeria's development, insisting that the legislative arm of government must save itself from being a stooge in the hands of the executive.

Among the speakers were the factional Chairman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Dr Kabiru Turaki, a former vice presidential candidate of the Labour Party, Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed, and former Executive Secretary of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund TETFund, Prof. Suleiman Bogoro.

Speaking on the theme, "The Nigerian Senate: Yesterday, Today, and the Future of Representative Legislation" at the event marking the 68th birthday of Governor Mohammed, Turaki said Nigerians should demand a quality legislature that adds value to the lives of citizens.

He noted that though legislation is made every day, no quality work that fundamentally affects the life of the common man is being turned out of the National Assembly.

Also, the chairman of the event, Bogoro, urged Nigerian leaders to provide quality representation for Nigerians amid rising insecurity, low levels of education and poverty, particularly in Northern Nigeria.

FG donates N250m to miners' bereaved families, assures justice as toll rises to 38

From Bala Yahaya, Minna

VICE-PRESIDENT Kashim Shettima has announced federal government support of N250 million to the bereaved families of the 37 suspected illegal artisanal miners who died while in the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) custody in Niger State.

Announcing the donation yesterday during a condolence visit to the government and people of the state, Shettima assured the families of justice over the loss of life.

Meanwhile, the Niger State Government has confirmed that 38 people died

in the NSCDC incident, disclosing that one more person was killed by gunshot during the ensuing riots.

The vice president, who was received by Governor Mohammed Umaru-Bago, conveyed the condolences of President Bola Tinubu, saying the federal government was in the state to share in the people's grief, listen to their concerns and reaffirm its commitment to protecting every citizen.

According to him, the death of the 37 young men in the NSCDC custody "was a stain on our national conscience. A citizen deprived of liberty remains entitled to the state's protection.

No allegation, however grave, diminishes that entitlement."

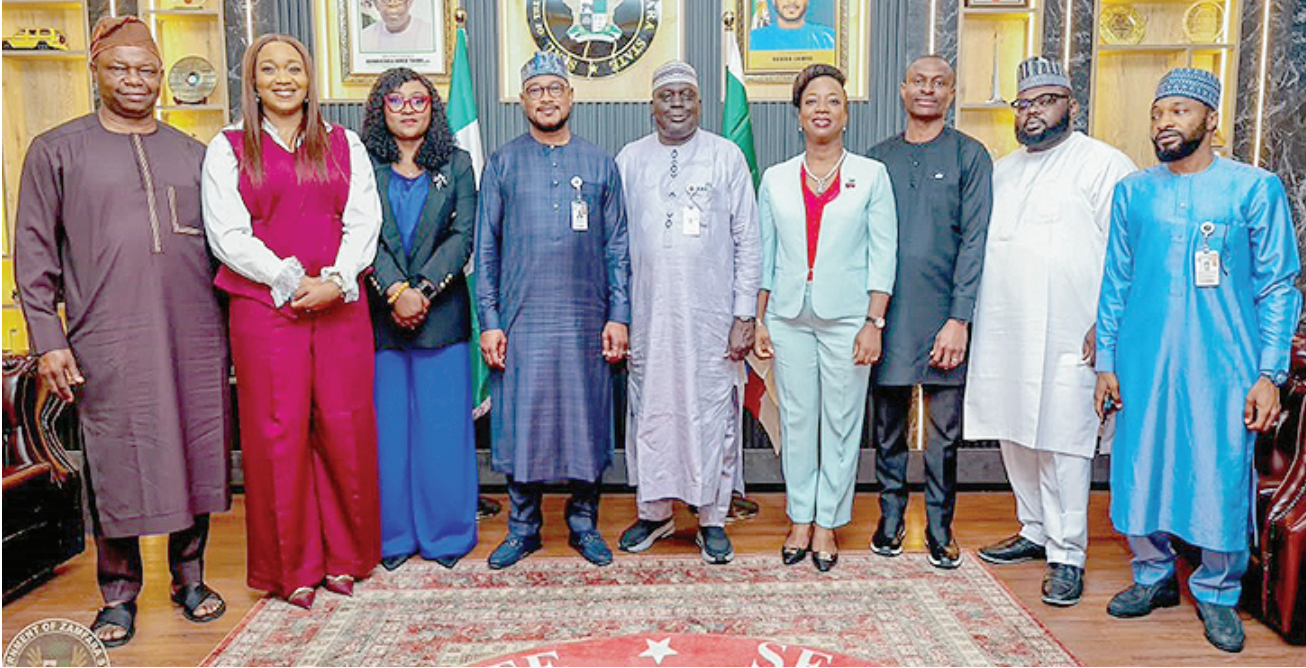
Assuring justice, he warned against any attempt to shield anyone from accountability, stressing that the government owed the deceased justice, answers to their families, and due process to persons under investigation.

For his part, Governor Bago noted that the state had been bedevilled by several tragedies that resulted in the loss of many lives. He thanked the federal government for the monetary donation, while appealing to it to strengthen regulation in the mining sector, protect national assets and

provide safe, legal and dignified opportunities for young people.

He also announced N5 million in financial support for each bereaved family and N2 million for each survivor, while acknowledging the support of the Emir of Minna, Farouk Bahago, in promoting peace and counselling both the affected families and those arrested in connection with the incident.

Meanwhile, he also revealed that 32 survivors had so far been recorded, even as the committees investigating the incident were still working to establish the exact number of people affected.



Dr Festus Adedayo of the *Nigerian Tribune* (left); Ayo Mairo-Ese of *Arise News*; Veronica Dan-Ikpoyi of *TVC*; Zamfara State Governor, Dauda Lawal; his deputy, Mani Malam Mummuni; Maupe Ogun-Yusuf of *Channels TV*; Editor of *The Guardian*, Dr Femi Adekoya; Editor-in-Chief, *Daily Trust*, Ibrahim Shehu Adamu, and the Governor's Spokesperson, Sulaiman Bala Idris, at the end of a media chat in Gusau, Zamfara, yesterday.

Zamfara bids to change perception on Sharia, insecurity, emerge as top minerals destination

By Tunde Bodunrin

Governor Dauda Lawal has said Zamfara State was working to correct the negative perception of the state arising from the introduction of Sharia Law by former Governor Ahmed Yerima through repositioning it as a prime investment destination for vast critical mineral resources.

Addressing newsmen, Lawal said that though Yerima had his reasons for introducing Sharia, his engagement process was flawed as there was no ade-

quate awareness.

He reiterated that he would not support negotiations with kidnappers abducting residents and wreaking havoc in the state, adding that paying ransom to criminals empowers them, while previous negotiations did not yield any positive results.

The governor described Zamfara as a state of good, loving people with freedom of religion, noting that there are areas dominated by people from the South-West and South-East, as well as other minority groups.

Moreover, he argued that Zamfara should not be defined by insecurity but by its comparative advantages, including as the number one in critical minerals in the country, going by proven data, and "that is why investors are rushing into the state with their money."

He added that his administration was providing infrastructure and making the environment conducive for investment.

On mining, he revealed that about \$1 million worth of informal gold mining

transactions take place daily in the state, with the government incorporating artisanal miners through technology and carrying the people along.

Among others, Lawal said Zamfara is naturally blessed with abundant sunshine, which the state is harnessing, with every school and ministry built or rebuilt in the state now solar-powered, thereby reducing electricity and diesel costs from N150 million monthly to about N35 million monthly through renewable energy.

Girls silently dropping out while in classrooms, FG warns

From Owede Agbajileke, Abuja

GIRLS could effectively drop out of school while still sitting in the classroom; therefore, the need for teachers to identify and address bullying, abuse, exclusion and other factors that silently push learners out of education, the federal government has said.

The Minister of State for Education, Prof. Suwaiba Ahmad, spoke yesterday in Abuja at the National Trainers' Workshop on Safe

Learning Environment, Gender-Responsive Technology and ICT Skills for Educators in Teacher Training Institutions in Nigeria.

Ahmad, represented by the Director, College of Education in the ministry, Dr Uchenna Uba, stressed that physical attendance alone should no longer be regarded as evidence that a child was benefiting from education.

Ahmad noted that a girl could remain in school

every day but gradually withdraw after being repeatedly ignored, ridiculed, bullied or made to feel unsafe.

According to the minister, the warning underscored the need for Nigeria to move beyond simply enrolling children in school to ensuring that they were safe, included and learning.

Meanwhile, Ahmad noted that though the ministry had introduced the National Policy on Anti-

Bullying in Nigerian Schools and its implementation guidelines, the success of such policies would ultimately depend on teachers and other adults in schools.

The workshop is expected to train 45 master trainers from 15 teacher training colleges in gender-responsive pedagogy, safe learning environments, prevention and response to school-related gender-based violence and digital teaching.

Keyamo blames N400b Abuja Airport second runway on 15yr delay

By Olusegun Koliki

THE proposed second runway for the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport (NAIA), Abuja, has risen from an initial N45 billion in 2009 to about N400 billion in 2026 due to years of delay, the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, has said.

Speaking yesterday at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA), Lagos, during the 67th anniversary of Aero Contractors, Keyamo said the sharp increase in the cost of the project indicated the economic consequences of delaying critical aviation infrastructure.

According to him, the proposed second runway had been the subject of controversy for almost two decades, with the National Assembly previously questioning the estimated N45 billion cost of the project.

The second runway for Abuja was first proposed in 2009 when Babatunde Omotoba was the Minister of Aviation under then President Umaru Yar'Adua.

According to Keyamo, the cost controversy started when former President Goodluck Jonathan was in office. However, he said President Bola Tinubu's infrastructure strategy is anchored on the need to address decades of under-investment in critical facilities across the aviation sector.

Police detain Kano assembly aspirant over display of firearm

From Murtala Adewale, Kano

A KANO State House of Assembly aspirant under the platform of Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), Aminu Warkal, has been detained at the state police command for alleged unlawful display of a firearm.

The Kwankwasiyya Movement loyalist was initially summoned after a viral video showed him displaying a pump-action gun at a political rally. The former Nigerian Air Force personnel was seen in the clip amid supporters chanting political slogans.

In a statement, the Police Spokesperson, CSP Abdullahi Kiyawa, disclosed that the command detained Warkal for interrogation over the video clip.

According to the police, unlawful display of a firearm, if established, constitutes a clear violation of the provisions of the Firearms Act as it can incite fear, intimidating members of the public and breaching public peace and security.

He further advised members of the public, particularly politicians, their supporters and other stakeholders, to conduct themselves peacefully and abide strictly by the provisions of the Electoral Act, the Firearms Act and other extant laws of the land.

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Happy
60th
BIRTHDAY

Professor Adeola F. Adenikinju

Father • Teacher • Mentor • Scholar

Happy 60th Birthday, Professor Adeola Adenikinju!

Today, we celebrate not only six decades of a remarkable life, but also a legacy of scholarship, service, and quiet yet profound influence. As a distinguished Professor of Economics at the University of Ibadan, you have earned lasting respect as one of Nigeria's foremost thinkers on energy economics, development policy, and computable general equilibrium modelling. Your pioneering work, particularly on energy pricing, agricultural performance, and household welfare, has illuminated how policy shocks ripple through the Nigerian economy, shaping debates and informing decisions at the highest levels.

Beyond your publications and advisory roles, what truly distinguishes you is your humanity. Through your leadership at the Department of Economics and the Centre for Petroleum, Energy Economics and Law (CPEEL), your service to the Nigerian Economic Society (NES) and the Nigerian Association for Energy Economics (NAEE), and your contributions to national and international policy platforms, you have mentored generations of students, young researchers, and colleagues. You have opened doors, nurtured talent, and modeled integrity, humility, and intellectual generosity. Many of us who have benefited from your guidance carry its lasting imprint and continue to draw inspiration from your example.

As you celebrate this diamond milestone, we thank God for the gift of your life and for the many lives you have touched. We pray that the years ahead bring you continued good health, joy, peace, and fulfilment. May your wisdom keep guiding, your voice keep inspiring, and your legacy continue to grow from strength to strength.

Happy 60th birthday, Professor Adeola Adenikinju!

Wishing you many happy returns and many more years of impactful service to Nigeria and the world.

Signed

Adebayo Nurudeen Durodola
Olaniyi James Ogunleye, Ph.D
Abiola S. Akande, Ph.D
Dilinna Lucy Nwobi, Ph.D
Habtamu Girma Demieessie, Ph.D
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Transport fares soar in C'River as electric buses await deployment

From Solomon Azu and Tina Todo, Calabar

CROSS River State workers, parents and students are groaning under rising transport fares as schools resume for the 2025/2026 academic session, months after the state government acquired electric buses that are yet to be deployed.

The buses, procured by the Bassey Otu administration under its mass transit scheme to cushion the effects of fuel subsidy removal, are still parked at the premises of the state-owned Construction and Fabrication Academy of West Africa along Murtala Mohammed Highway, Calabar.

The delay came amid rising fares across Calabar South, Calabar Municipality, Akpabuyo, Bakassi and other local councils.

Checks by *The Guardian* showed that by 6:30 a.m. yesterday at Atimbo Road junction, schoolchildren and parents were scrambling for tricycles, with fares rising to as much as N800 per trip from N600 before the resumption of schools.

A petty trader and mother of three in Federal Housing Estate, Mrs Eme Bassey, said she now spends more than N2,400 daily transporting her two children to school. "Government said they bought buses to help us, but we have not seen any," she



Electric vehicles parked in the premises of the Construction and Fabrication Academy of West Africa, along Murtala Mohammed Highway, Calabar.

said.

At the University of Calabar main gate, a 300-level student, Mary John, said many students were now trekking long distances as mini-buses

operating between 8 Miles and the university charge between N800 and N1,000. Commercial drivers attributed the fare increases to the high cost of petrol,

which they said was selling for more than N1,400 per litre in Calabar, as well as rising spare-parts costs.

Transportation analysts said the situation reflected a

gap between policy and implementation, warning that the delay in deploying the buses was worsening the financial burden on households.

They said some families were now spending more than 40 per cent of their daily income on transportation, with the situation also contributing to school absenteeism in public schools in Bakassi, Akpabuyo and Calabar South.

Reacting, the state Commissioner for Transport, Ekpenyong Cobham, assured residents that the buses would soon be deployed and would help reduce transport costs.

Police arrest two kidnappers after Rivers victim pays N10.3m ransom

From Obinna Nwaoku

OPERATIVES of the Rivers State Police Command have arrested two suspected members of a six-man kidnapping syndicate allegedly involved in the abduction of a resident identified as Hassan.

The suspects, identified as 24-year-old Victor Ifeanyi, alias "Big Bobby", and 36-year-old Aniekan Okon Michael, alias "Duff Man", were arrested by operatives of the command's Violent Crime Response Unit (VCRU-AKU) following an intelligence-led operation.

Spokesperson for the command, ASP Agabe Blessing Kaborlo, said Hassan was abducted on September

6, 2026, around Fidelity Bank, Garrison, Port Harcourt.

The kidnappers reportedly took him to Igbugulu Waterside, Borikiri, where he was held captive for three days.

The victim was eventually released after his relatives allegedly paid N10.3 million in ransom.

The police said they received credible information about the abduction on September 7, prompting operatives of the VCRU-AKU to

commence investigations and intelligence-led operations to identify those behind the crime.

The operation subsequently led to the arrest of Ifeanyi and Michael, whom the police described as suspected members of the kidnapping syndicate.

The command said preliminary investigations indicated that the suspects allegedly confessed to participating in the operation.



ASP Agabe Blessing

Drug dealers recruit amputees, hawkers to distribute narcotics in Lagos, Ogun

By Alex Olise

DRUG dealers in Lagos and Ogun states have allegedly adopted a new strategy of using persons living with disabilities and female hawkers to distribute narcotics in a bid to evade security agencies.

The development has made detection more difficult, as persons with disabilities are often seen on the streets begging for alms, while female hawkers carrying bowls or other items may attract little suspicion from members of the public.

The new method of drug distribution was uncovered at the weekend when *The Guardian* visited some police formations in Lagos and Ogun

states.

At one of the police stations in Lagos, a male amputee was arrested with a large quantity of different types of hard drugs at a black spot in one of the state's major markets.

During interrogation, the suspect reportedly confessed that he was introduced to the business, alongside others, by a major drug dealer who is currently at large.

According to him, many of those recruited are operating across Lagos and Ogun states and are paid 10 per cent of their daily sales. He said he had been using the proceeds to supplement the money he made from begging.

In a separate incident, a female hawker was arrested in the

Sango-Ota area of Ogun State while allegedly carrying hard drugs concealed beneath a large pot.

The woman reportedly claimed she was hawking native liquid herbs, popularly known as agbo. However, a plain-clothed police officer became suspicious and asked her to drop the pot. She reportedly started trembling, prompting the officer to search it, where several hard drugs were allegedly found.

Police investigators told *The Guardian* that the suspects would be used to trace the major dealers and other kingpins behind the distribution of narcotics in Lagos and Ogun states and, by extension, other parts of the South-West.

Gunmen kill two, injure six in fresh attack on Plateau herders

From Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi, Jos

AT least two persons were killed and six others injured on Sunday evening when gunmen attacked Fulani herders travelling in a pick-up vehicle around Total Filling Station, Yelwa Club Junction, Bukuru, Jos South Local Council of Plateau State. The attack occurred less than two weeks after gunmen reportedly attacked herders around Kassa community in Barkin Ladi Local Council,

killing five persons and injuring one.

The state chairman of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), Ibrahim Yusuf Babayo, who confirmed the latest incident in Jos, said the victims were attacked at about 5:30 p.m. while returning from a cattle market.

Babayo condemned the attack and urged security agencies to track down those

responsible and bring them to justice.

He said the victims had been rushed to hospital, adding that one person was still missing.

Babayo said MACBAN was concerned that the latest incident was not isolated, recalling that five Fulani herders were killed on September 20, 2026, around Kassa in Barkin Ladi Local Government Area while returning from the same market.

Jos-Abuja highway crash: Death toll rises to 23 as three bodies recovered

From Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi, Jos

THE death toll from Friday's multiple-vehicle crash along the Jos-Abuja highway in Plateau State has risen to 23, from the 20 initially reported.

The crash occurred around Hawan Kibo, a steep and winding section of the highway, and involved four vehicles, including a Howo Sino Truck with registration number AGL525YN, a Toyota Corolla with registration number AB 129 M and a Toyota Hummer bus

operated by Yankari Express.

At least 20 people were initially confirmed dead in the crash, while several others were injured.

Eyewitnesses attributed the accident to the failure of the truck's brakes, which allegedly caused it to lose control while descending the steep section of the road before ramming into several passenger vehicles.

One eyewitness said the crash occurred at about 6:00 p.m.

"The vehicle lost control while coming down the hill. It was a terrible scene. People were shouting for help, and many victims were trapped in their vehicles," he said.

The injured victims were reportedly rushed to nearby health centres for treatment.

A resident of the area told *The Guardian* yesterday that three additional bodies were later recovered from the bush around the scene of the accident, bringing the death toll to 23.

Group mobilises Lagos residents to clear blocked drains, canals

By Adaku Onyenucheya

THE Sustainable Future Development Initiative (SUFDI), in partnership with the African Cleanup Initiative, has mobilised residents and the Lagos State Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) to clear blocked drains and canals and evacuate waste from communities across the state.

The exercise, organised as part of activities marking World Cleanup Day, was held

simultaneously in Ijora-Badia, Ikeja, Ojuelegba, Surulere, Bariga and Agege, among other areas.

Speaking on the initiative, SUFDI Executive Director, Favour John, said it was aimed at reducing flooding, promoting positive environmental behaviour, encouraging active and healthy mobility, linking sanitation with public health and strengthening community ownership and institutional collaboration.

John said the initiative was conceived in response to poor environmental practices observed in the selected communities, adding that residents were being educated on the importance of maintaining clean and healthy surroundings.

She expressed optimism that the awareness created through the exercise would encourage residents to abandon practices such as

open defecation, dumping waste in drainage channels and indiscriminate burning of refuse.

"We noticed that many people here still engage in unhealthy environmental practices like open defecation and disposal of waste in gutters, among others. These, we have told them, are injurious to their health and have devastating effects on their environment.



Participants during the clean up

Hot Lines: 08034990344 and 08160223638

Abuja park demolition sparks uproar over alleged breach of court order

From **Adamu Abuh**, Abuja

THE management of Obike Industries Nigeria Limited, owners of Peka Park and Garden in Wuse Zone 3, Abuja, has raised the alarm over the demolition of the recreational facility, alleging that the action was carried out despite a subsisting court order restraining the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) authorities from interfering with the property.

The company said the demolition destroyed buildings, equipment and other facilities worth more than N1 bil-

lion and displaced over 100 workers.

Director of Obike Industries, Onyeka Ikenta, who disclosed this at a press conference in Abuja yesterday, appealed to President Bola Tinubu, FCT Minister Nyesom Wike, the National Assembly and the judiciary to intervene and ensure that the rule of law prevailed.

Ikenta said the property, identified as Plot 1353, Cadastral Zone A02, Wuse 1 District, was originally designated as a green area by the FCT Administration before it was allocated to the company in

2007 following a competitive process for its management and development.

According to him, the company complied with the relevant procedures, made the

required payments and obtained approvals from the appropriate FCT authorities before developing the recreational facility.

He said the company later ran into problems over alleged encroachment on the property by adjoining developments, prompting it to petition the authorities and eventually institute legal proceedings in 2016.

Ikenta said the case, marked CV-840-2016, was instituted against the FCT Minister, the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) and other parties.

He added that the High Court of the FCT subsequently issued an interlocutory injunction restraining the first and second defendants from dealing with the property in a manner adverse to the company's interests.

According to him, the court inspected the disputed property on March 2, 2017, before delivering its ruling on March 9, 2017.

Ikenta, however, alleged that officials of the FCT Administration returned to the property in September 2026 and issued a notice directing the company to vacate on the grounds that the property had been revoked and allocated or sold to another party.

He said the company immediately wrote to Wike and relevant FCT officials, drawing their attention to the court order and warning against any action that could interfere with the subject matter of the litigation.

Ikenta said the company also commenced contempt proceedings by filing Form 48 and subsequently Form 49 after the alleged demolition began.



Some demolished structures

LAWMA steps up clean-up, recycling drive, arrests offender

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

THE Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) has intensified its campaign for a cleaner environment through a combination of large-scale waste evacuation, community recycling initiatives, public education and enforcement against indiscriminate dumping across the state.

As part of the effort, the authority deployed eight compactor trucks and a large team of sanitation personnel to clear accumulated waste along the median of Ayobo-Isefun Road, even as enforcement officers, advocacy teams and environmental health officials moved in to prevent the cleared areas from being used as dumping points again.

The operation continued despite Sunday morning rainfall, with sanitation workers and members of LAWMA's management team remaining on the ground to evacuate the

waste. Several sections of the road were subsequently left visibly clean.

The Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of LAWMA, Dr Muyiwa Gbadegesin, said the intervention was part of the authority's sustained efforts to strengthen its zero-waste initiative and address both waste accumulation and the behaviours that contribute to its recurrence.

"Our commitment to achieving a cleaner Lagos remains unwavering. We will continue to deploy the necessary equipment and manpower to clear accumulated waste, while also addressing the behaviours and service gaps that contribute to its recurrence," he said.

Gbadegesin added that the evacuation would continue until the entire stretch was cleared, warning that the authority would not allow rehabilitated locations to become dumping points again.

While the clean-up was underway, LAWMA enforce-

ment officers served notices on non-compliant premises along the corridor, while members of the Advocacy Team and Environmental Health Officers engaged residents and traders on responsible waste disposal.

The authority also warned that stiffer measures would be taken against persistent illegal dumpers and erring Private Sector Participation (PSP) operators whose service failures contribute to waste accumulation.

Beyond the immediate clean-up, LAWMA has also intensified efforts to make communities active participants in waste management and recycling.

At Osborne Foreshore Phase 1, the authority is distributing 100 tagged recycling bins to households under its Community Buy-Back Programme, while the LAWMA Academy is sensitising residents on waste separation at source and the proper use of the bins.



LAWMA officers during clean up exercise

So-Safe Corps arrest three suspected cultists, recover firearm in Ogun

From **Segun Ayinde**, Abeokuta

OPERATIVES of the Ogun State Community, Social Orientation and Safety Corps (So-Safe Corps) have arrested three suspected cult members and recovered a firearm from them in Ijagun Town, Ogun State.

The suspects, identified as Samuel, Dapo and Favour, were arrested at about 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 4, 2026, during a security operation at Emmanuel Villa, Abapawa, Ijagun Town.

The operation followed credible intelligence on the activities of suspected cultists in the area.

The Corps Commander, Dr Soji Ganzallo, confirmed the arrest in a statement issued yesterday by the Director of Information and Public Relations, ACC Adegunwa Adegbuyi, in Abeokuta, the state capital.

Ganzallo said that upon receiving the intelligence, operatives immediately mo-

bilised to the area and conducted a security operation that led to the arrest of the three suspects.

"During the operation, one firearm was reportedly recovered from the suspects. The weapon was immediately secured by the operatives and preserved as an exhibit for further investigation," he said.

He added that the suspects were taken into custody and subsequently handed over to the Nigeria Police Force, Igbaba, for further investigation, interrogation and necessary legal action.

The recovered firearm was also handed over to the police as an exhibit in connection with the case.

Ganzallo commended the operatives for their prompt response and intelligence-led action, assuring residents that the corps would continue its efforts to prevent cultism, armed robbery, violence and other criminal activities that threaten the safety and security of residents in the state.



Recovered exhibit

Traders question relocation plan as LCDA offers alternative site

By **Glory Sunday**

A dispute over the relocation of motor spare-parts and scrap dealers operating around Ogunrinde Street and the Super/Katangowa axis in Abule Egba, Lagos, has taken a new turn, with the Agbado/Oke-Odo Local Council Development Area (LCDA) offering an alternative site while the affected traders question the process and the short notice given to them.

The council's intervention followed complaints by leaders of the affected associations, including the Chairman of the Scrap Union, Alhaji Bala Gambo; Vice Chairman of the United Brothers Motor Spare Parts Association, Mr Chigozie Arinze; and other representatives of auto

spare-parts dealers.

The traders had appealed to the council for assistance in securing a suitable location for their businesses following plans to redevelop the Katangowa axis as part of the emerging Lagos ICT Park initiative.

Road construction is already progressing along the corridor, while preparations are reportedly advancing for the relocation of computer and technology-related businesses associated with Ikeja Computer Village.

In response, the LCDA said it had facilitated the allocation of three acres of land along the Amikanle axis for the affected auto spare-parts dealers, describing the move as an effort to provide a structured alternative and min-

imise the impact of the re-development on traders' livelihoods.

However, concerns remain among some of the affected traders over the manner in which the relocation is being implemented.

A public notice attributed to the LCDA management and seen by *The Guardian* directed auto spare-parts dealers operating along Ogunrinde Street and inside Super/Katangowa Market to relocate to Amikanle Auto Spare Parts Market with immediate effect.

The notice, which took effect on Friday, October 2, 2026, gave traders five days to comply and warned that those who failed to do so could face sanctions, including the sealing of their shops and

payment of fines.

The notice, however, did not state the reason for the relocation, identify any official by name or outline the procedure for securing space at the proposed destination. It was simply signed as, "Management, Agbado/Oke-Odo Local Council Development Area."

The development has unsettled some traders, who said they had previously relocated from another site after being told that the space was required for drainage construction.

They said they complied with that directive and moved their businesses to their present location, only to be asked to relocate again.

The Committee for the Defence of Human Rights

(CDHR), Lagos State Branch, which addressed a press conference in Lagos on Friday, said the five-day ultimatum was inadequate, particularly for traders who had existing tenancy arrangements and had recently renewed their rents.

The organisation said the traders needed sufficient time to move their goods, secure alternative premises and reorganise their businesses without suffering avoidable financial losses.

The traders also questioned the arrangements at the proposed Amikanle site.

According to CDHR, some traders said they were directed to meet one Bode Famuyiwa regarding the allocation of spaces at Amikanle.

Peace returns to Etamkpini Qua as succession dispute ends

From **Solomon Azu**, Calabar

AFTER years of uncertainty over its traditional leadership, peace has returned to Etamkpini Qua Clan in Odukupani Local Council of Cross River State, with the emergence of His Highness Sylvester Bassey Okon Eyo as the sole and uncontested Ntoe-Elect of the community.

The resolution of the longstanding succession dispute followed an arbitration process by the Qua Clans Constituted Assembly (QCCA) Arbitration Committee, culminating in the formal presentation of Eyo at the Royal Court of the Ndidem's Palace, Calabar.

The ceremony, which brought together traditional leaders and members of the community, also witnessed the supreme ratification of the arbitration award by His Royal Majesty, Ndidem (Dr) Eta Bassey Eteta III, Ndidem of Qua Nation and Paramount Ruler of Calabar Municipality.

Presenting the arbitration award and supreme ratification decree, Chairman of the QCCA Arbitration Committee, His Highness Chief Patrick Agbor Okon Edem, said the committee was constituted to resolve the longstanding customary headship dispute and restore peace to the clan.

He said the committee conducted hearings, examined native lineage registers, received sworn testimonies and applied the Arbitration and Mediation Act 2023, the Cross River State Traditional Rulers Law and Qua Native Law and Custom in reaching its decision.

Edem said the final customary arbitration award was rendered on July 21, 2026, while the ceremony was held for its formal reading and supreme ratification.

Celebrating
OUR AMAZING
MENTOR AND LEADER,

**DR. AYODELE
OGUNSAN**

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WHO INVESTS IN OUR TOMORROW

At 50, you could have chosen to focus solely on expanding your sprawling businesses and protecting your public image as a security icon but you chose us. You chose to make room in your life for us, young people whose questions you patiently entertain, whose ambitions you nurture, whose mistakes you correct and whose futures you care about deeply.

Through your words, your example, and the time you personally give us, you have taught us that success is not complete until it becomes a bridge for someone else to cross.

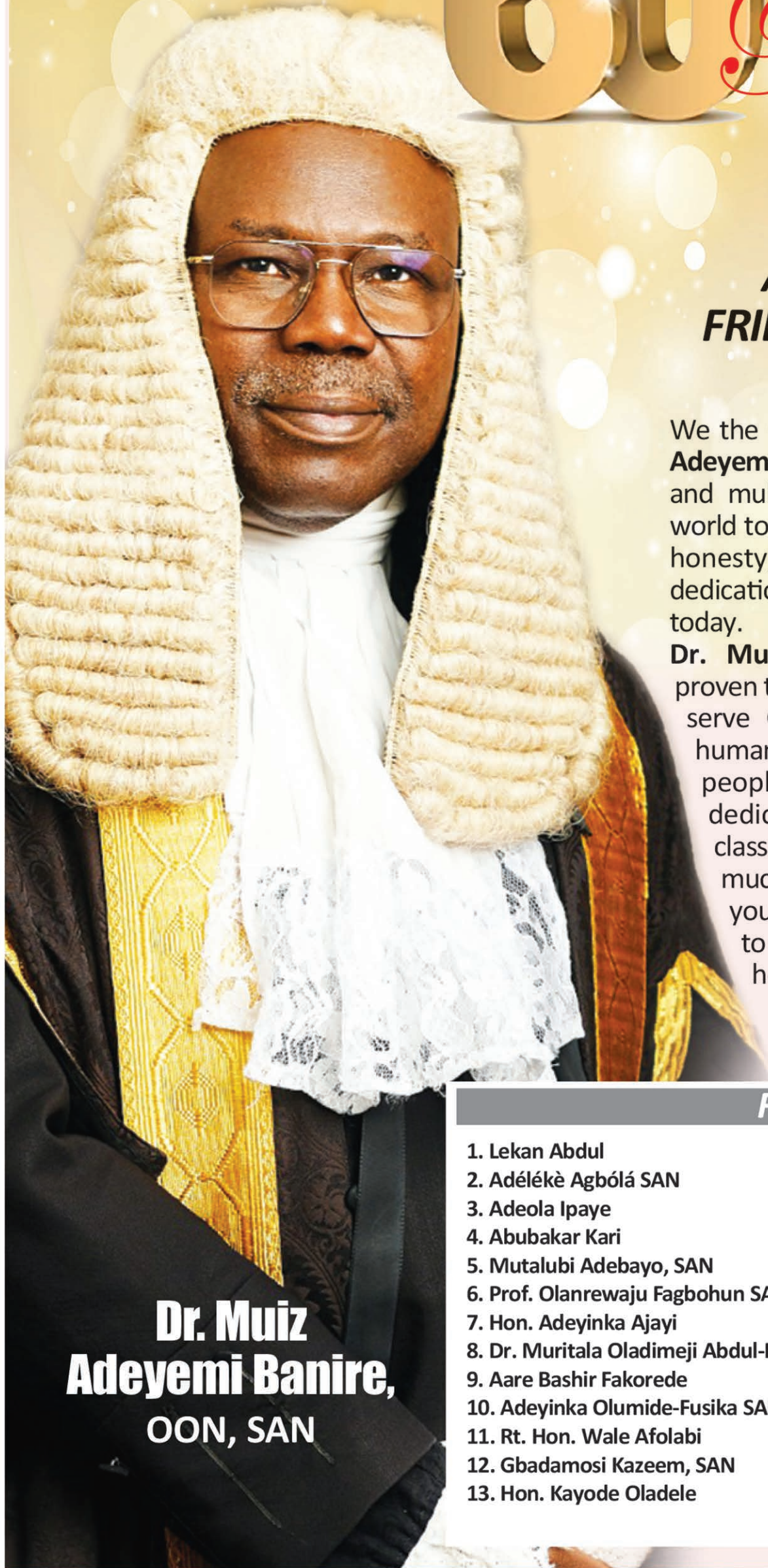
Dr. Ayodele Ogunsan, on your 50th birthday, we celebrate you as the man who saw something worth investing in us, when we were still becoming. We pray that our lives will become worthy evidence of your investment.

From all of us at:



Young Executives Forum (YEF)

Happy 60th Birthday



**Dr. Muiz
Adeyemi Banire,
OON, SAN**

WE CELEBRATE A WONDERFUL FRIEND OF ALL TIMES

We the Committee of friends of **Dr. Muiz Adeyemi Banire, OON, SAN**, join his family and multitudes of admirers all over the world to celebrate a quintessential man of honesty, charisma, responsibility, and dedication to humanity as he turns 60 today.

Dr. Muiz Adeyemi Banire, you have proven the purpose of creation which is to serve God through services to fellow humans. You have impacted so many people that your altruism and dedication to justice have made a classic subject of study. We have so much pride in being associated with you that we pray you live long enough to fulfill all your dreams in good health and abundant grace.

Congratulations

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Editorial

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Justice beyond the PFIPC scandal

THE prosecution of Adeniyi Adeyemi over the alleged creation and operation of the Presidential Foreign Investment Promotion Council (PFIPC) is more than a criminal case against one individual. It tests Nigeria's institutional credibility, the reliability of public-sector verification systems and the justice system's ability to distinguish accountability from political theatre firmly.

Adeyemi was arraigned before the Federal High Court in Abuja on eight counts of conspiracy, forgery and impersonation. He pleaded not guilty and was remanded at the Kuje Correctional Centre, with the court fixing October 12, 2026, for consideration of his bail application and further proceedings. The charges allege that he and two other suspects, who remain at large, forged a presidential appointment letter, State House letterheads, approvals for office accommodation and documents relating to the establishment and operation of PFIPC.

The allegations are grave. According to the Presidency, PFIPC was never created by law, executive order, presidential instrument or any other valid government authority. An interim report by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) similarly stated that the Federal Government never appointed Adeyemi and that the appointment letter, gazette and other official-looking documents presented to support the agency were forged.

Yet the seriousness of the allegations must not become a licence to disregard due process. Adeyemi remains an accused person, not a convicted criminal. His denial, his allegation that he paid N400 million through an intermediary to secure the appointment and the counter-allegations involving senior public officials must be tested by admissible evidence, not headlines or official insinuations. The Chief of Staff to the President has denied involvement in the alleged payment arrangement, and that denial, like Adeyemi's claims, requires proper investigation rather than premature judgment.

Nigerians are disturbed that a scandal of that magnitude is not being accorded the scrutiny it deserves. We do not also see the urgency. As a matter of fact, the government has so far handled the matter with levity, apparently believing that with time, the shameful act would lose currency in the public space, and as usual, Nigerians would move on. This scandal must not be swept under the carpet.

What was revealed in the interim report of the ICPC does not meet public expectations; it is less than transparent. Nigerians want an independent probe that is just and far-reaching. No one associated with the scam must be allowed to place himself/herself above the law.

The central question is not merely how Adeyemi allegedly forged documents. It is how a purported government agency could acquire the appearance of legitimacy, operate from premises associated with government, seek official collaboration, maintain bank accounts and present itself to the public without immediate detection.

The ICPC has acknowledged that

weaknesses in verification procedures and inter-agency oversight created opportunities that were allegedly exploited. Its report further indicated that the purported agency appropriated the identity and facilities previously associated with the Presidential Economic Advisory Council, while two other fictitious bodies were allegedly created to expand the scheme.

That finding is profoundly important. A government that treats the matter solely as an individual fraud will miss the institutional failure that allowed it to develop. Public institutions are protected not only by laws but by functioning registers, transparent appointment procedures, secure document systems, accountable premises management and effective financial-sector verification. Where these safeguards are weak, official names, letterheads and symbols become instruments of private enrichment.

The reported discovery of numerous bank accounts allegedly linked to the purported agency also raises urgent questions for financial institutions and regulators. Banks should not be able to open accounts for bodies claiming to be federal agencies merely on the strength of documents that have not been independently authenticated. The Central Bank of Nigeria, the Corporate Affairs Commission, the Office of the Accountant-General and relevant security agencies should determine whether established compliance procedures were followed and whether any warning signs were ignored.

The prosecution deserves public support if it is evidence-led, independent and transparent. The Attorney-General's decision to take over the case from the police should result in a more rigorous prosecution, not an expanded political contest. The charge must be reviewed carefully to ensure that every count is legally sustainable, properly particularised and supported by evidence capable of surviving cross-examination.

The House of Representatives' Ad Hoc Committee investigating PFIPC said the inclusion of the fake agency in the 2026 Appropriation was an embarrassment and a security risk. That is why no stone should be left unturned in smoking out all those who enabled the perfidy. It is a betrayal of public trust and must be punished.

The prosecution should establish, among other matters, the origin and authenticity of the alleged appointment letter and related documents; who created, signed, transmitted and used the documents; how the purported agency obtained access to office facilities; the identity and roles of alleged collaborators; whether any public official, intermediary, financial institution or private company facilitated the scheme; the source, movement and final destination of funds allegedly connected to the operation; and whether any person was deceived, financially harmed or induced to provide official recognition.

The court must also protect the accused's constitutional rights. Bail should be determined according to law, considering the seriousness of the allegations, the risk of flight, possible interference with witnesses and the availability of conditions that can secure attendance at trial. Detention before conviction must not become punishment by another name. Equally, the accused should not use procedural applications or non-appearance to frustrate justice. The reported issuance of an arrest warrant after an earlier failure to appear demonstrates why both the defence and the prosecution

must respect the authority of the court.

Justice also requires equal scrutiny of all actors. If Adeyemi acted alone, the evidence should demonstrate that. If public officers enabled access to premises, official correspondence or administrative recognition through negligence, collusion or corruption, they must face appropriate consequences. The ICPC has recommended administrative sanctions for public officers whose acts or omissions may have facilitated the alleged scheme. That recommendation should be implemented only after fair disciplinary procedures and clear findings of responsibility.

In all of these, Nigeria should respond with reforms that make the creation of a phantom agency substantially harder. The former Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, Mrs Didi Walson-Jack, admitted that her office failed to carry out adequate due diligence and made mistakes before granting approvals to a controversial, non-existent agency.

To avert a recurrence, every federal ministry, department and agency should maintain a publicly searchable register of legally established institutions, governing instruments, heads of agencies and official contact details. Any purported agency absent from that register should be treated as unauthorised until verified.

Second, presidential and ministerial appointments should carry a secure digital verification code linked to an official government portal. Letters should be authenticated through independent channels rather than by telephone calls or personal introductions.

Third, government premises should be allocated only through documented approval processes. Security, property and administrative departments must verify the identity and mandate of every organisation occupying federal facilities.

Fourth, banks should require direct confirmation from the relevant government

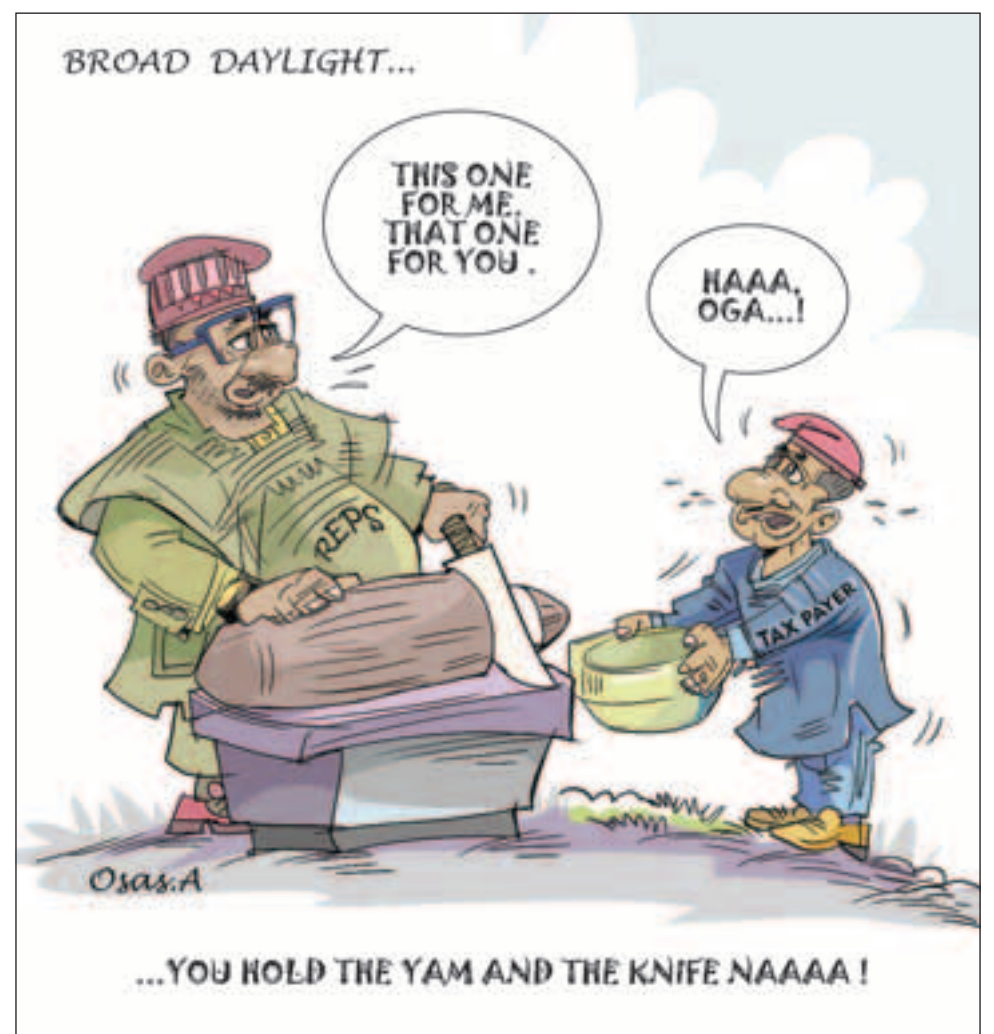
authority before opening accounts in the name of a purported public body. The Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit and financial regulators should also strengthen beneficial-ownership checks and suspicious-transaction reporting.

Fifth, agencies should establish a rapid public alert mechanism whenever a fake government body or forged official document is detected. Silence creates space for fraud. A prompt, authoritative clarification could prevent citizens, businesses, diplomats and foreign investors from becoming victims.

Finally, the reform process should not be selective. The President's directive appropriately called for investigation into public officers, private persons, financial institutions and intermediaries who may have facilitated the alleged scheme. That wider inquiry must not shield politically connected individuals or be used to settle unrelated disputes.

The PFIPC case should end with more than a conviction, acquittal or withdrawn charge. It should produce a credible judicial record, recovery of any unlawful proceeds, accountability for collaborators and institutional changes that protect the state from impersonation. The public deserves neither a predetermined verdict nor an evasive investigation. It deserves the truth established in court, through evidence tested fairly and without fear or favour.

Nigeria's democracy is not just weakened when government identity can be forged, but it is weakened further when accusations replace proof. The proper response is therefore clear: prosecute where the evidence supports prosecution, sanction negligence and complicity, protect the rights of the accused, and repair the systems that made the alleged deception possible. Adeyemi Adeniyi couldn't have acted alone. He must also not die in detention because he is willing to tell his side of the story. Justice must prevail.



Opinion

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Cardoso's three years and the 23% rate cut test

By Blaise Udunze

CELEBRATING Nigeria's latest inflation figures as proof that price stability has finally arrived is dangerously seductive. It has not. No doubt, the Central Bank of Nigeria under Olayemi Cardoso can point to reforms, stronger external reserves, a more orderly foreign-exchange market, banking-sector recapitalisation, improved remittance flows, and moderating headline inflation, as reported. Those are measurable developments. But the increasingly celebratory accounts of Cardoso's three years risk confusing improvement in macroeconomic indicators with victory over Nigeria's cost-of-living crisis. That distinction matters.

A recent *THISDAY* assessment described Cardoso's three years as a period in which the pursuit of price and exchange-rate stability "appears to be paying off", pointing to headline inflation of 15.39 per cent in August from 23.1 per cent at the beginning of the rebased CPI series in 2025, reserves of \$54.08 billion, stronger remittances and improved international market perception.

Tribune Newspaper's assessment similarly presented a catalogue of reforms spanning bank recapitalisation, foreign exchange, payments infrastructure, cybersecurity and external reserves. But the headline numbers do not tell the whole story. Inflation has fallen. Prices have not. That is the first uncomfortable fact that must not disappear underneath the celebration.

The recent report by the National Bureau of Statistics shows a contradiction whereby the headline inflation was 15.39 per cent in August 2026, down marginally from 15.43 per cent in July. Yet, despite this moderation, the Consumer Price Index itself rose from 145.3 points in July to 146.3 points in August, underscoring a crucial distinction, which indicates inflation may be slowing, but the underlying price level is still rising. This development has continued to cause outcry and pain among Nigerians even as the annual inflation rate eased. In other words, the average price level continued to rise; it simply rose at a slower rate.

This is not semantics. It is the difference between telling Nigerians that prices are stabilising and acknowledging that the cost of living remains elevated.

Food inflation was still 19.57 per cent year-on-year in August. Worse, the burden is not uniform. Lagos recorded headline inflation as high as 23.68 per

cent, while some other states recorded dramatically lower rates. Rural month-on-month inflation actually accelerated to 1.79 per cent in August from 0.78 per cent in July.

Fairly, Nigerians would be forced to ask, which Nigeria are we talking about when we say price stability is paying off? The Nigeria of the financial markets? Or the Nigeria where a family still has to find more money to buy the same basket of food, pay rent, transport children to school and keep a business running?

That is the uncomfortable gap between macroeconomic stabilisation and household prosperity. The second problem is attribution. The growth of external reserves to \$54.08 billion is significant. But reserves are not created by monetary policy alone. *THISDAY* itself notes the role of oil receipts, remittances and changing capital flows in the broader external position. *Tribune* Newspaper similarly attributes the reserve improvement to a combination of higher oil receipts, tighter FX management, remittances and improved confidence.

Therefore, it is too convenient to transform every favourable external indicator into a personal performance certificate for the CBN governor. The CBN deserves credit for reforms that fall squarely within its mandate. But oil production, global oil prices, diaspora behaviour, fiscal policy and broader investor sentiment are not variables that can simply be stamped "Cardoso achievement".

The same caution applies to Nigeria's improved credit ratings and renewed inclusion in international benchmarks. These are encouraging signals. But investor confidence is not the same thing as household welfare, and sovereign market access is not the same thing as affordable credit for a Nigerian manufacturer.

Cardoso inherited a deeply distorted foreign-exchange environment. The CBN subsequently moved toward a more market-driven FX regime, cleared verified obligations and tightened oversight of the Bureau de Change segment. *THISDAY* identifies these measures as part of the broader reform programme.

These are important institutional changes. But architecture is not outcome. A more transparent FX market does not automatically mean cheaper imported machinery. Higher external reserves do not automatically mean cheaper food. A stronger banking system does not automati-

cally mean cheaper credit. And lower inflation does not automatically mean Nigerians can afford more. That is where the real test begins.

And now the CBN has created an even more interesting test for its own three-year narrative. On Tuesday, September 22, the Monetary Policy Committee cut the Monetary Policy Rate from 26.5 per cent to 23 per cent, a substantial 350-basis-point reduction, after holding the rate at 26.5 per cent at its July meeting. The decision came against the backdrop of August inflation of 15.39 per cent.

The apex bank reported the reset of the MPR to 23 per cent as a recalibration of monetary policy in response to prevailing market realities. According to the available figures, this represents a substantial development. But the real test begins now. Will Nigerians actually feel it? That is the question.

For a manufacturer that has spent years paying punishing interest rates, the relevant question is not whether the CBN has reduced its benchmark. It is whether the commercial bank will reduce the cost of the loan. For a small business owner, it is whether working-capital financing becomes affordable enough to expand inventory. For a farmer, it is whether credit becomes cheaper enough to finance the next production cycle. For a household, it is whether access to financing becomes less expensive.

And for the economy, it is whether lower rates stimulate productive investment without reigniting the inflationary pressures that the CBN has spent the past three years fighting. That is why the 23 per cent decision should not simply be added to Cardoso's list of achievements. It should become the next test of his reforms.

The MPR is a policy signal. It is not the interest rate every Nigerian receives from a bank. Alongside the MPR cut, the MPC retained the cash reserve requirement for deposit money banks at 45 per cent, merchant banks at 16 per cent and non-TSA public-sector deposits at 75 per cent. The Standing Lending Facility is now 23.5 per cent and the Standing Deposit Facility 20 per cent. That matters because the transmission from the CBN's policy rate to actual lending rates is not automatic.

Banks still have funding costs, risk considerations, liquidity requirements and commercial decisions to make. Therefore, a 350-basis-point reduction at the policy level does not guarantee a corresponding 350-basis-point reduction in the cost of borrowing for businesses. And this is where the celebration of falling inflation needs to meet

the reality of the Nigerian economy. Private-sector credit can rise without affordable credit becoming widespread. Banks can become better capitalised without manufacturers obtaining cheaper loans. The naira can become more stable without imported inputs becoming cheap enough for struggling businesses. The financial system can become more resilient while households remain financially vulnerable. That is the contradiction Nigeria must confront.

Cardoso's defenders are right about one thing: a central bank cannot build sustainable growth on runaway inflation. Price stability matters. Exchange-rate stability matters. Sound banks matter. Credible monetary policy matters. The problem is that price stability must eventually be experienced beyond the CBN's statistical dashboard.

The CBN itself has emphasised the importance of monetary-policy transmission. Earlier this year, Cardoso launched the Nigeria Overnight Financing Rate, describing transaction-based benchmarks as important for improving price discovery, market transparency and monetary-policy transmission.

THISDAY reported that Cardoso explicitly described effective monetary-policy transmission as a critical piece in delivering the CBN's price-stability mandate. That admission is important. Because transmission is precisely where the argument now moves. If the CBN has improved the monetary framework, the next question is whether the improved framework is transmitting into the productive economy.

Will businesses obtain cheaper capital? Will investment increase? Will manufacturers expand? Will production costs decline? Will businesses pass some of those savings to consumers? Will employment improve? Will household purchasing power recover? And can all of this happen without another inflationary outbreak?

These are far more consequential questions than whether the inflation rate has fallen from its previous peak. Nigeria's households do not buy inflation rates. They buy rice. They pay school fees. They pay rent. They pay transport fares. They pay electricity bills.

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Nigeria must stop tolerating waste and corporate misconduct (1)

By Donald Ikenna Ofoegbu

AFRICA has long become a dumping ground not only for hazardous waste, obsolete electronics and polluting technologies, but also for international corporations and business practices that would struggle to survive under stricter regulatory systems.

Companies facing serious questions over pollution, emissions, labour practices, community rights or corporate governance elsewhere are frequently welcomed into African countries with little visible scrutiny. Once they arrive with promises of billions of dollars in investment, jobs and economic growth, difficult questions about their records are treated as obstacles to development.

Nigerian government officials celebrate proposed investments, sign memoranda of understanding and issue licences. Yet communities are rarely given complete information about the environmental and social consequences. Environmental impact assessments may be inaccessible, inadequately scrutinised or conducted after critical political decisions have effectively been made.

We must ask: What does Nigeria investigate before welcoming a major foreign corporation? Who examines the company's litigation, environmental and human-rights records? Who independently verifies its claims? What safeguards protect workers and host communities? Who bears the cost if the project contaminates water, destroys livelihoods or causes serious illness? Most importantly, who benefits and who carries the risk?

Investment without accountability is exploitation. Like never before, Nigeria needs investment. It needs industries, infrastructure, employment, technology and access to international markets. But development cannot mean accepting practices that other countries have rejected because they endanger human life.

Investment is not a favour granted to Nigeria. Companies invest because they expect to make profits from Nigeria's natural resources, markets, labour and population. Nigeria, therefore, has both the right and the responsibility to establish the conditions under which those profits may be earned.

A corporation should not be allowed to escape environmental responsibilities in one jurisdiction and reinvent itself as a development partner in another. If it faces credible allegations, penalties or lawsuits concerning emissions, pollution, labour violations, land acquisition or human-rights abuses elsewhere, those matters must

form part of Nigeria's approval process.

Allegations do not automatically establish guilt, and a lawsuit alone should not disqualify a company. But a corporation's complete environmental, social and legal history must be disclosed and independently examined. Nigeria should not discover a company's record only after licences have been issued and communities have surrendered their land. Capital must not be permitted to purchase regulatory silence.

Nigeria is not without an environmental governance framework. The Environmental Impact Assessment Act requires the environmental consequences of major projects to be considered before approval. The 2021 Environmental Impact Assessment Procedures and Charges Regulations provide for project screening, risk categorisation, scoping, public participation, review, certification, monitoring and environmental auditing.

The Federal Ministry of Environment's Environmental Assessment Department is responsible for ensuring that development projects comply with environmental laws and regulations. The National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency has also published numerous regulations covering pollution, waste, chemicals and environmental standards. The central question is, therefore, not whether procedures exist. It is whether they are applied independently, transparently and consistently, especially when influential politicians, foreign governments and powerful investors are involved.

An environmental impact assessment must not become a document produced to justify a decision that government has already taken. It must be an independent decision-making instrument capable of modifying, suspending or stopping a dangerous project. It must also be available and accessible to the general public.

If consultants are selected and paid entirely by project promoters, regulators lack adequate technical capacity, affected communities and civil society cannot examine reports, and political officials have already publicly endorsed the investment, the integrity of the assessment becomes questionable. An ESIA certificate is not proof of safety if the process that produced it is closed up and cannot withstand public scrutiny.

Nigeria does not need to imagine the consequences of weak environmental regulation. The Niger Delta provides decades of evidence. Oil-producing communities have endured spills, contaminated water, damaged farmland, declining fisheries, gas

flaring and serious health and livelihood consequences. While petroleum companies, contractors, political intermediaries and government institutions have benefited from extraction, many host communities have inherited pollution and poverty.

The same pattern appears in industrial settlements across the country. Communities around factories frequently complain about untreated effluent, smoke, offensive odours, contaminated waterways and unexplained illnesses. In industrial areas of Ogun State, including communities around Ota and other manufacturing corridors, residents have repeatedly raised concerns about the effects of industrial pollution on their health and environment.

Too often, regulatory action becomes visible only after public protests, media investigations or deaths. Even then, sanctions are mostly temporary, victims may receive no meaningful remedy, and factories most often resume operations without transparent evidence that the danger has been removed. This is not development. It is the transfer of corporate costs to poor communities. A company earns the profit, while residents pay through illness, lost farmland, unsafe water and shortened lives.

The dumping-ground problem is especially visible in the trade in used electronics.

UN Environment reported that more than 60,000 tonnes of used electrical and electronic equipment were shipped into Nigeria annually through Lagos ports, with additional quantities entering by land. More than one-quarter of some shipments was reportedly non-functional and effectively became waste upon arrival. Nigeria itself generated approximately 290,000 tonnes of electronic waste in 2017, while about half a million tonnes of discarded appliances were being processed annually.

Much of this waste is dismantled informally by workers, including young people without proper protective equipment. Plastics and cables are burned to recover metals, releasing dangerous substances into the air, soil and water. Workers and nearby communities may be exposed to lead, mercury, cadmium, dioxins and other toxic materials.

What some exporting countries describe as "second-hand goods" may, therefore, amount to the export of environmental and health risks to Nigeria.

Ofoegbu is a sustainable development expert and environmental activist and campaigner.

Opinion

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The day the church ‘blessed’ the media

By Emmanuel Nnadozie Onwubiko

FOR a media practitioner and a Catholic, Thursday, September 24, 2026, will remain a remarkable day. It was the day the Catholic Church formally beatified Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, one of the world's best-known Catholic clerics and one of the pioneers of using modern mass media as an instrument of evangelisation.

The significance of the occasion, however, went beyond the beatification of an eminent American churchman. To me, the event represented something much broader: a moment when the Church appeared to remind the contemporary media world of the enormous responsibility that accompanies the power of communication.

That is why I describe September 24, 2026 as “the day the Church blessed the media.” Archbishop Sheen's ministry demonstrated decades ago that radio and television could be used not merely for entertainment, commercial purposes or political messaging, but also for education, moral reflection, intellectual engagement and the communication of faith.

His beatification therefore offers an opportunity for journalists and media practitioners across the world to reflect on the responsibilities that come with the extraordinary power of the modern media.

The timing was also striking. Only a day before the beatification, Pope Leo XIV paid tribute to the late Archbishop, highlighting his pioneering work in evangelisation through radio and television. At his General Audience in St Peter's Square, the Pope said: “Tomorrow in Saint Louis, Missouri, Venerable Fulton Sheen will be beatified.”

He continued: “May the example and intercession of this holy bishop, known for his evangelising work through the media, inspire many others likewise to find new ways of spreading the Gospel message with joyful enthusiasm.”

The beatification Mass subsequently took place on Thursday afternoon, September 24, at The Dome at America's Center in St Louis, Missouri. Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, presided over the celebration.

According to information released ahead of the ceremony, thousands of pilgrims, bishops and priests were expected to gather for the historic occasion.

The beatification of Archbishop Sheen occurred against the background of an extraordinary contemporary debate about the relationship between political power and the media in the United States.

President Donald J. Trump, who has frequently criticised news organisations that he considers hostile to his administration, also issued a message honouring Archbishop Sheen.

That coincidence deserves reflection. Trump's administration had been involved in a dispute with media organisations over access to the White House. The controversy raised questions about presidential authority, press access and the constitutional relationship between government and the news media. At the same time, the United States was receiving Chinese President Xi Jinping, while the country continued to debate issues concerning press freedom and the treatment of journalists by governments around the world. These developments created an unusual juxtaposition.

On one side was a Catholic archbishop whose extraordinary ministry demonstrated how powerful mass communication could become when placed in the service of evangelisation. On the other was a contemporary political environment in which the relationship between political leaders and the press remained intensely contested. It is this coincidence that makes the beatification particularly significant to me as a journalist and Catholic.

The Church was honouring a man who understood the power of the media at precisely the moment when journalists and political leaders were again debating who should have access to the public's information and who should control the channels through which citizens receive it.

Trump honours the media pioneer
In his presidential message on the beatification, President Trump and First Lady Melania Trump celebrated Sheen's life and legacy.

Trump described Sheen as: “The Catholic priest who pioneered the use of media to speak the truth, preach the Gospel, and bring many souls closer to Christ.” The President also recalled Sheen's remarkable broadcasting career, noting that he spent more than two decades teaching, lecturing and broadcasting on radio before becoming an auxiliary bishop of New York.

Trump's statement highlighted Sheen's famous television programme, “Life Is Worth Living”, which brought the Catholic bishop into millions of American homes. According to the presidential message, Sheen used a simple television set, a chalkboard and his distinctive preaching style to address theological, philosophical and social questions. He became a national television personality and won an Emmy Award.

Trump's statement said Sheen's programme attracted an estimated 30 million weekly viewers and described his broadcasting career as one of

the most significant religious television successes in American history. The President concluded his tribute by expressing hope that Sheen's example would continue to inspire Americans to strengthen their spiritual and moral lives.

There is an important irony here.

A political leader who has often been involved in public confrontations with sections of the American media was, on this occasion, celebrating a Catholic bishop whose historic ministry demonstrated the enormous potential of mass communication. That irony should not be lost on journalists.

Who was Fulton J. Sheen?

Fulton J. Sheen was born Peter John Sheen on May 8, 1895, in El Paso, Illinois, the eldest of four sons of Newton and Delia Sheen. He later became known by his mother's maiden name, Fulton.

Raised in a devout Catholic family, he developed an early vocation to the priesthood and was ordained for the Diocese of Peoria on September 20, 1919.

His intellectual abilities soon became apparent. He was sent to Europe for advanced studies and, in 1923, earned a doctorate in philosophy from the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium.

His academic formation would become an important part of his later public ministry. Sheen believed that the truths of Christianity could be communicated intellectually without losing their spiritual character.

He was not simply a preacher.

He was a philosopher, theologian, author, teacher, priest and bishop who became one of the most recognisable Catholic communicators of the twentieth century.

The Holy Hour behind the microphone

One of the most remarkable aspects of Sheen's life was the relationship between his public communication and his private spiritual discipline. His ministry was not built solely around microphones, cameras and audiences. He placed prayer at the centre of his life.

According to accounts of his life, Sheen maintained a daily Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament from the beginning of his priesthood. He described this as: “the hour that makes my day.” That spiritual discipline informed his understanding of communication. Before speaking publicly about Christ, Sheen believed that he needed to listen privately in prayer.

There is an important lesson here for journalists. Communication is not merely about speaking. It is also about listening, reflection,

discipline and a commitment to truth.

From radio to television

Sheen's media apostolate expanded significantly in the 1930s. Beginning in 1930, he presented The Catholic Hour, a radio programme that brought Catholic teaching into homes across the United States. His clear reasoning, engaging delivery and pastoral style attracted a huge audience.

His broadcasting career eventually moved to television.

In 1951, he began “Life Is Worth Living”, the programme that would make him a household name across America. With little more than a chalkboard and his distinctive presentation style, Sheen discussed faith, morality, suffering, family life, human dignity, philosophy and social questions.

His audience extended beyond Catholics. He also attracted Protestants, Jews and people who were simply interested in his intellectual and moral reflections. This was the genius of his communication. He understood that the media could become a bridge between complex ideas and ordinary people. He could take theological and philosophical concepts and communicate them in language that millions could understand.

The media as a moral responsibility

This is perhaps the most important lesson of Sheen's life for contemporary journalism. The media possesses extraordinary power. A journalist can build reputations or destroy them. A television programme can educate millions or mislead millions. A newspaper can expose corruption or become an instrument of propaganda.

A social-media platform can disseminate verified information within seconds, but it can also spread misinformation and disinformation at extraordinary speed.

Sheen's example therefore challenges journalists to ask a fundamental question: What are we doing with the power of communication that has been placed in our hands? The answer cannot simply be that we are giving audiences what they want. Journalism has a social responsibility. It has a responsibility to truth.

It has a responsibility to fairness. It has a responsibility to accuracy. It has a responsibility to distinguish fact from opinion. And it has a responsibility to challenge power when power threatens the public interest.

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Onwubiko is the founder of the Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) and a former Commissioner of the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria.

Aig-Imoukhuede at 60: Building a critical mass to transform Africa's public sector

By Tobe Nneli

AS Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede, turns 60, much will rightly be said about his remarkable career in business, philanthropy, public service and family life. However, I want to focus on one idea that has animated an important part of his work: his belief that transforming Africa's public sector requires building a “critical mass” of capable public leaders. I have heard Aig use that phrase repeatedly and, having benefited from one of the initiatives through which he pursues this vision, I have often wondered what this proposition means for the enduring African question of how strong public institutions are built.

Former U.S. President, Barack Obama's message to Ghana's Parliament in 2009 that “Africa doesn't need strongmen; it needs strong institutions” remains perhaps the most memorable formulation of that question. Its appeal is understandable in a continent where personalised rule has frequently weakened institutions meant to outlive individual leaders. But it also leaves another question: who builds strong institutions? Because institutions do not exist independently of the people who lead, inhabit and reproduce them.

Nigeria's experience demonstrates this tension particularly well. Dora Akunyili's leadership of NAFDAC remains one of our most recognisable examples of what determined public leadership can achieve. Ifueko Omoigui-Okauru's reforms at the Federal Inland Revenue Service provide another. Joe Abah's doctoral thesis, Strong Organisations in Weak States helps contextualise these wins, explaining how capable leadership can produce unusually effective organisations even in difficult governance environments. Abah usefully distinguishes the authoritarian “strongmen” Obama warned against from the strong men and women often required to build strong institutions.

However, the harder challenge is turning episodes of exceptional performance into enduring institutional capability. Tunji Olaopa, Chairman of Nigeria's Federal Civil Service Commission and a longstanding scholar-practitioner of public-service reform, has written extensively about this problem. Drawing on Ladipo Adamolekun's categorisation of Nigeria as a “hesitant” public serv-

ice reformer, Olaopa argues that the country can generate reform ideas and enthusiasm but often struggles to translate them into sustained improvements in performance. He emphasises that while meritocracy, professionalism, a performance orientation and institutional continuity are essential to better civil service, reform efforts must move beyond reactive and episodic interventions.

It is against this background that Aig's proposition becomes interesting. What if, rather than waiting for exceptional public leaders to emerge episodically, we deliberately and consistently develop enough capable people to reach a critical mass? This does not resolve the old debate between leaders and institutions. It offers a possible pathway between them: invest in people who can reform organisations, connect them across the public-policy ecosystem, and sustain that investment long enough for individual capability to contribute to enduring institutional capability.

Aig's investments in public leadership make this wager visible through three initiatives delivered in partnership with the University of Oxford's Blavatnik School of Government. The AIG Scholarship enables exceptional Africans to undertake the Master of Public Policy, while the AIG Public Leaders Programme develops serving public officials through learning applied to practical reform challenges.

The AIG Visiting Fellowship gives accomplished public leaders, including former INEC Chairman Attahiru Jega and former FIRS Chairman Ifueko Omoigui-Okauru, space to reflect on their experience and contribute to public-policy thinking. These are different interventions at different points in people's careers, but with a common logic: identify, develop and connect public leadership capability, repeatedly and over time.

The important word, then, is not simply “leaders” but “mass”. One exceptional Director-General can significantly improve an agency's performance; one reform-minded Permanent Secretary can change how a ministry works. However, a critical mass suggests something more ambitious: enough capable people across government for effective leadership to become progressively less exceptional. Yet capable people do not operate outside politics. Research on “pockets of effectiveness” shows how political conditions can give reformers room to act, while Stefan Dercon's work on development bargains underscores the importance of sufficient commitment among those

with power to pursue development. The question, then, is whether a critical mass of capable public leaders can help turn islands of effectiveness into a wider ecosystem of effective institutions.

I have experienced something of this wager myself. The AIG Scholarship that took me to Oxford was not the beginning of my interest in public service, nor can everything I have done since be attributed to it. But it was undoubtedly a catalyst. My work and research since then have remained connected to governance, public-sector reform and relations between citizens and the state. Seven years after completing the MPP, I am returning to the Blavatnik School to join the teaching team working with another cohort of African public servants through the AIG Public Leaders Programme. This has made “critical mass” feel less like an abstract aspiration and more like a patient process of accumulation.

Ofofwe Aig-Imoukhuede, Co-Founder and Executive Vice-Chair of the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation, recently offered perhaps the most demanding test of that process. Reflecting on her husband's philosophy, she described legacy not simply as what people remember about someone, but “what continues because of them”: governance that holds, cultures that survive changes in leadership and systems that produce results when the leader is no longer in the room. The distinction goes to the heart of Africa's leadership dilemma. The strongman makes the system dependent on himself; the institution-builder ultimately builds something capable of working without him.

At 60, perhaps the most interesting way to engage Aig's contribution is, therefore, not simply to count scholarships awarded, leaders trained or programmes created, but to take seriously the proposition behind them. Africa needs strong institutions, but it also needs capable men and women who can build them, political environments that enable them, and systems capable of outliving them. Whether a critical mass can turn islands of effectiveness into an ecosystem of effective institutions will take much longer than a decade to answer. Aig has made the patient wager. Its ultimate measure may indeed be what continues because of him.

Tobe teaches on the AIG Public Leaders Programme at the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford, and is a Ph.D Candidate in the Department of Political Economy at King's College, London.

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* RONALD ONOSODE
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CRUDE OIL PRICE UPDATE

Brent crude: \$105.8 | WTI crude: \$101.4

FOREX MARKET UPDATE

I&E window: N1,381.87

Manufacturers groan as yearly alternative energy cost hits N1.35 trillion

By Victoria Nwachukwu

NIGERIAN manufacturers spent an estimated N1.35 trillion on alternative power in 2025, about a 23 per cent jump from N1.1 trillion in 2024 as rising cost of keeping factories running continues to erode resources needed for expansion and technology investment.

The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) said the 23 per cent increase in alternative energy spending came amid factory closures and production cuts, warning that the cost of self-generation was becoming unsustainable and could push the manufacturing sector towards collapse.

Speaking at the opening of

MAN's 54th Annual General Meeting and Made-in-Nigeria Exhibition in Lagos, the association's President, Francis Meshioye, said the huge expenditure on alternative power illustrated the broader cost pressures confronting manufacturers.

He said manufacturers were being squeezed by energy costs, foreign exchange exposure, financing costs, logistics, regulatory charges and weak consumer purchasing power, all of which were affecting production costs and investment decisions.

Meshioye raised concerns over Nigeria's continued dependence on imported raw materials, saying the country

imported approximately N3.53 trillion worth of raw materials in the first half of 2025, with about N1.72 trillion sourced from Asia.

According to him, the figures showed the extent to which domestic manufacturing remained dependent on imported inputs, warning that increasing the production of finished goods without developing domestic sources of raw materials and intermediate inputs would constrain local value addition.

Meshioye said the challenge had become more urgent as Nigeria seeks to position itself as Africa's industrial hub under the recently approved national industrial policy.

He listed reliable and affordable energy, access to finance, availability of industrial inputs, efficient logistics, regulatory predictability, productivity and the ability of firms to invest and scale as key indicators of the success of the policy.

Meshioye cited Central Bank data showing that manufacturing capacity utilisation increased from 51.33 per cent in the first quarter of 2025 to 57.50 per cent in the second quarter.

However, he cautioned against interpreting the improvement in capacity utilisation in isolation from the rising costs confronting manufacturers.

He called on the Federal Government to accelerate implementation of the industrial policy, arguing that policy adoption alone would not translate into industrial growth without effective execution.

Meshioye also urged the government to enforce Executive

Orders 003 and 005, which he said demonstrated its commitment to promoting domestic production through the patronage of locally manufactured goods.

He called for sanctions against ministries, departments and agencies that failed to comply with the orders.

Nigeria up four places on Bloomberg African investment risk ranking

By Abigail Ikhaghu

NIGERIA has overtaken Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya and Namibia to rank eighth among 19 African economies assessed for relative investment risk by Bloomberg Economics, recording one of the biggest improvements in the 2026 Bloomberg Economics Investment Risk-O-Meter.

The four-place rise reflected improvements in three of the five indicators measured by the gauge: economic strength, fiscal strength and external vulnerability.

Bloomberg said Nigeria's latest position was one of the more notable movements in the scorecard, while Mauritius emerged as the continent's most investable economy among the 19 countries assessed.

"The continent's biggest oil producer and refiner rose four places to eighth in the 2026 Bloomberg Economics Investment Risk-O-

Meter, overtaking Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya and Namibia as it improved in three of the five metrics assessed by the gauge, economic strength, fiscal strength and external vulnerability," Bloomberg reported.

Nigeria's improved standing came against a mixed performance among other major African economies. Botswana dropped two places, while South Africa, which topped last year's ranking, fell by one position, with Bloomberg attributing the decline to weaker economic growth outlooks.

The improvement in Nigeria's ranking follows a series of economic reforms introduced since President Bola Tinubu assumed office in 2023, including the removal of the petrol subsidy, liberalisation of the foreign exchange market and the introduction of electricity tariffs aimed at reducing losses in the power sector.



Director-General of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), Segun Ajayi-Kadir (left); Managing Partner, SEID, Tubosun Akeju; Director-General, National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Prof Ayo Omatayo and President of MAN, Otunba Francis Meshioye at the launch of the Nigerian Manufacturing Opportunity Report 2026 during the 54th MAN Annual General Meeting in Lagos.

Women-owned firms get less finance despite lower default

By Adeyemi Adepetun

WOMEN-OWNED businesses in Nigeria have less access to formal finance despite recording lower loan default rates and a stronger tendency to create jobs, Lead, Market Research, Moniepoint Inc., Sophia Ukoni, has said.

Ukoni disclosed this at the 2026 Women Entrepreneurs and Executives in Tech Summit (WEETS), where she presented a paper titled, 'Empowering Women Through Financial Technology: How Moniepoint is Transforming

and Supporting Women-Owned Businesses'.

Drawing on data from the Moniepoint 2025 Impact Report and Moniepoint 2025 Informal Economy Report, she said women-owned businesses accounted for a significant share of Nigeria's entrepreneurial ecosystem but continued to face structural barriers to accessing finance needed for growth and expansion.

"Women own one in three businesses in Nigeria," Ukoni said, adding that women accounted for 33 per cent of

the country's MSMEs and 35 per cent of informal businesses.

She said women-owned businesses also demonstrated a significant capacity for job creation, with 39 per cent of women-owned informal businesses employing staff, compared with 36 per cent of male-owned businesses.

"In short: women own a third of Nigeria's businesses and they are more likely than men to create jobs," she said.

Ukoni also highlighted the dominance of women in several segments of the informal

economy, particularly businesses linked to everyday consumption.

She said women owned 86.8 per cent of informal accommodation and food services businesses and accounted for 55.9 per cent of participants in wholesale and retail trade.

"Women lead in food, hospitality and trade, the sectors that keep daily commerce running," she said.

Despite their economic contribution, however, women remain disadvantaged in access to financial services.

Jobs threatened as imports take 64% of manufactured goods market

By Abigail Ikhaghu

NIGERIA'S manufacturing sector is expanding without developing the breadth needed to meet rising domestic demand, with imports accounting for 64 per cent of the market for manufactured goods and capturing an estimated \$29.4 billion opportunity in 2025, according to a new report by SEID.

The high import penetration underscores the scale of economic leakage and the jobs and industrial opportunities Nigeria risks losing to competing economies as local manufacturers struggle to capture a larger share of the domestic market.

Launched by SEID at the 54th Annual General Meeting of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), 'Nigerian Manufacturing Opportunity Report 2026' examined five major manufacturing subsectors and found that the central challenge was no longer a lack of demand, but the inability of domestic producers to meet that demand competitively.

Speaking on the report, Managing Partner of SEID, Tubosun Akeju, said Nigeria already had the demand and industrial strengths needed to build a stronger manufacturing sector but must better understand where those

strengths exist and deepen them to improve competitiveness.

Akeju said the report provides decision-makers with insights into the most immediate opportunities, areas where Nigeria is already making progress and the actions required to unlock greater value locally and position Nigerian manufacturers to compete beyond the domestic market.

The report found that manufacturing growth had become increasingly concentrated, with almost 90 per cent of the 33 per cent expansion recorded in the first half of 2026 coming from only cement and food processing.

The finding raises fresh concerns about the depth of Nigeria's industrial recovery, with manufacturing's contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) falling from 8.42 per cent in 2023 to 8.05 per cent in 2025. This leaves the sector about seven percentage points below the 15 per cent target set under the Nigeria Industrial Policy for 2030.

It said manufactured goods accounted for about 53 per cent of Nigeria's total import bill, while imported products continued to dominate several industries despite a temporary decline in import values following foreign exchange liberalisation.

NPA to ease port bottlenecks, boost non-oil exports

By Adaku Onyenucheya

THE Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) has stepped up efforts to remove bottlenecks hampering Nigeria's non-oil exports, with a renewed push to expand export channels, improve cargo processing and increase foreign exchange inflows.

The Managing Director of the NPA, Dr Abubakar Dantsoho, disclosed this at the 21st Abuja International Trade Fair organised by the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI).

He said the authority was strengthening port infrastructure and extending maritime logistics into the hinterland to enable exporters to access global markets more efficiently.

According to Dantsoho, trade resilience required efficient infrastructure, predictable fiscal frameworks and seamless supply chains.

He said Nigeria's economic resilience could no longer depend largely on imports and oil revenues, stressing that expanding non-oil exports and integrating businesses across the country into global value chains

were critical to sustainable economic growth.

Dantsoho said the recent approval by the Federal Government for the transfer of Inland Dry Port (IDP) management and development functions to the NPA would bring port services closer to businesses operating far from coastal ports.

He said the development would particularly benefit exporters in northern and central Nigeria, including Abuja, by reducing the need to transport raw commodities to coastal ports before completing port clearance and documentation.

"By bringing Inland Dry Ports under the operational purview of the NPA, exporters in northern and central Nigeria, including right here in Abuja, no longer need to move raw commodities to coastal ports before undergoing port clearance and documentation," he said.

The NPA boss added that the authority had introduced targeted interventions to eliminate bottlenecks confronting non-oil exporters, including the operationalisation of dedicated Export Processing Terminals.

Business

FG targets improved human capital index

From Collins Olayinka, Abuja

THE Federal Government plans to accelerate efforts to improve Nigeria's human capital development ranking, with the country currently ranked 135th globally on the Human Capital Index, the National Coordinator

for Human Capital Development (HCD) 2.0 and Special Adviser to the President on NEC and Climate Change, Rukaiya el-Rufai, has said.

el-Rufai disclosed this in Abuja yesterday during an engagement on the implementation of the Nigeria Human Capital

Development Strategy 2.0.

She urged the media to intensify scrutiny of human capital development efforts by tracking implementation, interrogating gaps and keeping health, education, skills and livelihoods at the centre of national discourse.

She said the strategy's success

would ultimately depend on how effectively it translated into measurable improvements in the lives of Nigerians.

The strategy seeks to build "a healthy and inclusive Nigeria with an educated workforce, advancing sustainable development", through interventions

targeting health outcomes, learning and skills, labour-force participation and livelihoods.

el-Rufai said the scale of the challenge required the strategy to move beyond policy intentions to concrete and measurable results.

She urged journalists to question government performance, bring evidence into public debate, highlight progress and shortcomings, and tell the human stories behind the statistics.

"You can ask difficult questions. You can bring evidence into the national conversation. You can highlight what is working, identify where progress is falling short, spotlight innovations and achievements across states, and, importantly, tell the human stories behind the numbers," she said.

She said various initiatives and investments were being implemented across the country, but significant gaps remained and

required sustained attention.

The immediate priority, she added, was to accelerate results, strengthen accountability and ensure that evidence increasingly informed government decisions and resource allocation.

Rather than viewing the media simply as a communication channel, el-Rufai described journalists as strategic partners in implementing the HCD agenda. She called for stronger collaboration between HCD institutions and the media, including improved access to credible data and greater opportunities for journalists to engage directly with institutions and people implementing HCD programmes.

The HCD Strategy 2.0 places particular emphasis on improving opportunities for Nigerians, especially women and young people, to develop their capabilities and participate fully in the economy.

Nigeria risks losing aviation investments to foreign hubs, Aero boss warns

By Olusegun Koiki

NIGERIA risks losing aviation jobs, investment and business to emerging aviation hubs in neighbouring countries unless the Federal Government gives the sector a deliberate strategic focus, Managing Director of Aero Contractors, Ado Sanusi, has warned.

Sanusi spoke during his welcome address at the 67th anniversary of Aero Contractors at the Murtala Muhammed Airport (MMA), Lagos.

He said the emergence of competing airports and maintenance facilities outside Nigeria should

serve as a wake-up call to policy-makers to reposition the aviation industry.

According to him, aviation should be treated not merely as a means of transportation but as a catalyst for economic growth, tourism, job creation and foreign investment.

He said the emergence of a new mega airport and major maintenance hub "just across our border" and within a few minutes' flight from Lagos was being deliberately positioned to serve the Nigerian market.

Sanusi therefore appealed to the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, to

champion a renewed strategic focus on aviation under the Federal Government's Renewed Hope agenda.

"If we do not respond strategically and soon, we risk our airports becoming ghost airports, our hangars falling silent and our jobs and investment flying quietly across the border, sadly using our own population as the price," he said.

"We are respectfully asking for a Renewed Hope for aviation, a deliberate strategic national focus for this sector alongside roads, rail

and power, so that Nigerian skies remain ours to command."

Sanusi said the aviation industry had demonstrated in several countries, particularly in the Gulf and parts of Africa, that it could serve as a powerful engine of economic development when deliberately supported by government.

He said Aero Contractors was ready to partner with the government in achieving such a vision, adding that recent investments in airport infrastructure had demonstrated the potential of aviation to transform Nigeria's gateways.

NGX reopens bearish as market capitalisation sheds N91 billion

By Helen Oji

RENEWED selling pressure in major stocks dragged the Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX) into negative territory at the start of the week, wiping N91 billion off investors' wealth as market capitalisation declined yesterday.

Data from the NGX showed that market capitalisation fell from N162.84 trillion at the close of trading last Friday to N162.75 trillion on Monday.

Similarly, the NGX All-Share Index (ASI) shed 140.41 points, representing a 0.06 per cent decline, to close at 250,667.86 points, down from 250,808.27 points recorded on Friday.

The marginal market decline came despite gains in several stocks, including Sovereign Insurance, FTN Cocoa, Tripple Gee, Learn Africa, Livestock Feeds and Neimeth.

Market breadth was negative, with 29 stocks recording

price declines against 24 gainers, reflecting the dominance of selling pressure during the session.

Sovereign Insurance led the gainers, appreciating by 10 per cent to close at N2.31 per share. FTN Cocoa followed with a 9.97 per cent increase, rising from N7.62 to N8.38, while Tripple Gee and Company gained 9.87 per cent to close at N2.56, up from N2.33.

Learn Africa advanced by 9.8 per cent to close at N8.40, while Livestock Feeds rose by 9.55 per cent to N9.75.

Neimeth gained 8.72 per cent to close at N8.10, while Chams appreciated by 4.95 per cent to N3.39. UPDC Real Estate Investment Trust rose by 4.60 per cent to N21.60, while Regalis gained 4.29 per cent to close at 73 kobo.

Among the major stocks, Zenith Bank advanced by 0.67 per cent to close at N135.40, while Stanbic IBTC Holdings gained 0.61 per cent to N164.

University Press revenue rises 14.5% despite cost pressures

By Benjamin Alade

UNIVERSITY Press Plc grew its revenue by 14.5 per cent to N3.895 billion in the financial year ended March 31, 2026, despite rising production, energy, transportation and financing costs.

The company disclosed this at its 48th annual general meeting, where management said the revenue growth reflected sustained demand for educational materials, particularly primary education titles, despite inflation and weakening purchasing power.

Profit before tax, however, fell to N389.5 million from N619.7 million recorded in the previous year, while profit after tax declined to N213.7 million from N450.6 million.

The company attributed the

decline largely to higher operating costs and the absence of exceptional income recorded in the preceding year, when it realised significant gains from the disposal of certain assets.

Cost of sales rose from N1.45 billion to N1.76 billion during the year, driven by increases in materials, printing, production and logistics expenses.

Consequently, gross profit increased from N1.96 billion to N2.13 billion, although the gross profit margin narrowed from 58 per cent to about 55 per cent.

Marketing and distribution expenses also rose to N775.7 million from N694.7 million, reflecting higher transportation and sales costs as the company expanded its market coverage.



It is Customer Service Week and across Nigeria, organisations will celebrate their customer-facing employees.

There will be colourful clothes, photographs, social-media posts, awards, cakes and messages thanking customers. Perhaps even executives taking over call centres or branches for a few hours. There is nothing wrong with any of this.

Customer Service Week 2026 runs from October 5 to 9, under the theme "The Extra Mile." But for Nigeria's financial-services industry, perhaps the week should provoke the question What exactly does excellent customer service mean in modern banking?

Nigerian banks celebrate customer service, but are customers experiencing better performance

BECAUSE customer service is no longer principally about whether the person behind the counter smiles.

Increasingly, there may not even be a counter. The bank now lives in your phone. Customer experience happens when you attempt a transfer at midnight. When your card is declined. When an account is debited but the beneficiary is not credited. When suspected fraud occurs. When you need a reversal. When an app is unavailable. When you need clarification about a charge. When you try to speak to someone because the technology has failed.

That means customer service has become a performance system.

The Frontline Cannot Compensate for a Broken System

Many organisations still treat customer service as primarily a people problem i.e. train the staff, teach courtesy, improve communication, smile more, respond politely etc. All of these things matter. But an excellent employee sitting inside a poor system cannot consistently deliver an excellent customer experience.

If technology fails repeatedly, politeness cannot replace reliability. If dispute resolution takes too long, empathy cannot replace speed. If customers cannot understand charges, friendliness cannot replace transparency. If fraud controls are weak, a good call-centre script cannot restore confidence. If responsibility moves endlessly between departments, the cus-

tomers does not experience an organisation. The customer experiences frustration.

That is why the real customer-service conversation must move from behaviour to system performance.

Complaints Are Performance Data

Consider what regulatory evidence has previously revealed. Between October 2023 and September 2024, the CBN reported addressing 19,988 customer complaints, resolving 15,306 of them and facilitating refunds of approximately ₦7.05 billion and US\$714,569 to customers in disputes with financial-service providers.

In its first-half 2024 Financial Stability Report, the CBN said complaints received had risen to 16,527. Fraud-related complaints accounted for 41.49 per cent, electronic/card complaints 32.57 per cent and account-management complaints 22.38 per cent.

These figures relate to earlier reporting periods and should not be presented as a description of every customer's experience today. But they reveal something important.

Complaints are not merely irritations for customer-service departments to close. They are performance intelligence.

When the same problem repeatedly reaches customers, leadership should ask what system, process, technology, control, policy or accountability failure is producing it. That is how a performance organisation learns.

The Digital Bank Has Changed the Standard

Nigeria has become a highly digital financial market. That brings enormous convenience but it also changes customer expectations.

If a bank encourages a customer to become digital, the institution assumes responsibility for making the digital experience dependable.

The CBN's recent reforms recognise this reality. New measures taking effect in 2026 include stronger identity verification, real-time enterprise fraud monitoring, multi-factor authentication around certain payment controls and additional security requirements around mobile banking.

This is important because trust is now part of infrastructure.

A customer does not experience cybersecurity as a regulatory framework. The customer experiences it as Is my money safe?

A customer does not experience interoperability as a technical architecture. The customer experiences it as Did my transfer go through?

A customer does not experience complaints management as organisational design. The customer experiences it as When something went wrong, did my bank solve it?

That is where customer-service performance becomes measurable.

Perhaps We Need a Different Customer-Service Scorecard. Imagine if every bank's leadership team used Customer Service Week to examine five questions; not how many branches were decorated or how many appreciation posts

were published.

But (a) how frequently customers encountered failed transactions; (b) how quickly disputes were resolved; (c) how much customer effort was required to solve a problem; (d) how reliably channels performed; and (e) are recurring complaints were disappearing because their root causes had actually been fixed.

That would change the conversation; because the objective should not be to become excellent at handling complaints. The objective should increasingly be to design systems that reduce the avoidable causes of complaints.

Customer Experience Is a Leadership Issue

This is where Performance Leadership™ becomes relevant.

Customer experience is often delegated downward to Customer-Service Officers, Branch Managers, Relationship Managers and Contact-centre teams but many of the things that determine customer experience are controlled elsewhere.

When the experience is consistently poor, leadership cannot solve it merely by demanding better attitudes from frontline employees. The system itself must improve.

Visit www.tppafrica.com for the full article

Dr. Abiola Salami is a World-Class Performance Strategist and the developer of Performance Leadership™. His work focuses on enabling leaders and organisations close the gap between investment, capability, execution and measurable outcomes.

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Unending search for missing link between skills, jobs

For years, Nigeria's response to youth unemployment has largely centred on equipping young people with skills. But for many beneficiaries, the journey from training to economic independence often ends where the real challenge begins, GLORIA NWAFOR reports.

DESPITE years of youth empowerment initiatives, there appears to be a missing link often ignored. Finding a job, securing capital, accessing electricity and equipment, reaching markets or obtaining the infrastructure needed to turn skills into sustainable livelihoods.

That gap is at the heart of the ongoing review of the Nigeria Youth Employment Action Plan (NIYEAP) 2025-2030, as the Federal Government and its development partners confront a question that increasingly defines the country's youth employment crisis: what happens after the training?

The question goes beyond the number of young Nigerians enrolled in skills programmes or the enterprises created through government interventions. It touches on the structure of the economy itself — whether businesses are expanding fast enough to absorb new workers, whether young entrepreneurs can access finance and markets, and whether public policy can connect skills development to sectors capable of generating sustainable employment.

As the government revises NIYEAP, stakeholders are pushing for a shift from programmes designed primarily around young people to an employment strategy built around economic opportunities into which they can plug their skills, labour and enterprise.

The existing ecosystem covers students, graduates, job seekers, young entrepreneurs, informal-sector workers, rural youth, young women, persons with disabilities and emerging professionals seeking meaningful pathways into work and enterprise.

The original NIYEAP 2021-2024 was built around four priority areas — employability, entrepreneurship, employment, and equality and rights — with the objective of contributing to decent, productive and freely chosen employment for young Nigerians.

The framework was also designed to coordinate fragmented interventions and strengthen multi-sector collaboration.

However, previous interventions have raised a fundamental question for the new plan: what happens when a young person acquires a skill but cannot find a job, secure finance, access electricity, obtain equipment or find a market for what he or she produces?

Stakeholders argue that Nigeria already has multiple youth programmes, skills initiatives, entrepreneurship schemes and employment interventions. The challenge confronting the review, therefore, is not simply how to equip more young Nigerians with skills, but how to connect those skills to employers, investment, infrastructure, finance, markets and decent work.

At a two-day employment workshop in Lagos, the Minister of Youth Development, Ayodele Olawande, said the private sector must play a central role because of its capacity to drive enterprise growth, investment, productivity and job creation.

He said the shared interest provided a basis for a stronger government-private sector partnership on youth employment and Nigeria's broader economic development agenda.

The workshop, attended by representatives of the private sector, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), GIZ, the MacArthur Foundation, the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), development partners, government institutions and youth-focused organisations, is aimed at developing a coordinated private-sector strategy for youth job creation, Olawande said.

According to him, one major gap in previous frameworks was the absence of a sufficiently developed and coordinated private-sector strategy focused specifically on youth employment.

Represented by the Ministry's Deputy Director, Ebiho Agun, Olawande said the strategy would examine constraints limiting businesses from employing more young people, including policy and regulatory barriers, infrastructure, financing, skills shortages and other factors affecting investment and business growth.

He said the government would also seek private-sector input on future labour-market demand, the skills employers were likely to need over the next five to 10 years and investment opportunities capable of generating employment at scale.

The minister said gender and inclusion would form part of the strategy, stressing the need to ensure that jobs created



Olawande

were accessible to young women, persons with disabilities and other groups facing barriers to entering and remaining in the labour market.

He further disclosed that the Private Sector Technical Working Group, launched by the Minister of Youth Development in 2024, would serve as a platform for sustaining government-business engagement beyond the workshop. Olawande said the objective was to move beyond identifying challenges to establishing practical actions, clear responsibilities and mechanisms for measuring results.

He noted that while young Nigerians needed decent, productive opportunities to build careers and livelihoods, Nigerian businesses also needed a skilled, productive and adaptable workforce to expand and remain competitive.

The Director of the ILO Office for Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone, Dr Vanessa Phala, spoke on the reforms, incentives and enabling conditions needed to unlock investment and employment, as well as what the private sector needed from government to invest, expand and create jobs.

Represented by the ILO Abuja Country Office, Augustine Erameh, Phala asked: "What policies, regulations, reforms, incentives and concessions are required? How can governments reduce the personal risk of doing business? That is the best way we can get what is required to advise the government on what policies to develop."

She said the process was expected to examine ways to integrate youth-led enterprises into corporate supply chains, procurement and markets, particularly by addressing the financing, infrastructure, regulatory and market-access constraints limiting the growth of small businesses and their capacity to create jobs.

She said the Federal Ministry of Youth Development and ILO, with technical support under the Strengthening Employment and Employability Systems in Nigeria (SEESIN) project, were seeking a private-sector engagement framework that would define business participation, financing, partnerships, monitoring and accountability under the revised plan.

The revised framework, she said, was expected to go beyond commitments by establishing mechanisms to track employment outcomes, retention, internship conversion, enterprise survival, productivity and employer satisfaction.

Phala said the review also proposed a continuing private-sector implementation mechanism, potentially through a council or working group with sector clusters, quarterly reviews, a commitment tracker and a system for escalating



Olayiwola



Phala

policy and regulatory barriers constraining youth employment.

Priority areas under consideration, she said, included agriculture and agro-processing, construction, creative industries, ICT and digitalisation, technology, green economy, energy, manufacturing, trade and services.

According to her, the workshop was expected to produce a private-sector action matrix, government-enablement framework, financing and risk-sharing options, practical apprenticeship and internship models, and a prioritised portfolio of sectors and interventions for inclusion in the revised NIYEAP.

Commenting on the plan, policy analyst Lekan Olayiwola advised that NIYEAP should move from youth programmes to economic zones.

He said the plan should go beyond coordinating youth programmes to integrating infrastructure, finance, skills and private-sector demand around actual economic opportunities. Olayiwola argued that NIYEAP's success would depend less on the number of programmes implemented than on whether its four pillars — employability, entrepreneurship, employment creation, and equal rights and opportunities — could connect to viable economic activities in which young Nigerians could participate and earn.

He said the plan should consider developing Youth Economic Opportunity Zones or Youth Enterprise Clusters that would bring together training, infrastructure, finance, production facilities, logistics and market access, rather than leaving young entrepreneurs to navigate these requirements separately.

A young person starting a business, he noted, might need land, electricity, finance, registration, equipment, digital connectivity, logistics, skills and access to customers, even though responsibility for these areas was spread across different institutions.

He said NIYEAP could therefore build on its proposed mechanisms for private-sector participation, sectoral clusters, commitment tracking and employment-outcome reporting by integrating resources controlled by different institutions around specific economic opportunities.

Olayiwola cited Special Economic Zones in South Africa as one example of how infrastructure, investment facilitation and productive activities could be concentrated geographically, but cautioned that such zones should not be regarded as a substitute for a broader employment strategy.

He noted that South Africa continued to record high youth unemployment despite investment and employment generated around its productive zones, stressing that Nigeria should ensure that any youth economic zones were connected to surrounding communities and the wider labour market.

He also drew lessons from Ghana's One District One Factory initiative, saying its emphasis on decentralised industrial production, private-sector participation and links between local resources and markets offered useful insights for NIYEAP.

Olayiwola said the youth employment debate should shift from asking how many young people had been trained to determining where young people could participate in value chains and generate income.

Young Nigerians, he said, could participate as agricultural producers, processors, equipment operators, logistics providers, packaging suppliers, distributors, digital service providers or employees of anchor companies, depending on the sector.

He also cited Rwanda's Special Economic Zones as an example of the benefits of combining infrastructure, productive space, investment facilitation and business services, arguing that skills development should similarly be tied to actual labour-market demand.

ILO: Informal workers need stronger voice in Africa's trade policies

By Gloria Nwafor

MORE than three-quarters of jobs linked to trade and global supply chains in Africa are informal, yet workers and small businesses operating outside the formal economy remain largely excluded from decisions shaping trade and labour policies, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has found. The organisation said the representation gap was undermining efforts to ensure that expanding trade translates into decent work and inclusive

economic development across the continent.

In a new research brief, engaging informal economy actors in trade and labour policy in Africa, the ILO called for stronger mechanisms to bring informal workers, small enterprises, cooperatives and associations into trade policy discussions.

The brief noted that more than 85 per cent of employment across Africa was informal, the highest rate for any region. In contrast, more than three-quarters of trade-linked

employment was informal in 11 African countries covered by available data.

It said the 11 countries represented about 45 per cent of employment on the continent, underscoring the scale of workers and businesses with limited access to policymaking processes.

According to the ILO, informal workers and enterprises often struggle to participate in consultations, raise concerns with policymakers or even access information about measures designed to support them. It added that formal exporting companies typically had greater access to policymakers, leaving informal economy ac-

tors at a disadvantage despite their significant contribution to trade and supply chains.

The findings were based on stakeholder evidence gathered for the ILO report, Trade, Investment and Decent Work in Africa: Evidence and Stakeholder Perspectives, as well as consultations involving more than 70 stakeholders from workers' and employers' organisations, government institutions and civil society groups in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa and Uganda. The ILO said existing consultation mechanisms frequently failed to reach informal workers and businesses, while the structure of informal employ-

ment created additional challenges for representation. "Many people operate simultaneously as workers and own-account operators," the organisation noted, saying the situation made conventional distinctions between workers and employers difficult to apply.

The problem, it said, was particularly pronounced in sectors closely connected to African and global supply chains.

Nearly 98 per cent of agricultural workers in Africa are informally employed, with many operating at the lower levels of supply chains and having limited direct relationships with major suppliers and buyers.

Informal cross-border trade also provides a major source of employment and income, particularly for women, who constitute the majority of informal cross-border traders in many African countries.

The ILO said such traders faced challenges including harassment and insecurity at borders, limited access to finance, and difficulty understanding and navigating regional trade rules.

To close the representation gap, the organisation recommended stronger links between cooperatives and informal-sector associations and established workers' and employers' organisations.

PR experts win double honours

By Gloria Nwafor

TPT International Limited and its Founder and Chief Consultant, Adetokunbo Modupe, have received double recognition at the 2026 Marketing Edge Awards in Lagos.

While Modupe was honoured with the PR Legend Award, TPT International emerged as Strategic Communication Company of the Year at the ceremony.

The awards recognise Modupe's more than three decades of contribution to Nigeria's public relations and marketing communications

industry, as well as TPT International's work in strategic communications and reputation management.

The latest recognition came weeks after TPT International was listed among Africa's leading public relations consultancies in the inaugural Africa Consultancy Performance Index 2026, published by Earned First.

The index assessed consultancies across business performance, creative impact and client outcomes, innovation and thought leadership, talent and culture, and industry leadership.

ICSAN urges professionals to prioritise physical health

By Victoria Nwachukwu

THE Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators of Nigeria (ICSAN) has urged professionals to make regular exercise a habit, stressing that maintaining physical health is essential to sustaining productivity and effectively discharging their responsibilities.

The institute's immediate past President, Funmi Ekundayo, made the call during ICSAN's annual Walk-for-Life

in Lagos, organised ahead of its national conference and as part of activities marking its 60th anniversary.

Ekundayo said ICSAN members worked across different sectors of the economy and needed to maintain their physical and cardiovascular health.

She said the walk was organised to remind professionals that maintaining physical health was essential to sustaining productivity

and effectively discharging their responsibilities.

Ekundayo said ICSAN had, over the past 60 years, contributed to the development of corporate governance in Nigeria.

ICSAN Vice President, Francis Olawale, said the initiative was designed to encourage professionals whose work often kept them seated through successive meetings and office activities to make exercise a habit.

Olawale, who is also chairman of the institute's conference and ICSAN@60 committee, said the Walk-for-Life had become part of the institute's culture over the past decade.

"ICSAN is not just all about the boardroom," he said, noting that many of its members moved from one board meeting to another and from one office meeting to another, resulting in sedentary lifestyles.



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RETRIEVAL OF CTC AND STATUS REPORT DOCUMENTS FOR HEIRS OF GOD CHRISTIAN BIBLE CHURCH WITH IT NO: 25132 ON CAC PORTAL

Notice is hereby given to the general public that HEIRS OF GOD CHRISTIAN BIBLE CHURCH located at 17, Olabisi Street, off Egbo Road, behind Dr. Tunji Otegbeye's Compound, Ilaro, Ogun State, with IT NO 25132, has updated its Annual Returns with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), and its status is now ACTIVE.

The General Public is notified that the Board has authorized the retrieval of CTC and STATUS REPORT documents from CAC Portal.

ALWAYS ADVERTISE ON THIS PAGE EVERY TUESDAY AND THURSDAY

Recording police officers on duty a legitimate tool for accountability, lawyers say

By Silver Nwokoro

LAWYERS have commended the act of recording police officers while carrying out official duties in public, stating that it is generally a legitimate tool of public accountability and does not automatically amount to an invasion of privacy.

However, they said the right to record police officers should not be abused for purposes of ridicule, social media engagement or exposing sensitive security information.

The Inspector General of Police (IGP), Tunji Disu, had cautioned Nigerians against recording police officers while on official duties.

Addressing a press conference in Abuja, Disu urged Nigerians to recognise that police officers don't invade their offices to record them while they are carrying out their duties.

The IGP, who frowned at such, however, admitted that a Federal High Court judgment in Warri, Delta State, gave Nigerians the constitutional right to record police officers.

Arguing the matter, a constitutional lawyer, Evans Ufeli, said police officers exercise public powers, including mak-

ing arrests, conducting searches, regulating public order and, in some circumstances, using force, adding that citizens and journalists have a strong interest in documenting such activities when they occur in public.

He said the issue involved balancing the constitutional right to privacy with freedom of expression and the public interest in filming law enforcement activities.

According to him, Section 37 of the 1999 Constitution (as altered) protects the privacy of

citizens, their homes, correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications.

However, he noted that a police officer performing official duties in a public place could not reasonably expect the same level of privacy as a private person inside a home or during a personal conversation.

He, however, cautioned that the right to record should not be interpreted as a licence to obstruct police operations.

"The line should be drawn at

purpose, location, conduct, and publication," he said.

Ufeli said people may ordinarily record officers at checkpoints, protests, traffic stops, arrests and other public operations, provided the recording did not obstruct officers, endanger anyone, interfere with an investigation, reveal sensitive operational details or provoke violence.

He advised that recording should not be used to cross a crime scene barrier, resist a lawful order, harass officers or

place a camera in an officer's face during a volatile encounter.

Similarly, Merit Chekwube Nworie of Roy & Associates affirmed that citizens have constitutionally guaranteed rights to freedom of expression and access to information, adding that recording police activities could provide tangible evidence where disputes arise over what transpired between citizens and officers.

She said: "A citizen can record a police officer while carrying out official duties. That is even

sanctioned by a case law currently, but it does not mean that a citizen has the right to record a police officer just to ridicule him or to record him when he is not on official duty."

Nworie noted that recording should also not obstruct officers from performing their lawful duties or expose sensitive police operations that are not intended for public consumption.

She said recording an officer for the purpose of creating social media content, gathering likes or ridiculing the officer was different from documenting an encounter for accountability.

Nworie recommended the use of body cameras by police officers, describing it as useful for evidence gathering, information collection and improving policing, as well as keeping officers in check.

She called for a data governance framework to regulate the use, storage and handling of footage captured by body cameras.

"I think there should be a data governance framework to ensure that wearing of body cameras by police officers does not breach citizens' right to privacy," she said.



AGF Fagbemi



CJN Kekere-Ekun

Monarch, chief seek protection against state anti-land grabbing agency

By Joseph Onyekwere

THE Ikale nationality in Ondo South Senatorial District has accused the state Property and Anti-Land Grabbing Task Force of unconstitutional interference with, and contemptuous undermining of an executory judgment of the Ondo State High Court.

The task force is headed by the Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice, Olukayode Ajulo (SAN).

The complaint followed a judgment delivered by the state Chief Judge, Justice O. O. Akeredolu, on May 13, 2019, in suit marked HOR/2/2004, filed by the Paramount Ruler of Ikale Land, Oba G. B. Faduyile, on behalf of himself and the Ikale nation.

In a fresh suit filed at the State High Court, the monarch is seeking an order protecting the sanctity of the 2019 judgment and restraining the Task Force, its officials and agents from interfering with the exercise of his traditional, chieftaincy and administrative authority over Kajola community and seven other towns and vil-

lages under his jurisdiction, as affirmed by the earlier judgment.

He is also seeking similar protection for chiefs and representatives appointed by him to oversee the affected communities.

The monarch further wants the court to declare that the Task Force lacks constitutional jurisdiction to review, sit on appeal over, or obstruct the execution of a judgment of the High Court.

In a related development, Chief Kehinde Oloruntobi Maiyegun, appointed by the monarch to oversee Kajola Community, has filed a suit at the Federal High Court, Akure, seeking enforcement of his fundamental rights over alleged harassment and interference with his freedom of movement by the Task Force, its officials and agents.

Filed on September 26, 2026, the suit followed an invitation by the agency to appear at its Akure office, which Maiyegun honoured in the company of his lawyer, Mr Agbor Akamba. Maiyegun also sued Mr Tayo

Kolawole, whom he alleged had been acting in concert with the Task Force to harass him and prevent him from exercising authority over land and property placed in his care by the monarch.

According to him, the dispute arose after the agency received a petition from Kolawole alleging that he threatened his life and wilfully damaged his property at Kajola.

Maiyegun said the property formed part of land earlier won by the Abodi, which he was appointed to oversee.



Ajulo

Clergy tasks judiciary on fair judgments

By Ngozi Egenuka

ARCHBISHOP of the Metropolitan See of Lagos, Alfred Adewale Martins, has urged the judiciary to address complaints that would arise after elections in fairness, paying attention to all evidence before delivering judgments.

This was at the 2026 new Legal Year Mass and Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in Lagos, organised by the National Association of Catholic Lawyers (NACL).

He charged politicians aspiring for positions to do so based on

their capacity and not by attempting to change people's decisions through material things.

The archbishop also admonished them to prevent violence at all costs, but to present an agenda that can transform every citizen and the nation.

"There is a lot of difficulty in our country today. Politicians should gather all the thoughts of people and ensure that they work out ways to rectify them," he said.

While congratulating the lawyers on the new year, he stressed that it is an opportunity

to do something different and better than the previous year, urging them to exhibit the values of the faith in the practice of the profession.

Martins tasked citizens to get their voter cards, evaluate politicians and on that basis cast their votes.

He urged them to shun freebies and other forms of inducement, and vote according to their good conscience.

The clergy charged INEC officials and security personnel to realise the weight of responsibility attached to their jobs and perform their duties justly.

Police arraign businessman over alleged N790m fraud

By Yetunde Ayobami Ojo

OPERATIVES of the Force Criminal Investigation Department (ForceCID), Annex, Alagbon-Ikoyi, Lagos, have arraigned a businessman, Mohammed Bello Abubakar, also known as Buba, before a Federal High Court, Lagos, over an alleged N790 million fraud involving 18 shops at Alaba International Market, Ojo.

Abubakar was arraigned before Justice Ibrahim Ahmad Kala on a three-count charge bordering on conspiracy, obtaining money by false pretence and unlawful conversion of funds in charge number FHC/LAG/CR/789/2026.

The prosecutor, Morufu Ajani Animashaun, from the legal department of ForceCID Annex, told the court that the defendant allegedly conspired with one Alhaji Musa Lawal, who is currently at large, to commit the offences between June 2025 and March 2026.

Animashaun alleged that the defendant and his accomplice fraudulently obtained the sum of N790 million from Casco Electronic Company Limited by falsely representing that

they had lawful authority, right and title to sell 18 units of shops located at Alaba International Market, Lagos.

He further told the court that Abubakar dishonestly converted the said sum to his personal use despite the money being paid in connection with the purported sale of the shops.

According to the prosecutor, the alleged offences contravene Sections 8(a) and 1(1)(a), and are punishable under Section 1(3) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006 (as altered), as well as Sections 383 and 390 of the Criminal Code Act, Laws of the Federation 2004.

The defendant, however, pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Following his plea, Animashaun urged the court to fix a trial date and remand the defendant in the custody of the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS) pending the determination of the case.

Counsel to the defendant, in response, requested time to file a bail application on behalf of his client.

Court discharges, acquits businessman of money laundering charges

From Amen Ochojila, Abuja

NIGERIAN businessman and philanthropist, Babatunde Morakinyo, has been discharged and acquitted by the Federal High Court, Abuja, of all money laundering charges brought against him by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

In a no-case submission judgment marked FHC/ABJ/CR/75/2020, the court held that the EFCC acted "with-

out sufficient evidence" when it arraigned Morakinyo in 2020 on charges bordering on money laundering.

In 2020, the EFCC accused Morakinyo of allegedly failing to report in writing certain transfers into his company's account to the anti-graft agency.

The EFCC also charged Iretidu Limited and Three Four Universal Concept Limited as co-defendants alongside Morakinyo.

All three defendants pleaded not guilty to the charges and were acquitted by the court of all charges.

Delivering the judgment, Justice Peter Lifu said: "I hold that there is no established linkage of the defendants with the evidence led so far by the prosecution."

"Consequently, the submission of no case to answer is hereby upheld and the defendants are herein discharged and acquitted."

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■ EXPERIENCED ARCHITECT (REF – EXA)

OBJECTIVE: Create functionally safe and aesthetically pleasing architectural designs for buildings and structures while also adhering to the company's vision and market demands.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES/DELIVERABLES

- **DESIGN AND PLANNING:** Create detailed blueprints and plans for building projects. This involves not just the aesthetic design but also ensuring functionality and compliance with local building codes and regulations.
- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT:** Oversee the construction process to ensure that the project is built according to their designs. Coordinate with contractors, engineers, and other stakeholders to manage timelines and budgets.
- **CLIENT CONSULTATION:** Work closely with clients to understand their needs, preferences, and budget constraints. Translate requirements into feasible designs.
- **SUSTAINABILITY:** Create environmentally sustainable designs. This includes using green materials, energy-efficient designs, and sustainable construction practices.
- **INNOVATION:** Constantly innovate to improve building methods, materials, and designs. Stay up-to-date with the latest trends and technologies in the construction industry.
- **SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE:** Ensuring the safety of the building's occupants, see to the fact that designs comply with all safety regulations and standards.
- **AESTHETIC APPEAL:** Strive to create structures that are both beautiful and functional.
- **PROBLEM-SOLVING:** Solve a variety of problems that arise during the design and construction process, from structural issues to unexpected changes in project scope.
- **COLLABORATION:** Work as part of a larger team, including engineers, contractors, urban planners, and interior designers. Effective collaboration is essential to the success of a project.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Minimum of a Bachelor's/Master's Degree in Architecture from a reputable University.
- A professional qualification will be an added advantage.
- PMP Certification is desirable.
- Certified membership of ARCON and other relevant professional bodies.
- Use of Microsoft Project.
- Minimum of 15 years cognate experience.
- Between 40 and 55 years of age
- Experience in construction supervision.
- Experience in developing, upgrading and amending building structures.
- Experience in building commercial offices and residential buildings.
- Proven track record in development and implementation of strategic management, operational review and project management delivery.

■ QUANTITY SURVEYOR (REF - QSR)

OBJECTIVE: Manage and oversee all aspects related costs estimates and financial aspects of building construction projects ensuring they are all completed within projected budget and schedule.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES/DELIVERABLES

- **COST ESTIMATION:** Prepare accurate cost estimates for materials, labor, and other project expenses.
- **BUDGET MANAGEMENT:** Develop and manage project budgets, ensuring that costs are controlled and kept within the allocated budget.
- **TENDER PREPARATION:** Prepare and evaluate tender documents, including bills of quantities, for submission to contractors and suppliers.
- **CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION:** Manage and administer construction contracts, ensuring compliance with terms and conditions, and resolving any disputes.
- **COST CONTROL:** Monitor and control project costs throughout the construction process, identifying and addressing any cost overruns or variations.
- **FINANCIAL REPORTING:** Provide regular financial reports and updates to project stakeholders, detailing cost performance and projections.
- **RISK MANAGEMENT:** Identify and assess potential risks related to project costs and develop strategies to mitigate these risks.
- **VALUE ENGINEERING:** Evaluate and implement cost-saving measures and value engineering

solutions without compromising on quality or functionality.

- **PROJECT DOCUMENTATION:** Maintain accurate and comprehensive project documentation, including cost records, contracts, and correspondence.
- **COLLABORATION:** Work closely with architects, engineers, contractors, and other project stakeholders to ensure that cost-related objectives including cost records, contracts, and correspondence.
- **COLLABORATION:** Work closely with architects, engineers, contractors, and other project stakeholders to ensure that cost-related objectives are met and projects are delivered successfully.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Quantity Surveying or Surveying Engineering from a reputable University. Relevant Post-Graduate degree will be added advantage.
- Membership of Nigeria Institute of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS) will be an advantage.
- Minimum of 15 years experience with a construction company or Estate Management/Valuation firm.
- Experience in construction supervision required.
- Certificate in Project Management in desirable.

■ SENIOR MECHANICAL ENGINEER (REF - SME)

OBJECTIVE: Design, develop and maintain

mechanical systems that ensure functionality, efficiency and safety of buildings and structures ensuring compliance with standards and regulators.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES/DELIVERABLES

- **SYSTEM DESIGN:** Develop and design heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC), plumbing, and fire protection systems to meet the specific needs of buildings.
- **ENERGY EFFICIENCY:** Implement energy-efficient solutions and sustainable practices to reduce the environmental impact of buildings.
- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT:** Oversee the installation and maintenance of mechanical systems, ensuring that projects are completed on time, within budget, and to the highest quality standards.
- **REGULATORY COMPLIANCE:** Ensure that mechanical designs and installations comply with local building codes, regulations, and safety standards.
- **PROBLEM-SOLVING:** Address and resolve any issues related to mechanical systems during the design, construction, and maintenance phases.
- **COLLABORATION:** Work closely with architects, structural engineers, contractors, and other stakeholders to integrate mechanical systems seamlessly into building designs.
- **SYSTEM PERFORMANCE:** Monitor and assess the performance of mechanical systems, identifying opportunities for improvement and optimization.
- **DOCUMENTATION:** Prepare detailed technical drawings, specifications, and reports to guide the construction and maintenance of mechanical systems.
- **INNOVATION:** Stay updated with the latest advancements in mechanical engineering technologies and methods, applying innovative solutions to enhance project outcomes.
- **SAFETY AND RELIABILITY:** Ensure that mechanical systems are safe, reliable, and durable, minimizing the risk of failures and hazards

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from a reputable university. Post-graduate degree(s) will be added advantage.
- Professional certification and accreditation by the Nigerian Society of Engineers is a requirement.
- Proven expertise with a minimum of 15 years relevant experience in designing, developing and maintaining mechanical systems in the building and construction industry.
- Certification in Project Management is an added advantage.
- Ability to multitask including coordinating and managing several projects, with solid project and change management skills.
- Ability to align, inspire and influence outsourced/external partners and teams for results.
- A can-do attitude, strong leadership, and organizational management skills.
- Good problem solving, innovation, analytical, presentation and interpersonal skills.

■ SENIOR ELECTRICAL ENGINEER (REF-SEE)

OBJECTIVE: Design, develop, and oversee

electrical systems to ensure functionality, safety, and efficiency in buildings and structures ensuring compliance with standards and regulators.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES/DELIVERABLES

- **SYSTEM DESIGN:** Develop electrical systems, including lighting, power distribution, fire alarms, and communication networks, that meet the specific needs of buildings.
- **ENERGY EFFICIENCY:** Implement energy-efficient solutions and sustainable practices to minimize energy consumption and environmental impact.
- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT:** Oversee the installation, testing, and maintenance of electrical systems, ensuring projects are completed on time and within budget.
- **REGULATORY COMPLIANCE:** Ensure that electrical designs and installations comply with local building codes, regulations, and safety standards.
- **PROBLEM-SOLVING:** Identify and resolve issues related to electrical systems during the design, construction, and maintenance phases.
- **COLLABORATION:** Work closely with architects, structural engineers, contractors, and other stakeholders to integrate electrical systems seamlessly into building designs.
- **SYSTEM PERFORMANCE:** Monitor and assess the performance of electrical systems, identifying opportunities for improvement and optimization.
- **DOCUMENTATION:** Prepare detailed technical drawings, specifications, and reports to guide the construction and maintenance of electrical systems.
- **INNOVATION:** Stay updated with the latest advancements in electrical engineering technologies and methods, applying innovative solutions to enhance project outcomes.
- **SAFETY AND RELIABILITY:** Ensure that electrical systems are safe, reliable, and durable, minimizing the risk of failures and hazards

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering from a reputable University. Post-graduate degree(s) will be added advantage.
- Professional certification and accreditation by the Nigerian Society of Engineers is a requirement.
- Proven expertise with a minimum of 13 years relevant experience in designing, developing and maintaining Electrical systems in the building and construction industry.
- Certification in Project Management is an added advantage.
- Ability to multitask including coordinating and managing several projects, with solid project and change management skills.
- Ability to align, inspire and influence outsourced/external partners and teams for results.
- A can-do attitude, strong leadership, and organizational management skills.
- Good problem solving, innovation, analytical, presentation and interpersonal skills.
- Membership of professional bodies, like COREN essential.

■ SENIOR CIVIL ENGINEERS (REF: SCE)

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILL

- Minimum of a good Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from a reputable University. Post-graduate degree(s) will be added advantage.
- Professional certification and accreditation by the Nigerian Society of Engineers/ COREN is a requirement.
- Proven expertise with a minimum of 15 years relevant experience in the structural design and construction industry
- Certification in Project Management is an added advantage
- Ability to multitask including coordinating and managing several projects, with solid project and change management skills.
- Ability to align, inspire and influence outsourced/external partners and teams for results.
- A can-do attitude, strong leadership, and organizational management skills.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Support and ensure the effective and efficient design of buildings and structures as may be required.
- Assess technical requirements and provide technical advice for project related inputs such as appropriate construction materials, the

computation of loads and stresses data as well as environmental impact assessment.

- Work with other project teams members (including architects and building contractors) both onsite and offsite to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of structural design specifications and in particular, required HSE guidelines.
- Work with statutory planning officials to secure required regulatory approvals for building and related projects.
- Maintain an updated project-monitoring log and provide timely communication to critical stakeholders on status and technical evaluation of projects.

■ SENIOR BUILDING ENGINEERS (Ref: SBE)

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILL

- Bachelor's degree (B.Sc./B.Eng.) or HND in Building Engineering, Civil Engineering, or a related discipline
- Professional certification and accreditation by the Nigerian Society of Engineers is a requirement.
- Proven expertise with a minimum of 15 years of active experience in building construction, site engineering, or facility maintenance
- Professional registration or membership of relevant bodies like COREN (for engineers) or CORBON/NIOB (for builders) is a strong advantage
- Certification in Project Management is an added advantage
- Proficiency in technical drawing interpretation, structural troubleshooting, and construction software (e.g., AutoCAD).
- Ability to multitask including coordinating and managing several projects, with solid project and change management skills.
- Ability to align, inspire and influence outsourced/external partners and teams for results.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Site Supervision:** Oversee day-to-day building construction, renovation, and structural installation activities
- **System Maintenance:** Manage and troubleshoot critical facility utilities, including electrical, plumbing, and HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) systems
- **Drawing & Compliance Review:** Read, interpret, and ensure site execution matches architectural blueprints, structural designs, and Nigerian building codes.
- **Stakeholder Coordination:** Liaise with architects, civil contractors, quantity surveyors, and project managers
- **Quality & Safety Control:** Inspect building materials and enforce strict Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) protocols on site
- **Reporting:** Maintain comprehensive records of site progress, material usage, and facility maintenance schedules

MODE OF APPLICATION

Interested and qualified professionals should send their detailed Resume/CV along with a scanned passport photograph within 2 weeks of this application to:
luxury.structures11@gmail.com using the Job Title/
Reference as the subject of the mail.
Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted in confidence via email or SMS.



Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)



CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNDER THE NIGERIA CLIMATE ADAPTATION – EROSION AND WATERSHED PROJECT (NEWMAP-EIB) DELTA STATE PROJECT MANAGEMENT / IMPLEMENTATION UNIT

Reference No.: [DTNEWMAP-EIB/CS/26/002,007&009]

Client/Procuring Entity: Delta State NEWMAP-EIB

Project: Consultancy Services

Location: Delta State

Date:

1. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), through the Federal Ministry of Environment (FMEEnv.) has received a credit from the European Investment Bank (EIB) towards the cost of Nigeria Climate Adaptation Erosion and Watershed Project – EIB (NEWMAP-EIB). Delta State is a beneficiary of the Credit and now intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the contract for Consultancy Services across the Intervention sites in Delta State.

Accordingly, the Delta State SPIU invites qualified, experienced and reputable consulting firms, Individuals, consulting organizations, consortia and/or joint ventures to express their Interest in providing the consultancy services described under the Lots below;

SCOPE OF SERVICES

LOT No.	DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES
2.	Consulting services for review/re-validate Engineering Designs for Amachai/Ogbeozoma and Vanguard/Airport Area Erosion Sites of NEWMAP-EIB Intervention Sites
7.	Engagement of Focal NGO for NEWMAP-EIB Intervention Sites and PAPS
9.	Engagement of Security Consultant for the Project

Applicants may apply for one or more lots if they meet the qualification criteria for such lots combined. For the same lot, a firm can only apply to be shortlisted once either as a single entity or as a member of JV or consortium.

2. SHORTLISTING/MINIMUM QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

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

LOT 1 – Engineering Designs

- Proven and successful experience in large-scale Engineering designs, Ground-truth existing designs against current 'as-is' site conditions and identify physical changes, encroachments, developments, utilities and changes to the right of way
- Knowledgeable and experienced in re-verification of hydrological and hydraulic basis, including catchment boundaries, design storm assumptions, runoff estimates, conveyance capacities, freeboard, velocities, energy disruptions and safe outfall conditions.
- Experienced in reviewal of geotechnical assumptions, slope stability, erosion susceptibility, foundation conditions, material parameters, subgrade assumptions, structural design adequacy for culverts, channels, transition structures, stilling basins, baffle chutes, other concrete or erosion protection elements, road geometry and pavement designs where road construction/upgrade is integral to the intervention.
- Demonstrated skills and competencies in reviewal of constructability, traffic/access arrangements, sequencing, utility interfaces and residual risks, environmental and social integration, climate resilience, bio-engineering, occupational/ community health and safety and operation/maintenance requirements, quantities and update of BEME rates to current market conditions; identify quantity changes arising from validated design amendments.
- Experienced in confirming that intervention conveys runoff from the erosion source/catchment to a stable natural and safe natural receiving system without creating unacceptable downstream erosion or flood risk.
- Experienced in engineering designs for donor-funded projects, including EIB, EU, World Bank, AfDB, IsDB or comparable institutions availability of an appropriately constituted multidisciplinary team and adequate field deployment capacity

LOT 2 – FOCAL NGO

- Proven and Successful experience in stakeholders engagement, grievance redress, vulnerability assessment and gender/social inclusion
- Successful experience in community and stakeholders mobilization and comparable projects experience with international development-partner safeguards requirements, particularly EIB ESS6 or comparable resettlement standards (World Bank, AfDB, IsDB, etc.)
- Proven expertise in Gender Based Violence issues especially in international development-partner projects particularly EIB ESS6 or comparable standards (World Bank, AfDB, IsDB, etc.)
- Demonstrated capacity for socio-economic census, digital data collection capacity, asset inventory, land/asset valuation and livelihood-restoration planning as is evidenced by the numbers of full-time or long-term staff dedicated to such studies
- Successful experience in Nigeria is an added advantage

LOT 3 – SECURITY CONSULTANT

- Proven and successful experience in intelligence gathering, create and execute security policies, protocols and defense measures.
- Successful experience in the investigation of security breaches, crisis response management and prompt redress of system failures or challenges.
- Proven expertise in the deployment of security staff to project needs and also management of trained staff in risk spotting, attack prevention and compliance with safety standards.
- Demonstrated capacity for the overall safety and security of the project office, staff and sites throughout the project duration.
- Knowledge in effective management of security personnel, vehicles and gadgets

- Ability to provide armed security personnel
- Successful experience in Nigeria is an added advantage
- Experience in security services to donor agencies including European Investment Bank

3. SHORTLISTING/MINIMUM QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

Interested consultants/firms are to submit an Expression of Interest containing below **Mandatory** requirement:

- Evidence of Company's registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) or equivalent in the country of incorporation.
- Evidence of the company's current Tax Clearance Certificate for the last three (3) years (2023, 2024 and 2025)
- Company's audited account for the last three years (2023, 2024 and 2025) duly stamped.
- Evidence of registration with State Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) 2026 or equivalent at national level or in the country of incorporation.
- Well detailed company profile with managerial and technical structure, office address and functional contact details including staff list with functions and years of experience and years with the firm.
- For joint ventures, a draft memorandum of understanding must be attached.
- Evidence of experience as required for the qualification criteria for the lot under consideration inclusive of Client contact details

3. The attention of interested consultants(s) is drawn to section I sub-section 1.5 of Guide to procurement for projects financed by EIB September 2024, setting forth the bank's policy on conflict of interest.

4. Following the shortlisting of qualified consultants based on the information submitted in response to this REOI, the shortlisted consultants will be invited to submit a technical and financial proposal in the next stage and subsequently evaluated and the successful consultant selected in accordance with the Consultant Qualification Selection (CQS) method set out in the applicable procurement regulations.

5. Shortlisting will be done for each lot separately; requests for proposals will be issued separately to only the shortlisted applicant in each lot.

6. Interested eligible consulting firms may obtain further information from the State Project Coordinator (SPC) Delta State NEWMAP-EIB, State Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) during office working days/hours from 0800 to 1600 at the address stated below:

**The State Project Coordinator,
Delta State NEWMAP-EIB
No.14 Governor's Street, West-End, Asaba, Delta State,
Email: deltanewmap@gmail.com
Telephone: 08023370333**

Note:

- The EOI should focus on demonstrating the consultant's qualifications and experience.
- A consulting firm may express interest in one or more Lots, subject to the applicable procurement strategy. Where a firm expresses interest in more than one Lot, it shall demonstrate adequate technical, managerial, staffing and logistical capacity to undertake the assignments concurrently.

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR SHORTLISTING OF CONSULTANTS – REOI

NO.	Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
1	General relevant experiences of the Firm/Consultant	15
2	Specific experience in similar assignment	35
3	Donor Funded/WB/EIB/International development Projects Experience	10
4	Technical and institutional capacity	15
5	Geographical/Contextual experience	10
6	Availability and suitability of resources	5
7	Experience in managing multidisciplinary/integrated assignments	10
	TOTAL	100

4. SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Expressions of Interest should be clearly marked with the title and LOT number and submitted to:

**The State Project Coordinator,
Delta State NEWMAP-EIB
No.14 Governor's Street, West-End, Asaba, Delta State,
Email: deltanewmap@gmail.com
Telephone: 08023370333**

Closing Date: Tuesday, 27th. October, 2026

Closing Time: 4:00pm PROMPT

Only shortlisted consultants/firms will be invited.

**SIGNED
PROJECT PROCUREMENT OFFICER**



...Inspiring a Sustainable Future

Invitation for Expression of Interest for Provision of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Surveillance and Inspection Systems

1.0 INTRODUCTION

NLNG is a leading energy company committed to driving innovation and meeting the evolving energy needs of the future through its world-class production plant on Bonny Island, Rivers State, Nigeria. The plant consists of six (6) natural gas liquefaction trains with a total capacity of twenty-two (22) million tons of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and five (5) million tons of Natural Gas Liquids (NGL) per annum. The production plant is operated by a dedicated team of operators, specialists and service providers who ensure continuous production round the clock, supported by enabling activities at all company locations.

NLNG requires a vendor to provide Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS) services to support its surveillance and inspection needs within company facilities in Bonny Island, Port Harcourt and land acquisition in Rivers State, Nigeria. NLNG hereby invites Remotely Piloted Aircraft Surveillance and Inspection Systems (RPAS) operators with experience, capacity and all regulatory permits and licences required for the provision of UAS services, to express their interest to participate in tendering for this service.

2.0 SCOPE OF WORK

The UAS service dedicated to NLNG operations is expected to provide specialised services including but not limited to:

- Pipelines Right- of-Way (RoW) Surveillance along five (5) pipeline routes (12 km, 30 km, 33 km, 42 km and 87 km in length) 5 days a week, within 90 km radius of Rumuji and Night flights on request.
- Maritime security surveillance from shore to pilot boarding station (up to 50 nautical miles).
- Inspection of Critical Plant Infrastructure viz internal maintenance inspection of tanks, flare derricks & components, chimneys, confined spaces, pipe racks, jetty trestle and under -deck inspections, building roofs, catwalks etc.
- Telecoms mast inspection and tall structure modelling.
- Underwater pipeline and structural survey.
- Aerial monitoring, data capture and analysis of remote locations, personnel and gas leaks, using multispectral and hyperspectral image sensors, environmental control and management
- Topographic mapping with spot elevation and orthophoto for asset map updates, digitisation of geospatial data, geometric survey and volumetric quantification with geo tagging and onsite coordinate alignment.
- Real time incident monitoring for search and rescue.

3.0 MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

Only companies considered to meet NLNG's pre-qualification requirements shall receive further correspondence from the Company, including receipt of invitations to tender for the services. To qualify for

consideration, interested companies are required to respond to this Expression of Interest (EOI) with the following information/documents for consideration. Failure to submit any of the under-listed documents may lead to disqualification. In addition, no entity (including its subsidiaries or affiliates) may submit more than one proposal, whether acting as a sole bidder, a lead partner, or a member of a Joint Venture. Participation in multiple bids may result in the disqualification of all proposals involving that entity.

- a. Company's Certificate of Incorporation.
- b. Complete copy of Form CAC 7 (Particulars of Directors) and/or the most recent complete Status Report issued by the CAC (or its equivalent).
- c. Complete copy of Form CAC 2 (statement of Share Capital and Return of Allotment of Shares) and/or the most recent complete Status Report issued by the CAC (or its equivalent). Please note that where a shareholder is a corporate entity, the entity's most recent complete status report, down to the level identifying all ultimate beneficial owner(s) shall be mandatorily required.
- d. Complete copy of Memorandum and Articles of Association
- e. Tax Clearance Certificate for previous three (3) years (2023, 2024, 2025).
- f. Three (3) years financial accounts audited by a licensed accountancy firm which shall be a member of a recognised institute of accountancy. Most recent accounts should not have an end of year date more than 18 months before the time of EOI.
- g. UAS Operator's Certificate (ROC)
- h. UAS End User Certificates
- i. Description and specification of UAS/Drones currently owned and operated and/or to be deployed for the service.
- j. Letter acknowledging willingness to undergo NLNG and Third-Party audits.
- k. Current/valid relevant Midstream and Downstream Oil and Gas Industry Service Permit (MDOGISP) issued by Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) for Facility Inspection & Maintenance Services (Specialised Category)
- l. Health Safety & Environment (HSE) Management System Manual.
- m. Quality Assurance/Quality policy and details of the standards to which its QA/QC processes are accredited
- n. A letter of reference/support from a bank or reputable financial institution.
- o. Details of relevant verifiable experience of RPAS service that contractor has undertaken as main contractor/UAS operator over the past five (5) years with evidence e.g., contracts, award letters, purchase orders, work completion certificates etc. Kindly indicate names and contact details of clients, location, and cost or volume of services provided with evidence.



...Inspiring a Sustainable Future

Invitation for Expression of Interest for Provision of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Surveillance and Inspection Systems

- p. Company Profile, organisational size and structure, including any parent, technical partnership, alliance, or joint venture of companies to whom they belong, together with:
 - a. CV of management team
 - b. CV of key technical personnel within the organisation available for the work.
- q. Evidence and documentation supporting compliance with the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act 2010 [See Nigerian Content Compliance section below]

4.0 NIGERIAN CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

1. Evidence of valid Category 1,2,3,4 or 5 for Consultancy Services (CS) or Quality Inspection (QS) Group NCEC demonstrating capability and capacity relevant to execute this work-scope.
2. Demonstrate willingness to carry out Human Capital Development (HCD) in compliance with the Human Capacity Development guidelines of NCDMB.
3. Documentation to demonstrate that the entity is a Nigerian- registered company. Submission of certified true copies of CAC forms 02 & 07 (or its equivalent; CAC 2.3, 2.4, 2. 5, etc.) including company Memorandum and Articles of Association. All companies shall be Nigerian Indigenous Service Companies having 51% and above Nigerian equity in the shareholding and ownership structure of tenderer's legally registered entity in Nigeria by CAMA (Companies and Allied Matters Act).
4. Evidence of registration on the NCDMB's NOGIC Joint Qualification System (JQS).
5. Evidence of registration with the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority and the office of the National Security Advisor.
6. The process and procedure that explain the methodology of how it intends to comply with the requirements of the NOGICD Act 2010 (Nigerian Content Plan) and how to achieve set target(s) in the schedule of the NOGICD Act, and any targets set by the Board.
7. Details of the company's corporate organization's overall human resources structure (management, supervisors, senior & junior skilled officers, etc.), identifying positions manned/occupied by Nigerian nationals with evidence of type of employment in-country, and identifying the positions manned/occupied by other nationals.
8. Proposed organogram for this work scope populated with nationality, qualifications of personnel and years of experience of personnel on the job (attach CV of key finance, operational and technical personnel), including a succession plan in this work scope.
9. A detailed description of the location of facilities and infrastructure (assets, equipment, technical office, and administrative space, storage, etc.) in Nigeria to support this contract, evidence that 50% of all equipment deployed to work by multinational and international companies are owned by the local subsidiaries.

5.0 CLOSING DATE

27 October 2026

6.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Submissions in response to the above requirements shall be completed strictly in accordance with the instructions given in this publication. Failure to submit any of the documents may result in the disqualification of the application.

The expression of interest documents/requirements should be submitted electronically in PDF format via link: <https://eoiportal.nlng.com/eoi-portal>. Please note that this EOI is being administered through the new NLNG EOI portal. Interested participants are required to register on the portal prior to submitting their responses. Please note that registration is free of charge. Responders are also strongly encouraged to review the user guide provided to acquaint themselves with the platform and its functionalities. Please contact the portal administrator via vendorservices@nlng.com and +234 911 223 5588 for support, if required. Submissions must be received by NLNG not later than **27 October 2026**.

Disclaimer

- a. This is not an invitation to tender. The full tendering procedure will be provided to applicants that are successful at this EOI stage, in accordance with NLNG's relevant procedures.
- b. Notwithstanding the submissions of the documents for the expression of interest, NLNG is neither committed nor obliged to include any company and/or their associated companies, agents or sub-contractors on any bid list or to award any form of contract to any company and/or its associated companies, agents or sub-contractors.
- c. Please be aware that this invitation to express interest does not guarantee that any company will be requested to submit an offer to NLNG; it does not constitute any form of agreement or contract between NLNG and any Company.
- d. NLNG shall not be responsible for any cost incurred in responding to this invitation.
- e. This advertisement for EOI shall not be construed as a commitment by NLNG, nor shall it entitle respondents to claim any indemnity from NLNG and/or any of its shareholders by virtue of having responded to this advertisement.

This is a simple invitation for interested companies to express their interest in the indicated work scopes and does not warrant any further feedback from NLNG hereafter. If you do not hear from NLNG within three (3) months of submission to this publication, please assume that your application deadline was not successful.

Birthday Congratulations

I warmly celebrate and congratulate you, Prophet **Dr. Amb. Oladipupo Babatunde Okeyomi, JP**, on the occasion of your birthday.

Your years of dedicated service in the security sector, business leadership and ministry reflect a life committed to protecting lives, building institutions and serving humanity.

As you mark another year, I pray that God grants you greater wisdom, good health, strength and abundant grace to continue your impactful work.

May the years ahead bring you greater accomplishments, fulfilment and divine favour.

Happy Birthday.

Signed
Hon. Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo
Minister of Interior



32 passengers, crew aboard, wreckage found in Ondo coastal community

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

The most prominent crash of 2021 occurred on May 21, when a NAF King Air 350 crashed near Kaduna International Airport, killing all 11 people aboard, including the then Chief of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. Ibrahim Attahiru.

The Accident Investigation Bureau and the NAF subsequently conducted a joint investigation into the accident, with the interim report submitted to the Chief of Air Staff in September 2021.

On July 18, another NAF Alpha Jet was lost after it was shot down in Zamfara State. Its pilot survived after ejecting from the aircraft.

Thus, 2021 accounted for 20 deaths or presumed deaths, making it the deadliest year in the period under review.

The following year, a NAF Super Mushshak trainer aircraft crashed in Kaduna on April 19, killing its two pilots.

Military aviation losses continued in 2023, when an FT-7NI trainer aircraft crashed in Makurdi, Benue State, in July. The pilots survived.

A month later, an NAF MI-

171 helicopter carrying out a casualty evacuation mission crashed at Chukuba village in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State. Eleven people died, making it one of the deadliest military aviation accidents in the period.

The third qualifying crash that year involved an NAF MI-35P helicopter, which was lost shortly after take-off from the NAF Base in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, in December. The five crew members survived.

The review records an aircraft loss involving an NAF Alpha Jet in 2025, during a post-inspection functional check flight. However, the pilots ejected safely.

In January 2026, before yesterday's Ondo accident, the military also lost a CH-4B unmanned aircraft during a surveillance operation in Niger State but no human life was lost.

The ATR-42 crash became the 16th military aircraft crash or aircraft loss in the review period.

The human cost of the crashes has been substantial. The recorded fatalities before the Ondo incident comprise one

death in 2018, six in 2019, 20 deaths in 2021, two in 2022 and 11 in 2023.

That produces 38 confirmed deaths, while the two Alpha Jet pilots who disappeared in March 2021 bring the figure to 40 when presumed deaths are included.

The Ondo crash is not included in that figure.

The latest accident has renewed questions about the safety of military aviation operations, particularly the maintenance, airworthiness and operational deployment of aircraft used for combat, surveillance, transport and other missions.

The concern is heightened by the recurrence of crashes involving different categories of aircraft rather than a single platform, with the decade's losses spanning fighter jets, attack helicopters, transport aircraft, training aircraft and unmanned systems.

Reacting to the latest crash, the Executive Director of the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), Auwal Musa Rafsanjani, told *The Guardian* that the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC DISPLAY EXERCISE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FOR THE PROPOSED 10KM CRUDE OIL EXPORT PIPELINE PROJECT AT EMOHUA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE BY EAST WEST ATLANTIC PIPELINE LIMITED

In accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act CAP E12 LFN 2004, which makes it mandatory for proponents of all new major developmental activities to carry out EIA for their proposed projects, the Federal Ministry of Environment hereby announces twenty-one (21) working days public display for information and comments on the draft EIA report submitted by East West Atlantic Pipeline Limited.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed project entails the construction and installation of a 10km crude oil export pipeline from EOP Emohua Field to the Ibaa manifold which include clearing of Right of Way, trenching, welding and coating of pipe joints and installation of pipe floaters, flushing, pigging and hydro-testing of the pipeline, installation of cathodic protection system, laying of pipeline, backfilling of the pipeline trench amongst others located in Emohua Local Government Area, Rivers State.

THE DISPLAY CENTERS ARE:

- Emohua Local Government Area Headquarters, Emohua, Rivers State
- Rivers State Ministry of Environment, Port Harcourt.
- Federal Ministry of Environment office, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- Federal Ministry of Environment, Environmental Assessment Department, Environment House, Independence Way South, Central Business District, Abuja - F.C.T.
- www.ead.gov.ng

DURATION OF DISPLAY:

Date: 2nd – 30th October, 2026

Time: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm Daily.

ALL COMMENTS SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE HONOURABLE MINISTER, FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT HEADQUARTERS, MABUSHI, ABUJA – FCT AND VIA info@ead.gov.ng ON OR BEFORE 6TH OCTOBER, 2026.

**SIGNED
PERMANENT SECRETARY
FOR: HONOURABLE MINISTER**

SHIPPING MASTER

QUALIFICATION / EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

- Bachelor's degree in Marine Engineering, Nautical Science, Shipping Management, Logistics, Business Administration or any other relevant field. Relevant post-graduate qualifications or professional maritime certifications, e.g Master Mariner or equivalent.
- Minimum of 15 years significant hands-on experience in shipping, vessel operations and/or commercial maritime management, with at least 8 years spent in a senior management role overseeing fleets or vessel operations.
- Proven experience in the day-to-day management of vessels, with particular expertise in Oil Barging Vessels (tank barges, product tankers or similar petroleum logistics assets).
- Strong knowledge of maritime regulations, ISM Code, ISPS Code, SOLAS, MARPOL, flag-state and port-state control requirements, and oil & gas HSE standards.
- People management experience, including proven ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams (shore, technical, commercial and shore-based staff) and develop talent.
- Strong analytical, leadership, negotiation and communication skills.
- Ability to handle the pressure of working in a dynamic, high-risk and result-oriented environment typical of oil logistics operations.
- Experience in establishing and building strong collaborative partnerships with charterers, terminals, agents, classification societies, regulators and other key

HIGH-FLYING SHIPPING PROFESSIONAL NEEDED IN OIL & GAS

We are a leading Maritime and Oil Logistics Operator in Africa, in search of a very senior Shipping Master with remarkable experience in vessel operations, particularly Oil Barging. The prospect should be well-rounded in business areas including operations, HSE, commercial management and fleet administration. The Company is seeking to recruit a candidate who is currently in a similar role with a proven track record.

We are reputed for above Industry remunerations and conditions of service.

stakeholders.

- Proven track record of achieving operational targets, cost control, vessel utilisation and delivering profitable growth.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide day-to-day management and operational oversight of the Company's fleet of vessels, with primary focus on Oil Barging Vessels engaged in the transportation of petroleum products.
- Ensure all vessels under management operate safely, efficiently and in full compliance with international maritime conventions, flag-state regulations, class requirements and company HSE policies.
- Develop and execute shipping and fleet operational strategies that drive vessel utilisation, cost efficiency,

customer satisfaction and revenue growth.

- Design and implement operational plans, voyage schedules, maintenance programmes and crew manning strategies for the oil barging fleet.
- Lead and develop the operations and vessel management team to deliver exceptional performance, high safety standards and profitable growth.
- Set comprehensive operational, safety, commercial and financial goals for the fleet and monitor performance against KPIs.
- Evaluate vessel and team performance by analysing and interpreting operational data, voyage reports, bunker consumption, off-hire statistics and other key metrics.
- Participate in expansion activities

including fleet acquisition, newbuilding projects, charter-in/out decisions and strategic alliances.

- Represent the Company in negotiations with charterers, oil majors, terminals, agents, classification societies, insurers, regulators and other key contacts to secure the most effective commercial and operational terms.
- Manage relationships with technical managers, crewing agents, bunker suppliers, shipyards, surveyors and other service providers.
- Identify and explore new commercial opportunities, trade routes and optimised deployment strategies for the oil barging fleet.
- Ensure robust emergency response, incident investigation and continuous improvement processes are in place and effectively executed.

MODE OF APPLICATION

Qualified candidates should e-mail their resume, possibly with a scanned passport photograph, within 2 weeks of this publication to career.shippingprofessionals@gmail.com. All applications will be treated in confidence and only short-listed candidates will be contacted.



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) - PROVISION OF SERVICE

Sector: Agricultural Research

Expression of Interest: Design, Development, and Deployment of Project Data Measurement and Learning System (PDMALS) for I-Youth 2.0.

Reference ID: IITA/E08/09_26

The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) is a not-for-profit institution that generates agricultural innovations to address Africa's most pressing challenges, including hunger, malnutrition, poverty, and natural resource degradation. Working with various partners across Sub-Saharan Africa, IITA improves livelihoods, enhances food and nutrition security, increases employment, and preserves natural resource integrity. IITA is a member of CGIAR, a global agriculture research partnership for a food-secure future. Please visit <http://www.iita.org/> for more information on IITA.

Objectives

This request for expression of interest follows IITA's procurement procedures and is intended to engage a qualified and experienced organization capable of designing, building, deploying, integrating, securing, and supporting an enterprise-grade Project Data Measurement and Learning System.

IITA intends to establish PDMALS as the authoritative digital system of record for I-Youth 2.0. The platform will integrate operational data capture, participant lifecycle management, measurement, learning, geospatial information, dashboards, and reporting within a secure, scalable environment. It must work in low-connectivity settings, interoperate with existing and future digital tools, and remain configurable as Program requirements evolve.

IITA invites eligible and reputable firms to express their interest in providing the services. Further details on the required services are available via the QR code below or at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/DataManagement-TOR>.



Detailed Terms of Reference will be shared with the shortlisted vendors via a Request for Proposal/Quotation (RFP/Q).

Terms and Conditions for Pre-Qualification

Interested service providers must submit relevant information demonstrating their qualifications and capacity to undertake the services. The following documents are mandatory for consideration:

Mandatory Requirements

1. A cover letter expressing interest in the assignment and confirming availability for the proposed period.
2. Company/consortium profile, legal registration details, ownership/lead entity, years in operation, and contact information (office locations, telephone numbers, and email addresses).
3. Proposed key personnel matrix and CVs of key experts, showing role, qualifications, years of experience, and comparable assignments.
4. Relevant Experience: Provide verifiable evidence of at least five highly relevant comparable assignments completed within the last seven years, stating client, country, scope, scale/users, technologies, implementation period, contract value range (optional where confidential), status, and client reference/contact.
5. Certificate of incorporation/registration with the relevant corporate regulatory body, e.g., Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), and relevant licenses/certifications.
6. Evidence of relevant certifications/partnerships where applicable (e.g., cloud, security, database, project management, BI)
7. Reference letters from a minimum of three (3) reputable organizations for comparable work.
8. Disclosure of any proposed subcontractors/sub-processors and the functions they would perform.
9. High-level implementation schedule confirming ability to deliver the core system within the required timeframe.
10. Audited Financial statements for the last three years (2023, 2024 and 2025)
11. Valid Income Tax Clearance Certificate for the last three years (2023, 2024, and 2025).

Shortlisting of firms will be based on compliance with the above requirements and in line with IITA's procurement guidelines.

Submission Details:

Deadline: Monday, 12th October 2026; 4:30 PM (WAT)

Mode of Submission:

Soft copy of the expressions of interest (EOI) must be emailed to iita-hqprocurement@cgiar.org. Titled "**Expression of Interest for the Provision of Service-Data Management**".

NAF launches search, rescue, yet to disclose death toll

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33

incident highlighted the need to scrutinise the safety and airworthiness of military aircraft.

He said: "It is really important to look at the safety of the pilots, the passengers and the people, as well as the authenticity or correctness of the aircraft itself. Sometimes people are concerned that some of these aircraft are outdated."

He called for more rigorous maintenance and pre-flight checks, saying the government must ensure that aircraft deployed for operations were properly maintained and certified as fit to fly.

"It all comes down to the issue of effective governance and safety in Nigeria. The government must take everything necessary to save lives and protect property and facilities by ensuring that due diligence is done for any aircraft that will fly in Nigeria," he said.

Bureau: NAF must invite NSIB before it can investigate

THE Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB) has said the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) must formally invite it before it can participate in the investigation of yesterday's ATR-42 aircraft crash in

Igbokoda, Ondo State.

The Bureau, however, offered to provide investigators and technical support, including assistance with the recovery and analysis of flight data and cockpit voice recordings from the aircraft.

The ATR-42, which the NAF said was on a routine mission from Benin to Lagos, crashed in the Igbokoda area.

The NAF said search and rescue operations were immediately activated.

In a statement by its Director-General/Chief Executive Officer, Captain Alex Badeh Jr., the NSIB said the investigation of the accident rests with the military because the aircraft involved was a military aircraft.

The Bureau said: "This occurrence involves a military aircraft. In line with the NSIB Establishment Act, 2022, and with established international practice, the investigation of military aviation accidents rests with the military authority."

"The NSIB does not investigate military accidents unless formally invited to do so by that authority."

The Bureau said it was ready to assist the Air Force if requested, including

through the deployment of investigators and the use of its Flight Safety Laboratory for flight data and cockpit voice recorder recovery and readout.

The NSIB also expressed condolences to the Nigerian Air Force and the families and colleagues of those involved in the incident, while commending first responders and rescue teams at the crash site.

The Bureau urged the public to rely on official updates from the NAF concerning the rescue operation and any subsequent investigation.

The circumstances that led to the crash also remain unclear, with authorities yet to disclose its cause.

Aiyedatiwa mobilises emergency agencies after military aircraft crash in Ondo

ONDO State Governor, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, has mobilised emergency response agencies following the crash of a Nigerian Air Force aircraft in Igbokoda, headquarters of Ilaje Local Government Area of the state, yesterday.

Aiyedatiwa expressed sadness over the incident and sympathised with the Chief of Air Staff, the Nigerian Air Force and the families of personnel and passengers on board the aircraft.

In a statement issued by his Chief Press Secretary, Ebenezer Adeniyi, the governor said he had been in contact with the leadership of the Nigerian Air Force, Ilaje Local Government Chairman, Maurice Oripelaye, and security agencies at the scene.

He directed the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Ministry of Health and relevant security agencies to immediately mobilise and provide logistical and human support to the Nigerian Air Force and other emergency responders involved in the search and rescue operation.

Aiyedatiwa also ordered security agencies to cordon off and secure the crash site to facilitate smooth and unhindered rescue operations.

The governor urged residents of Igbokoda and neighbouring communities to remain calm and cooperate with emergency responders.

The statement said the state government would continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as more information became available from the Nigerian Air Force.

Aiyedatiwa also prayed for the safety of the officers involved and the success of the rescue operation.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Our Company, a growing fintech and payment solutions company, is expanding its team and invites qualified, driven and results-oriented professionals to join us across key business, commercial, finance, sales and customer-facing functions.

AVAILABLE POSITIONS:

Head of Sales and Strategic Partnerships

Locations: Abuja
Lead business growth, revenue generation, partnerships and commercial strategy. **10+ years'** relevant experience with a strong record in business development, sales or commercial leadership, at least 5+ years in financial technology sales.

Business Development /Growth/ Sales Managers

Locations: Abuja | Lagos | Benin/Warri | Port Harcourt | Ibadan | Kano
Drive customer acquisition, merchant development, sales performance and market expansion. **5+ years'** relevant experience in sales, business development, fintech, payments or related sectors.

Accountant / Finance Manager

Locations: Abuja
Manage financial operations, reporting, reconciliations, budgeting, compliance and controls. **5+ years'** relevant experience, preferably within fintech, financial services or a regulated environment. Professional accounting qualification (ICAN/ACCA) or at least Final Stage, with one paper to finish.

Direct Sales Agents

Locations: Nationwide
Drive customer acquisition, product adoption and field sales activities. Strong communication, persuasion and target-driven ability required. Previous sales experience is an advantage.

GTM / Merchant Acquisition Agents Freelance

Locations: Nationwide
Identify and onboard new merchants to our platform. Ideal for individuals with strong community, business or market connections and the ability to generate merchant leads and drive sign-ups.

Performance-based job

Social Media Manager / Customer Support

Locations: Abuja
Manage digital engagement, social media presence and customer interactions while supporting timely resolution of customer enquiries. Strong communication, digital and customer-service skills required.

TO APPLY: Send your CV to career@fairsurepayment.com.ng with the **position and preferred location** as the email subject.

14 YEAR 10n APPRECIATION



As we mark one year since the passing of our dearly beloved father, **Rev. Dr. Uma Ukpai**, the Uma Ukpai family remains profoundly grateful for the extraordinary love, honour and support shown to us over the past year.

From the time of his homegoing and throughout this first year of remembrance, we have been deeply strengthened by your prayers, visits, messages, phone calls, generous support, kind words, tributes and continued expressions of love to our family.

We extend our special appreciation to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR; former President Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR; the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, His Excellency, Pastor Umo Eno; the Governor of Abia State, His Excellency, Dr. Alex Otti; former Governor of Akwa Ibom State, His Excellency, Mr. Udom Emmanuel; alongside fellow Governors; members of the National and State Assemblies; Federal and State Executive Councils; the Diplomatic Corps; past and present political office holders; local government chairmen; and traditional rulers.

We also sincerely appreciate the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), church leaders, ministers of God, friends, associates, organisations, sons and daughters of the ministry, and well-wishers who have continued to honour his memory and stand with our family.

We specially thank the Rev Dr Uma Ukpai Burial Planning Committee (Inner Caucus) for their selfless contribution and tireless support to the family.

One year on, his voice is still speaking. His message continues to inspire. His impact remains, and his legacy lives on.

As we remember him with thanksgiving, we are comforted by the knowledge that a life devoted to the service of God and humanity continues to bear fruit long after departure.

To everyone who has walked this journey with us, thank you for remembering with us. Thank you for standing with us. Thank you for helping to keep his legacy alive.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Pastor Dr. Philomena O. Uma
For the Uma Ukpai Family





NNPC

nigerian agip
exploration

NIGERIAN AGIP EXPLORATION (OPERATOR)
NIGERIAN NATIONAL PETROLEUM COMPANY LIMITED
SHELL NIGERIA EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION COMPANY LIMITED
(CO-VENTURE PARTNERS)

TENDER OPPORTUNITY
PROVISION OF LARGE TUBULAR (EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES) FOR THE OFF-
SHORE NIGERIA ZABAZABA & ETAN DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

NipeX Ref.No.:1000008482

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigerian Agip Exploration Limited (hereinafter referred to as "NAE"), hereby invites reputable Operators to apply to be considered for inclusion in the bid list for the proposed contract for provision of large tubulars (36" x 2" X56 Conductor Pipes, 20" 129,29 ppf X56 Surface Casings, plus other Equipment and Services) through the NipeX portal.

The proposed contract term shall be fixed for a period of Three (3) years, with Two (2) successive options to extend for an additional two (2) years for each option. One (1) single contract will be awarded at the end of the tender exercise to the lowest technically accepted responsive applicant.

2. SCOPE OF WORK

The scope under this tender, requests the Contractor to supply Large-Size Tubulars in accordance with the STAP-138-S and Project Specifications including consumables and spares parts, vehicles, qualified personnel, technical assistance and documentation necessary to carry out the scope.

The services shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Personnel (including operators, welders etc.);
- Supply of Equipment, (Connections, Connectors and welding including Conductor pipes, Surface Casing, Drive Shoe, Float Shoe, etc.);
- Handling Equipment
- Marking;
- Inspection;
- Documentation.

In addition to the applicable general requirements listed in "STAP-138-S Large Tubular (36" x 2" X56 Conductor Pipe and 20" 129,29 ppf X56 Surface Casing both with maximum length of 12.95m for each joint installed protector included)", Contractor shall also prepare and submit the necessary detailed technical studies/reports and other documentation as directed by Company.

Specifically, Contractor shall:

- Manufacture, test and deliver tubulars and accessories according to Company instruction.
- Supply Company on the initial delivery date, the required quantities of Large Tubulars and spare parts according to the scheduled delivery plan.
- Ensure that technical data sheets, including safe handling recommendations, are available for all products delivered.
- Deliver additional spare parts to the best of its ability in the event Company requires emergency delivery of such items.

Further details to be found in the Technical Specification attached to the ITT. The ITT is expected to be launched by Fourth quarter of 2026 and contract issued by Second quarter of 2027.

3. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- a. To be eligible for this tender exercise, interested Contractors are required to be pre-qualified with live status by advert closing date in the **1.01.04-Casing, Tubing Liner, Connectors and Accessories (OCTG) or 2.01.01 - Pipes and Tubes- All Categories except the uncategorized**, in NipeX Joint Qualification System (NJQS) database. All successfully pre-qualified suppliers in this category will receive Invitation to Technical Tender (ITT).
- b. To determine if you are pre-qualified and to view the product/service category you are listed for: visit <https://vms.nipex.org/login> and access NJQS using your log in details. Click on the 'Subscription' tab on the left-hand side of the dashboard to view your status and click on the 'Product Code' tab to view your registered product codes.
- c. If you are not listed in a product/service category and you are certified by Nigerian Up stream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) to do business in this category, contact NipeX office at Post Square building, 1-3 (Building B) Ologun Agbaje Street, oft Adeola Odeku Street Victoria Island, Lagos customersupport@nipex.com.ng, 08032850332, 0903845285 with your NUPRC certificate as evidence for verification and necessary update.
- d. To initiate the NJQS pre-qualification process, access <http://www.nipex-ng.com>, click on the 'Registration' tab, and select 'Start NipeX New Vendor Registration Here'.
- e. To be eligible, all tenders must comply with the Nigerian Content requirements in the NipeX system.

4. TENDER MINIMUM REQUIREMENT

- a) Compliance with Technical Specification No. STAP-138-S and project specification;
- b) Delivery to Port Harcourt / Onne Base (to be defined by Company) no later than 12 months from call off;

5. NIGERIAN CONTENT REQUIREMENT

Contractor must ensure full compliance with Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Act 2010 (NOGICD Act) April 2010. Please note the following: Bidders that do not meet the Nigerian Content criterion will not be allowed to participate in next Tender Stage.

Pursuant to enactment of the NOGICD Act, the minimum Nigerian Content in any project, service or product specification to be executed in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry shall be consistent with the level set in the schedule of the Act and any other target as may be directed by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB).

Bidders are invited to express complete understanding and willingness to comply with the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act 2010.

Pursuant to the above, bidders' submissions shall be evaluated strictly with the minimum evaluation criteria defined in the NOGICD Act provisions/Schedule. Only bidders whose submissions are in compliance shall proceed to the next stage of the tendering process.

The following are some of the Nigerian Content requirements bidders are expected to comply with in their technical bid submission:

- a. Provision of detailed description of all work bidders will accomplish using Nigerian Resources (Labour, Materials & Services).
- b. Provision of current and in-place organization structure with detailed experience and skills of key management personnel with names. Provide evidence (personnel list and positions with organization chart to substantiate) of percentage of management that are Nigerian Nationals and the percentage of the total workforce that are Nigerians.
- c. Detailed past experience/present commitment to staff training and development of Nigerian personnel. Furnish details of training plans for Nigerians specific to this scope of work.
- d. Nigerian Content Plan with detailed description of the role, work scope, man-hours and responsibilities of all Nigerian companies and personnel that are involved in executing the service.
- e. State any further innovative proposals that would enhance the development of Nigerian Content for the Project.
- f. Details of Company ownership and shareholding structure with certified true copies of CAC forms CO2 and CO7, including company memorandum & article of association and other evidence of entity's incorporation.
- g. Comprehensive description of company's Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) policies together with the programmes and HSE management system.
- h. Community Affairs policies together with programmes and records of community matters handled for the past three years.
- i. Annual financial report and relevant funding information from a licensed accounting firm for the last three (3) years.
- j. Record of experience of similar jobs performed within the last five (5) years.
- k. Description of equipment currently owned by company that will aid the execution of the service. Proof of offices, workshop, warehouse, spare parts, resources and other support facilities.
- l. Copy of Nigerian Content Equipment Certification.
- m. Evidence of company Ownership Structure form CO2 and CO7, registration on NOG IC JQS and NUPRC certificate.
- n. Evidence of what percentage of your key management positions is held by Nigerians and what percentage of the total workforce are Nigerians. Also, show overall percentage of work to be performed in Nigeria and those by Nigerian resources relative to total work volume.
- o. Comply with the latest approved version of NCDMB HCD guideline by committing (via a letter of undertaking) to providing Project-Specific training, man-hour, budget, skill development and understudy plan for Nigerian personnel utilizing OGIAN registered trainer(s) or other approved NCDMB training institution(s).
- p. Evidence of either of the under-listed NCEC demonstrating ownership of in-country facility to support this contract:
 Manufacturing and Related Services NCEC for in-country manufacturing of line pipes.
 Manufacturing and Related services NCEC for Pipe coating.
 Manufacturing and Related NCEC for OCTGs, tubulars, connectors, casings or pipe threading.
- q. Project-specific organogram showing Names and Nationalities of all key personnel that will execute the work scope for this service.

6. CLOSING DATE

Only tenderers who are registered with NJQS Product/Service category **1.01.04-Casing, Tubing Liner, Connectors and Accessories (OCTG) or 2.01.01 - Pipes and Tubes- All Categories except the uncategorized**, as of 16.00 hours Tuesday, 20th October 2026 being the advert closing date, shall be invited to submit Technical Bids.

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

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

ES/NCDMB/UPD/NAE-DA-101151/070926/

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Broadcasters urged to verify contents, contexts in AI age

By Sunday Aikulola

EXECUTIVE Director/Chief Executive Officer, Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism (WSCIJ), Motunrayo Alaka, has urged broadcast professionals to verify contents and contexts to address misinformation and disinformation. Speaking at the third yearly national conference of the Society of Nigerian Broadcasters (SNB) held in Bauchi State, she observed misinformation is attacking truth, and truth is struggling to catch up.

Themed, 'Responsible broadcasting in an election year: Countering misinformation, promoting peace and strengthening democracy,' Alaka argued information environment is becoming more complex.

Saying technology is making the production and circulation of false information easier, she added the regula-

tory environment is demanding greater professionalism while generating important debates about the boundaries of regulation and media freedom.

Speaking further, she called for broadcasters who will follow the money, question official version, examine regulatory failure, investigate abuse of power, expose exploitation and return to stories after the headlines have disappeared.

To her, broadcasting remains so powerful despite the

extraordinary disruption brought by digital media because it can reach people where they are.

She observed, "a farmer can listen to radio; a trader can listen while working; a driver can hear discussion on the road; a young person can watch programme on a phone; a community can gather around a radio set; a family can watch television together. Broadcasting can bring information to people across levels of literacy, geography, language and income.

This makes broadcasting one of the most accessible communication technologies ever created."

Alaka also referred to the broadcaster as a bridge— a bridge between citizens and institutions; between policy and lived experience; between power and accountability; between conflict and dialogue; between information and understanding; between the present and the historical memory of a people and ultimately, between the citizen and democracy.

She further highlighted five ways broadcasters can be socially responsible:

She advised, "first, verify before you air, particularly when a story confirms what you already believe. The most persuasive misinformation is often the claim that fits neatly into an existing political, ethnic, religious or ideological narrative. That is precisely when professional scepticism becomes most important. Fact-checking organisations can support newsroom verification, but verification

must ultimately remain a newsroom discipline."

Second, she suggested, "protect your people (journalists) in the field. Every station sending reporters, correspondents, camera operators or producers into the field during this election cycle should have a documented safety protocol. It should include communication and check-in arrangements, emergency contacts, legal support, basic risk assessment and clear guidance on when a journalist should withdraw. Safety should be treated as part of the cost of professional journalism."

She noted, "give citizens meaningful access to information about political choices. Fairness is more than allocating airtime. It means giving citizens enough information to understand candidates, their records, their policies, their priorities and their plans. It means asking comparable questions of people seeking comparable offices, examining manifestoes, checking claims, allowing candidates to respond and helping audiences distinguish political promises from demonstrated evidence."



Participants at the conference

Nigeria @ 66: BON reiterates commitment to balanced information, sustaining democratic culture

By Sunday Aikulola

AS the nation commemorates 66th independence anniversary, members of the Broadcasting Organisations of Nigeria (BON) have restated commitment to balanced information and sustaining democratic culture.

BON Executive Secretary, Yemisi Bamgbose, noted the broadcast industry remains steadfast in driving the nation's economic and democratic advancement despite severe operational challenges.

Describing the broadcast media as bedrock of democracy and economic growth, he, however, observed the industry is grappling with high energy costs and heavy dependence on imported equipment sourced with foreign exchange.

Speaking further, he said the organisation reiterated its commitment to promoting unity, equity, justice, and accountability, while continuing to provide accurate and balanced information Nigerians can trust amid rising fake news and disinformation.

In conclusion, Bamgbose added, "BON also commended the Federal Government and security agencies — the Military, Police, DSS and others — for their sustained efforts and sacrifices to restore security across the country."

LAIF partners The Loeries to strengthen governance, technical capability

By Sunday Aikulola

THE Lagos Advertising and Ideas Festival (LAIF), West Africa's premier celebration of advertising, design, and creative craft, has entered into a strategic partnership with The Loeries, a leading creative awards body in Africa and the Middle East, to strengthen the technical governance, rigour and regional relevance of its award judging process.

The collaboration is expected to enhance the framework for evaluating entries and jury decisions, further positioning LAIF to reflect the growing quality and ambition of creative work emerging from Nigeria and West Africa.

According to the Board Chair of the

Lagos Advertising and Ideas Festival (LAIF) Management Board, Funke Adekola, the partnership with The Loeries underscores a deliberate step in LAIF's journey to strengthen its standards and ensure the festival continues to evolve in line with the expectations of the creative industry.

Adekola explained that LAIF has, the past two decades, provided a platform for Nigerian and West African creativity to be recognised and celebrated, adding that the partnership would build on that foundation by ensuring LAIF in its practice is not isolated form best-in-class standards that creative works enjoy globally and also strengthening the processes through which creative work is evaluated and awarded at LAIF.

To her, "LAIF has always been about celebrating the boldest and most impactful ideas coming out of our industry. As we look to the future, we also have a responsibility to ensure that the processes behind that recognition continue to evolve. Our partnership with The Loeries is a deliberate step in that direction, bringing together two institutions with a shared commitment to creativity, excellence, and credible judging."

In his remarks, the President of the Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria (AAAN), Lanre Adisa, noted that the partnership with The Loeries provides an opportunity to elevate the creative process to global standards within one of Africa's most dynamic creative markets. Adisa

noted that credible judging processes are central to the integrity of any creative awards platform, adding that LAIF is pleased to tap into this unique opportunity as it strengthens its judging framework and builds on its two-decade history of celebrating creativity in West Africa.

He added, "we are pleased to partner with The Loeries at this important stage of our journey. The strength of any creative awards platform rests on the quality and credibility of its judging process. More importantly, we look forward to seeing the work that emerges from Nigeria and the wider West African creative community recognized through a process that reflects the ambition and quality of the industry."

Indigo, others shine at Edge Awards

By Sunday Aikulola

INTTEGRATED Indigo Limited, one of the nation's leading marketing communications consultancy firms, and its clients bagged thirteen awards across public relations, corporate communications, sustainability, reputation management, digital commerce, mobility, and corporate affairs.

Integrated Indigo received the Leadership Award in PR (Corporate), while the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Bolaji Abimbola, was honoured as the Outstanding PR Personality of the Decade. The PR campaign, 'From

Lafarge to HBM: A New Chapter,' handled by Indigo for HBM Nigeria Plc, was adjudged PR Campaign of the Year (Corporate).

In his speech, Abimbola noted that the breadth of the recognitions demonstrate the impact of strategic communications in helping organisations strengthen their reputation, communicate their value, and engage meaningfully with stakeholders.

To him, "this is a significant recognition for Integrated Indigo and, more importantly, for the people and partnerships behind the work we do. To see our agency, our clients, and professionals across our

client portfolio recognised across such a broad range of categories is a testament to the quality, creativity, and strategic thinking that go into our work. We are proud of the relationships we have built with our clients and the opportunity to support them in telling their stories, strengthening their reputations, and communicating their impact."

The Edge Awards also recognised several executives, brands, and campaigns across the agency's client portfolio, including HBM Nigeria, Nigerian Bottling Company, Glovo, and InDrive. Group Managing Director/Chief Executive

Officer of HBM Nigeria, Lolu Alade-Akinyemi, received the EDGE Excellence in Sustainable Manufacturing Leadership award.

The Director of Communications, Public Affairs & Sustainable Development, Viola Graham-Douglas, and Head of Communications, Brand & Events, Ginika Frank-Durugbor, were named the Corporate Affairs Professional of the Year and the Reputation Management Professional of the Year.

The Corporate Affairs and Sustainability Director at Coca-Cola HBC, Soromidayo George, was named Chief Sustainability Officer of the

Year. In the same vein, Samuel Iboroma, Senior Manager, External Communications, at Nigerian Bottling Company Plc, received the Corporate Communications Professional of the Year award.

Also recognised were the Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications, and Sustainability, Unilever Nigeria Plc, Zainab Obagun, as the Outstanding Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Communications Personality of the Year, and the Head of Integrated & Corporate Communications.

Politics & Policy

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Can popular candidates withstand federal might in 2027?

The defeat of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the August 15 governorship election in Osun State has rekindled self-belief that popular support, performance and strong local political structures can be a 'federal might', TUNDE BODUNRIN reports.

THE Osun State gubernatorial result has provided a fresh reference point in the long-running debate over 'federal might' in Nigerian elections. Governor Ademola Adeleke's victory over the APC candidate, Bola Oyebamiji, despite the ruling party's formidable national structure, suggests that control of the centre does not automatically guarantee victory at the state level.

Adeleke polled 511,067 votes against Oyebamiji's 444,815, winning 19 of the state's 30 local government areas, while the APC candidate secured 11.

The significance of the election, however, may lie less in the result itself than in what it says about the limits of federal influence. The APC had mobilised its national structure for the contest, yet the party failed to reclaim the state.

The outcome has consequently raised a broader question ahead of 2027: can an incumbent, or a candidate backed by a popular governor, withstand the organisational and institutional advantages enjoyed by the party controlling the centre?

That question will be tested across several states and legislative districts next year.

In some cases, serving opposition governors will personally defend their mandates against APC challengers. In others, the contest will be about whether governors can transfer their political capital to preferred successors. At the National Assembly level, sitting legislators and former governors will also test the strength of their personal networks against candidates backed by the ruling party.

Otti's Abia test

ONE of the clearest tests will be in Abia, where Governor Alex Otti of the Labour Party is seeking a second term against APC candidate Eric Opah.

Otti, elected in 2023, will seek to persuade voters that his administration's record warrants another term, while the APC will seek to convince Abia voters that its candidate offers a more compelling alternative.

Unlike Osun, the Abia contest will not involve an incumbent seeking re-election after changing parties. The central issue will be whether Otti's personal popularity and assessment of his administration can withstand the organisational strength of an APC that controls the Federal Government.

The contest could therefore provide another indication of whether the political capital accumulated by an incumbent can outweigh the advantages associated with the party at the centre.

Oyo presents a different but equally significant test.

Governor Seyi Makinde cannot seek a third term after completing the two terms permitted by the Constitution. The contest is therefore not about his personal re-election but whether his political standing and the record of his administration can help his preferred successor, Abimbola Adeganmbi of the Allied Peoples Movement (APM), withstand the APC's Senator Sharafadeen Alli.

APM adopted Adeganmbi as its consensus governorship candidate in May, while the APC formally unveiled Alli as its candidate in July.

The Oyo election could consequently become an important test of political succession. Can the popularity of an outgoing governor be transferred to another candidate?

The question is more complicated than the Osun example because voters will not be choosing Makinde directly. Adeganmbi will have to persuade the electorate that continuity under a new candidate is preferable to a change of government.

Alli, meanwhile, brings his own political profile and experience as the sitting senator representing Oyo South, as well as the structure of the APC.

The contest could therefore reveal whether the decisive factor is the

outgoing governor's popularity, the successor's strength, the organisation of the parties, or voters' assessment of eight years of government.

Bauchi: Bala's succession test

A similar test is unfolding in Bauchi, where Governor Bala Mohammed of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) is also approaching the end of his constitutionally permitted two terms.

Like Makinde in Oyo, Mohammed cannot seek a third term, making the 2027 contest a test not of his personal popularity but of his ability to transfer his political capital to a successor.

The Bauchi governor has built a significant political profile within the state and nationally, while the PDP remains the dominant political platform in the state. The challenge, however, will be whether that influence can survive a change of candidate in an election in which the APC is expected to leverage its control of the Federal Government.

The question is particularly important because the strength of a governor's political structure is not necessarily the same as the popularity of his preferred successor. A candidate who inherits an incumbent's machinery must still establish a personal connection with voters and convince them that continuity is preferable to change.

Bauchi will therefore provide another opportunity to test whether the political influence of a two-term governor can extend beyond the incumbent's personality.

Put alongside Oyo, the two states could offer an important comparison: whether governors who cannot seek re-election can turn their records, structures and relationships with voters into electoral advantages for their chosen successors.

For Makinde and Mohammed, therefore, the 2027 election is not simply about who wins the governorship. It is also about whether political capital can be inherited.

Legislative battles

THE same struggle between personal political capital and party machinery will extend beyond the governorship contests.

In the Federal Capital Territory, Senator Ireti Kingibe of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) is seeking another term against former senator Philip Tanimu Aduda of the APC.

Aduda represented the FCT in the Senate from 2011 to 2023 before losing the seat to Kingibe. He later left the Peoples Democratic Party and moved towards the APC.

The contest has acquired an additional political dimension following comments by FCT Minister Nyesom Wike that Kingibe would

not return to the Senate. Kingibe has

rejected the suggestion that any individual can determine the choice of FCT voters.

For Kingibe, the election will test whether her record as a sitting senator and her relationship with voters can sustain her against an experienced challenger backed by the APC structure.

The FCT contest also presents a distinctive dimension to the "federal might" argument because it is taking place in the nation's political capital, where national political interests are particularly pronounced.

IN Kogi Central, Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) faces former Governor Yahaya Bello of the APC in another closely watched senatorial contest.

Akpoti-Uduaghan is the sitting senator seeking re-election, while Bello is seeking a return to the Senate after two terms as governor.

The contest will pit legislative incumbency and the senator's record against the political network and experience of a former governor.

It is, however, more complex than a simple contest between the two prominent contenders, as other candidates are also in the race. The distribution of votes among the parties could therefore prove decisive.

For Akpoti-Uduaghan, the question is whether her representation can translate into sufficient local support for another term. For Bello, the question is whether the political structure associated with his years in the Government House can translate into a Senate victory.

IN Bauchi Central, incumbent Senator AbdulNingi of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) will face the APC's Misau Isah Hama in a contest that adds another dimension to the federal might debate.

Ningi, who defected from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to the ADC in 2026, has had a history of political disagreements with the ruling APC. His move to the ADC, therefore, makes the contest not only a test of his personal popularity and political structure, but also of whether the APC can deploy its organisational advantage to dislodge an incumbent with an established constituency.

The contest will ultimately test whether Ningi's political capital can survive a party change and withstand the machinery of the party controlling the Federal Government.

In Bayelsa West, former Governor Seriake Dickson is seeking a return to the Senate on the platform of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), with the APC's Fidelis Agbiki among the candidates.

Dickson's case differs from those of Kingibe and Akpoti-Uduaghan because he is a former governor rather than a sitting senator.

His contest will therefore test

whether the political capital accumulated during his two terms as governor remains strong enough to influence a senatorial election, particularly against an APC candidate.

The election will also be watched against the background of the broader political realignment taking place in Bayelsa and the South-South ahead of 2027.

What does 'federal might' really mean?

FOR Associate Professor of Strategic, Social and Behaviour Change Communication at Lagos State University, Thanny Taiwo, federal influence has historically been an important feature of Nigerian politics.

He argued that such influence becomes particularly significant when a sitting governor belongs to an opposition party, citing the use of security agencies and financial investigations as avenues through which the centre could exert pressure.

Taiwo, however, said an incumbent's strongest defence remained good governance and investment in the people.

According to him, an incumbent who governs well is more likely to establish a bond with the electorate, making voters willing to defend such a government at the polls.

He also advised voters to consider candidates' antecedents rather than their political affiliations or access to federal support.

Professor Bayo Popoola, a political communication scholar and Head of the Department of Mass Communication at the University of

Lagos, also sees federal influence as only one factor in an election.

According to him, its effectiveness depends on factors such as political literacy, awareness, and consciousness among voters.

He argued that federal influence could help defeat an incumbent who had lost the confidence of the electorate, but that the situation could be different when voters considered the incumbent a performer.

The arguments of the two scholars point to a more complicated reality than the simple notion that control of the centre guarantees electoral victory.

The strength of federal influence may depend on the credibility of the challenger, the popularity of the incumbent, the organisation of the competing parties, and, ultimately, how voters perceive the performance of the government they are being asked to retain or replace.

The 2027 test

THIS is where the significance of Osun becomes clearer. Adeleke's victory did not establish that "federal might" has disappeared from Nigerian politics. Neither did it prove that national political structures have become irrelevant. It demonstrated that their influence is not necessarily decisive in every contest.

The circumstances will differ from state to state. Otti will be defending his personal record in Abia. Makinde and Mohammed will be attempting to deliver successors in Oyo and Bauchi, respectively. Kingibe will be defending a Senate seat in the FCT.

Akpoti-Uduaghan will face a former governor in Kogi Central, while Dickson will attempt a political comeback in Bayelsa West.

The contests, therefore, offer different tests of the same proposition. Can personal popularity overcome party machinery? Can performance in office translate into electoral loyalty? Can a governor transfer his political capital to a successor? Can a sitting legislator's record withstand a better-organised challenger?



President Bola Tinubu

INEC Chairman, Joash Amupitan

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International Friendly

'Highly-changed' Eagles confront Russia in Nizhny Novgorod

By Christian Okpara

UNLESS you are a keen follower of the leagues in Eastern Europe, you may not recognise some of the players that Nigeria will field in today's international friendly game against Russia. This is because the usual stars, including Victor Osimhen, Alex Iwobi, Wilfred Ndidi, Ademola Lookman, Calvin Bassey and Samuel Chukwueze, among others, withdrew from the squad either because of injury or because their clubs refused to allow them to travel to Russia.

In effect, Coach Eric Chelle will play the game with some players he hurriedly invited to the team, and some of the fringe stars in the Super Eagles set-up. The Super Eagles had

their third and final training session at the 45,000-capacity Nizhny Novgorod Stadium last night, in preparation for the game slated to start at 8.00 p.m. Nigerian time.

The regular players in the team are Moses Simon, Akor Adams, Stanley Nwabali, Benjamin Frederick and the returning Kelechi Iheanacho. The new players to complete the squad are Emmanuel Fernandez, Wilfred Igor, Samuel James, Kenneth Igboke, and Chibuzor Nwoko. Umar Abubakar, Peter Edokpolor, Abdullahi Bewene, Umar Abdullahi, Atata Michael, Aderemi Adeoye, Isaac James, Michael Stephen and Ibrahim Ajasa. But despite the loss of his regular starters, Coach Chelle is optimistic that the new players will rise to the occasion and show Nigerians that they deserve to become regulars in the

team.

Russia showed what they could do today when they thrashed Namibia 6-0 in another friendly game on Saturday, but Chelle is not fazed by that result. Rather, he wants his team to do better than they did in their earlier game against Russia last year. Speaking for the team on Sunday, forward Akor Adams said that Chelle has told them to use today's game to appease Nigerians who are still peeved by the 3-0 defeat the Super Eagles suffered in Guinea-Bissau last week. He said: "It's still the Super Eagles, and we know what we stand for. The coach has made it clear that we are here to try our best to win. Russia is a very good team as well, and I think they're very hungry to play games because of their peculiar situation. For us, it's to give our best."

Abdullahi Bewane is one of the players in Super Eagles' camp ahead of today's game against Russia.

Six feet, 4 inches, Agunbiade's ready to shake up Africa's best in Morocco

STANDING at an imposing six feet four inches (193 cm), Sultan Agunbiade cuts the figure of a young athlete who could easily have made a name for himself on the basketball court.

But the 18-year-old has chosen a different path, defying expectations by dedicating himself to table tennis, a sport in which he is rapidly emerging as one of Nigeria's brightest prospects.

Agunbiade's remarkable rise has earned him a wildcard invitation to join Nigeria's contingent for the 2026 ITTF Africa Championships in Tangier, Morocco. The tournament will mark his maiden appearance at a senior continental championship, and the reigning runner-up of the 2026 ITTF Africa Youth Cup is relishing the opportunity to compete against Africa's finest players.

Widely regarded as "Mr Consistency" due to his steady progression over

the last two years, Agunbiade has continued to impress on the international stage. His growing reputation was further enhanced at the 2026 WTT Contender Lagos, where he emerged as Nigeria's last man standing in the Men's Singles event. He battled his way to the round of 16 before bowing to the experience of India's Manush Shah.

The talented youngster also enjoyed a memorable campaign at the 2026 ITTF Africa Youth Championships in Accra, Ghana. He played a pivotal role in Nigeria's triumph over Egypt in the U-19 Boys' Team final.

Argentina on edge as Messi ends international career today

LIONEL Messi will bring the curtain down on his glittering Argentina career today with a farewell friendly against Benin Republic that marks the dawn of a new era for the South American champions, reports *Buenos Aires Times*.

After more than two decades of service to his country, the 39-year-old superstar will hand over the captain's armband for good as he makes his final appearance in the Albiceleste's colours at the Estadio Monumental in Buenos Aires. Messi will be joined for his in-

ternational swansong by 85,000 spectators and several of the teammates with whom he reached the pinnacle of football at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, alongside members of Argentina's emerging generation.

The friendly marks a symbolic passing of the torch for a player whose international legacy includes a World Cup title, two Copa América crowns and the Finalissima. Messi also bows out as Argentina's record appearance-maker and leading scorer, with 125 goals in 207 games, as well as a record 68 assists.

Lamine Yamal set for huge salary raise

LAMINE Yamal's start to the new season has been astonishing, and the player is operating at a level that any normal teenager should not even be able to dream of, reports *barcauniversal.com*. He is, at this point, one of the best players on the planet, if not the absolute best, and the same is reflected in terms of his market value. Given his age, projection and output, Yamal is genuinely one of the highest-valued and most marketable names in the sport, and is only growing in stature with every passing week.

Barcelona, needless to say, must make countless efforts from their end to show how they value his talent.

As matters stand, the young winger is Barcelona's highest-earning player, and his salary is estimated to be close to €20 million net across fixed salary and variables.

Today's Football Matches

International Friendly

Russia v Nigeria

CAF Africa Cup of Nations Qualifiers

Group B

Angola v Malawi

UEFA Nations League

League A - Group 3

Croatia v Spain

England v Czech Republic

League B - Group 1

Scotland v Slovenia

Switzerland v North Macedonia

League C - Group 1

Albania v San Marino

Belarus v Finland

League C - Group 3

Kazakhstan v Faroe Islands

Moldova v Slovakia

League C - Group 4

Estonia v Iceland

Luxembourg v Bulgaria

Dolphin Swimming League Season 8

Swimmers, parents relish experience

By Daniel Akinola

SATURDAY, October 3 was a day that many of the budding swimmers in Lagos and its environs will remember for a long time. It was a day when these children from different schools gathered at the Grange Schools, Ikeja, to vie for laurels in the pools. It also afforded them the opportunity to test their abilities against their peers with the same ambition of becoming great swimmers. With their parents and teachers cheering them on, the children took to the pool determined to show the coaches and scouts at the event that they have the potential to become world-beaters.

At the end of the competition, the excellent swimmers went home with laurels, while the others took with them valuable experience in their journey to stardom.

Speaking on his experience at the event, young swimmer Jotham Abdullahi of Corona School said the league has helped him focus on improving his personal best times rather than simply winning medals. Having participated for three years, he credited the competition for helping him develop friendships, build confidence and understand the value of hard work.

Parents at the event also commended the organisers for creating a safe, disciplined and motivating environment. They noted that the league promotes healthy lifestyles while encouraging children to challenge themselves and strive for excellence.

Lakowe Golf Classic

Ghana's Torgah outlasts Bako to win cash, electric car

By Christian Okpara

VINCENT Torgah of Ghana was not ready to be a hostage as he stomped over Kamalu Bako of Nigeria's challenge to win the Lakowe Lakes Golf Classic in a sudden-death playoff on Sunday. His reward: The landmark Sunshine Development Tour title and a brand-new electric car courtesy of CIG Motors. Torgah had seen his advantage disappear as Bako stormed into contention with a six-under-par 66, forcing the \$50,000 event into extra holes at the par-72 Lakowe Lakes Championship course.

The Classic was supported by Oando, CIG Motors, ARM and Providus Unity Bank. Rain delayed the final round before the 33 finalists returned to action, but Bako quickly provided the drama with eight birdies and two bogeys. His impressive putting erased the deficit and drew him level with Torgah for the playoff.

Despite falling short in sudden death, the Nigerian took considerable satisfaction from his performance. "I wished I could have executed the sudden death play better, but I was happy with my round where I putted well and was able to produce a six under par that gave me the chance at the title," he said.



Agunbiade



Guest Writer

Chidi Anselm Odinkalu



Six feet, 4 inches, Agunbiade's ready to shake up Africa's best in Morocco



/39

What happened to the Peace Accord?: A memo to the National Peace Committee

AS Nigeria marked 66 years of independence this past week, the Chairman of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in Edo State, Jarrett Tenebe, turned prayerful. Mr Tenebe is not priest, pastor, or Imam. He claims to be a professional politician. Ordinarily, that should mean that he is interested in votes and in voters. But those do not apparently concern him.

There is a context to Mr Tenebe's public induction into the Prayer Warriors' Hall of Fame. The governor of Edo State, Monday Okpebholo, has repeatedly and with increasing vigour promised a haul of 2.5 million votes from Edo State for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in the 2027 presidential elections. He is that exact.

So, on Independence Day, Jarrett Tenebe turned to prayers to underscore that promise as not negotiable. He did not pray for powers of persuasion or performance to convince the voters of Edo State. Instead, his prayers were for "those who do not wish [Edo APC] well" in its pursuit of the governor's promise. "So, anybody who refuses", he continued, "who wants to stand in our way, for us not to have those votes that we intend to give to Mr President, AK-47 fire."

This was surely not your standard campaign stump speech. It was a threat directed at the voters and fits a recent pattern of such behaviour from leading members of the ruling party all over the country.

Two months ago, the APC Senator representing Osun East in the upper chamber of Nigeria's National Assembly, Francis Fadahunsi, opened the season of violence on the eve of the off-cycle governorship election in the state. The incumbent governor (and eventual winner) in the contest, Ademola Adeleke, ran on the ticket of the Accord Party.

Ahead of polling day, around August 10, Senator Fadahunsi addressed his party supporters in his constituency, and described the yellow-coloured cap worn by supporters of the Accord Party as "Yellow Fever cap, it is the cap of an animal." He proceeded to exhort them: "So, we have come to tell you, up till the day of the election, if we see them, it is killing."

The following day, the Nigeria Police Force reportedly invited the Senator to a meeting. Not much was heard thereafter of what transpired, if any.

At the end of the same month, the Chairman-elect of the Kuje Area Council in the Federal Capital Territory, Danjuma Shekwolo, let it be known for the benefit of residents of the local government that "it's either you are for the APC, or you leave the area council." He did not mean that as an endearment. For the record, Nigeria's constitution prohibits internal banishment.

One week later, youthful heavies chanting the name of the state governor, a Catholic priest, blocked the road and prevented Peter Obi, an opposition candidate for the presidency, from visiting communities in Benue State. The priest-governor was not at Mass.

Similar threats or actual acts of violence involving the ruling party and its supporters or senior surrogates have been reported in



Abubakar

several other states, including Delta, Enugu, Kaduna, Kano, Kogi, and Rivers.

In response to this pattern, law enforcement and the security agencies have been eloquently silent, as has the Independent National Electoral Commission.

Yet, under section 132(b) of the Electoral Act, it is a felony for any person to inflict or threaten to inflict "by himself or by any other person, any minor or serious injury, damage, harm or loss on or against a person in order to induce or compel that person to vote or refrain from voting, or on account of such person having voted or refrained from voting." A person convicted of this crime may be punished with imprisonment for up to three years.

That will not happen, however, if the security and law enforcement agencies continue in their complicit silence.

In the absence of action by law enforcement, it has been left to newspapers to call attention to the dangers in the pattern of violent intimidation and threats from the ruling party.

Last month, the Editorial Board of the *Punch* called attention to "a disturbing and increasingly dangerous belief among some Nigerian politicians that political power confers the right to intimidate, threaten and silence citizens." The newspaper warned that "such conduct is not politics; it is an assault on democracy, citizenship, and basic decency."

There is, however, something more troubling than the practiced indifference of law enforcement and security agencies.

One week after the Osun State governorship elections last August, at the formal onset of the general election campaign season, the presidential candidates of all parties met in Abuja to sign a "Peace Accord" ahead of the 2027 presidential elections. Under the Accord, they



Kukah

undertook "to shun violence, hate speech, misinformation, personal attacks and other conduct capable of undermining the electoral process."

The Peace Accord is the initiative of what increasingly looks like an ostentatiously-named National Peace Committee (NPC). It is led by former Head of State, Abdulsalami Abubakar and has Ebitu Ukiwe, second-in-command during the early years of the regime of Ibrahim Babangida, as the Vice-Chair. Other members include the Sultan of Sokoto; John Cardinal Onaiyekan, the former Catholic Archbishop of Abuja; business moguls, Aliko Dangote and Femi Otedola; nonagenarian and publisher of *Vanguard* newspaper, Sam Amuka; and former president of the Nigerian Bar Association, Priscilla Kuye.

This NPC is co-ordinated by Dr. Matthew Hassan Kukah, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Sokoto, with its secretariat is at the epony-

mous Kukah Centre.

Following the signing of the Peace Accord in Abuja, the NPC has taken the accord to the political parties in the various states. The enthusiasm of the committee may be admirable, but its promise is lacking in both belief and benchmarks.

The only thing more deafening than the indifference of security and law enforcement to the rising violence and threats of violence in the current campaign season, is the silence of the NPC. Having got the parties to sign up to an accord committing to supposedly peaceful elections, the committee appears to have declared victory and de-planed.

Their Peace Accord is devoid of any benchmarks of performance, monitoring, compliance, or fulfilment. At best, it is a collective act of wishful thinking. Moreover, the continuing silence of the NPC encourages a perception that their accord is a tool to protect a violent incumbency project.

That is dangerous. The NPC has had enough practice in un-monitored Peace Accords over the past decade in elections of various kinds both general and off cycle. None has held up. Under their watch, Elections have increasingly become murder Olympiads in which competitors - usually led by the incumbent party - declare open season on voters and the voting process under the committee's dutiful silence. After each ballot, the committee indulges in ritual self-congratulation until the next election when it runs a rinse-and-repeat.

It is increasingly self-evident that these agreements advocated or mediated by the NPC have neither accord in their intent nor peace in view. If the committee wishes to be taken seriously, at least three things must change and urgently too.

First, it must end its complicit silence and lead or construct an active civic coalition to face down acts or threats of violence by any and all sides. As NPC that continues to observe a self-imposed code of Omerta in the face of acts and threats of violence against voters and their communities is not neutral. It supports violence.

Second, it will be necessary to review the membership of the Committee. People like Femi Otedola and Aliko Dangote whose exposures to the government of the day are incalculable have a duty to stand down in favour of more credible figures of impartiality. It is not even in their interests to claim non-partisanship. They are not.

Third, the Committee must establish clear benchmarks for monitoring, compliance, and public reporting on observance as well as breach of the Peace Accord or lack thereof. Without these, the Committee may be best served by an honest admission that its mission has passed its sell-by date. Honest admission in this circumstance would be an act of courage. To persist in the present course would be deceit.

Odinkalu, a lawyer and teacher, can be reached at chidi.odinkalu@tufts.edu

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