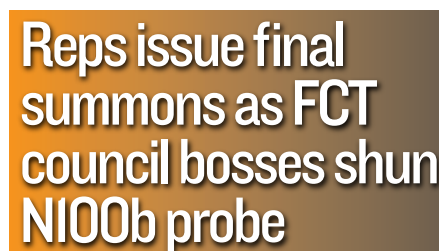




NEWS PAGE 3



NEWS PAGE 6



NEWS PAGE 3



Private jet operators target boom as campaign trips, bookings intensify P6



FG plans 35 linear accelerators, six centres in fight against cancer

NEWS PAGE 4

Asset forfeiture trial: EFCC says Diezani's U.K. acquittal irrelevant

NEWS PAGE 4

Probe panel seeks two-week extension on miners' deaths inquiry

NEWS PAGE 30

Nigeria's next economic test is turning growth into jobs, says World Bank

BUSINESS PAGE 15



NUPRC Announces 2026 Licensing Round: Chairman, NUPRC Board, Senator Magnus Abe (left); Chairman, Senate Committee on Gas, Senator Jarigbe Agom; Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil), Senator Heineken Lokpobiri; former Senate President Ahmad Lawan; Vice President Kashima Shettima; Commission Chief Executive, NUPRC, Mrs. Oritsemeyiwa Eyesan; Group Chief Executive Officer, NNPC, Mr. Bayo Ojulari; Executive Secretary, PTDF, Prof Shu'aibu Aliyu; and OPEC Governor for Nigeria, Mr. Ademola Adeyemi Bero, at the 5th anniversary ceremony of the NUPRC in Abuja, yesterday.

FG clears N758 billion backlog, funds pension payments till 2029

BUSINESS PAGE 15

Panorama

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Guardian Nigeria f GuardianNigeria 08136370421 i Guardianigeria

SPOTLIGHT

International Friendly: Depleted Super Eagles hold Russia to 3-3 draw

By Christian Okpara

A NIGERIAN team devoid of the usual superstars, yesterday, rallied from 3-1 down to hold Russia to a 3-3 draw in an international friendly game held at the Nizhny Novgorod Stadium.

Only six players in the starting XI, including Moses Simon, Kelechi Iheanacho, Benjamin Fredricks, Emmanuel Fernandez, Abdullahi Bewene, and Aderemi Adeoye had previously featured for the Super Eagles. But the absences did not matter as the new players, including three home-based stars, rose to the Russian challenge.

Super Eagles' Coach, Eric Chelle handed international debuts to five players in a heavily-rotated lineup designed to

test the squad's competitive depth.

Nigeria drew first blood in the 11th minute through returning forward Kelechi Iheanacho.

Receiving a precise pass on the edge of the penalty area from Abdullahi Bewene, Iheanacho unleashed a thunderous left-footed drive into the top corner, notching his

15th international goal in Nigerian colours.

Despite controlling early possession, defensive lapses by Nigeria allowed Russia back into the match.

Accidental discharge kills High Chief during burial rites in Ondo

From Adewale Momoh, Akure

A TRADITIONAL burial ceremony in Ayeka, a community in the Okitipupa Local Council Area of Ondo State, descended into tragedy at the weekend, when a high chief was fatally shot in the head during funeral rites.

The victim, a traditional titleholder among the chiefs conducting the ceremony, died instantly after a firearm was accidentally discharged amid the rituals.

According to eyewitness accounts and video footage of the event, the incident un-

folded while the deceased's colleagues were carrying out traditional funeral proceedings for a fellow High Chief.

The ceremony, which had drawn family members, community leaders, and residents, was abruptly halted as panic spread following the gunshot.

According to sources, the shooting may have involved funeral celebrants discharging firearms into the air as part of customary festivities. Meanwhile, the identities of both the victim and the High Chief being buried could not be immediately ascertained as

of press time.

One of the sources attributed the fatal incident to an accidental discharge by what he described as reckless handling of the weapon.

When contacted over the development, the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Abayomi Jimoh, disclosed that one person has been arrested in connection with the incident.

Jimoh, who added that the investigation had also begun into the development, assured that details of the incident will be provided in due course.

Trump blames France unrest on Islam, migration

U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday blamed France's mass student protests on Islam and migration, pushing his global right-wing narrative ahead of tough midterm elections at home.

"What's happening in France is nothing less than out of control mass migration," Trump said in a post on his Truth Social network. "This isn't about schools, this is about Islam wanting to take over a once great Country!"

French students have blocked the entrances to hundreds of high schools across the country since late September to demand better conditions, in protests that have descended into sporadic clashes with security forces.

A quarter of a million demonstrators took to the streets across France on Tuesday.

Trump did not elaborate on his claims or provide any evidence. In France, no link has yet been established between the student movement and any religious or identity-based demands.

... DAY 4546

OUR GIRLS STILL MISSING

Tope Templer Olaiya, News Editor

@TopeTempler



Students and pupils of Ladi-Lak Nursery and Primary Schools and Management team of Dangote Cement during the donation of the school items in Apapa, Lagos.

WSCIJ condoles with The Guardian over Nwanne's death

THE Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism (WSCIJ) has extended its condolences to the management and staff of The Guardian on the passing of Mr Chuks Nwanne, General Manager, Abuja/Northern Operations and former editor of the Saturday title, who died on Saturday after a protracted illness.

In a letter sent yesterday by the Executive Director/CEO, WSCIJ, Motunrayo Alaka, to the Editor, The Guardian Newspapers, Dr Oluwafemi Adekoya, the centre said it received with sadness the news

of Nwanne's passing on Saturday, October 3, 2026.

"Chuks was a dedicated journalist who contributed significantly to The Guardian over many years, rising through the ranks from an entertainment reporter to senior editorial and management positions. His work across entertainment, arts, culture and tourism reflected his versatility as a journalist and his commitment to the profession.

"His passing is a painful loss to The Guardian, the journalism community and the many colleagues and associates whose lives and careers he touched. At

a time when the media community continues to draw strength from the dedication of professionals who have committed themselves to the craft, his departure is a reminder of the enduring value of the people who give their best to journalism and public service".

"We commiserate with the management and staff of The Guardian, his family, friends and colleagues on this irreparable loss. We pray that God will grant his family the strength to bear this difficult time and grant his soul eternal rest," Alaka stated.

RANDOM FACTS

• **Hodophile** (noun): A person who loves to travel.

• In October 2025, Ethiopia laid the foundation stone for two industrial projects: a urea fertilizer plant and the Gode Oil Refinery. The fertilizer plant is developed by Ethiopian Investment Holdings in partnership with Dangote Group, while Golden Concord Group Limited will construct the refinery with an annual production capacity of 3.5 million tons.

• A group of pandas is called an "embarrassment."

TODAY'S QUOTE

The world is changing very fast. Big will not beat small anymore. It will be the fast beating the slow.

Great journalism will always attract readers. The words, pictures and graphics that are the stuff of journalism have to be brilliantly packaged; they must feed the mind and move the heart.

RUPERT MURDOCH

To forgive the terrorists is up to God, but to send them there is up to me.

It's better to be hanged for loyalty than rewarded for betrayal.

VLADIMIR PUTIN

TODAY IN HISTORY

• **2025 - Nigeria**

Minister of Innovation, Science & Technology, Geoffrey Uche Nnaji, resigned amid certificate forgery allegations, which President Bola Tinubu accepted.

• **Prof. Mahmood Yakubu** stepped down as Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission, with May Agbamuche-Mbu stepping in as acting chair.

• **2023 - Israel**

Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups launched an attack into Israel, which results in the deaths of around 1,200, mostly civilians, and taking more than 240 hostages, including civilians and soldiers. The attack initiated the Israel-Hamas war.

• **2012 - Iraq**

Iraq executed 11 people bringing the yearly total of executions in Iraq to 113.

• **2008 - USA**

Barack Obama and John McCain had a town hall debate dominated by the financial crisis and foreign policy.

• **2005 - Egypt**

Mohamed ElBaradei received Nobel Peace Prize for his work with the IAEA

• **2001- Afghanistan**

The U.S. invasion of Afghanistan began with an air assault and covert operations on the ground, starting the longest war in American history. U.S. launched strikes against Taliban in retaliation for 9/11 terrorist attacks in US.

• **2000 - UK**

England played their last match at the old Wembley stadium before demolition to make way for the new Wembley Stadium. The match was between old rivals England and West Germany which Germany won 1-0.

• **1999 - Nigeria**

Floodgates of River Niger were opened at two dams, Jebba and Shiro, to prevent Shiroro Lake from overflowing its banks. 400 villages were submerged leaving 300,000 people homeless and 500 people estimated to have drowned.

• **1996 - USA**

Fox News by Australian-born American media mogul Rupert Murdoch began broadcasting to appeal to a conservative audience.

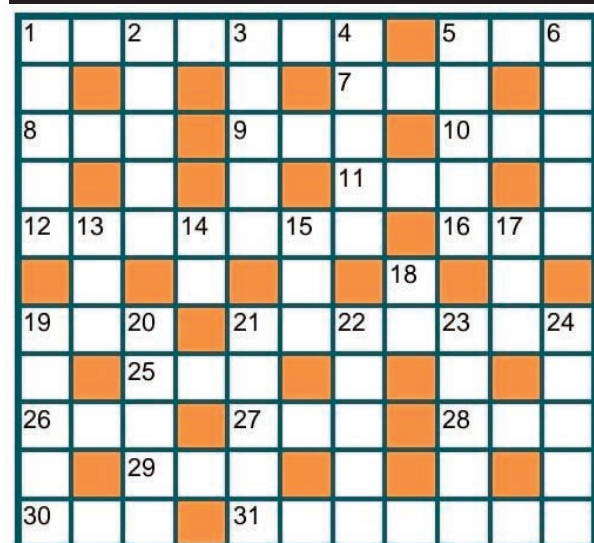
• **1981 - Egypt**

Egypt's parliament named Vice President Hosni Mubarak to succeed the assassinated Anwar Sadat.

• **1952 - Russia**

Vladimir Putin, ex-intelligence officer and de facto leader of Russia since 1999, was born. He served as President since 2012, having previously served from 2000 to 2008. He also served as Prime Minister from 1999 to 2000 and again from 2008 to 2012.

CROSS WORD PUZZLE



• ACROSS

1. LGA in Osun State, (7).
5. Unopened flower, (3).
7. Walloon, abbr., (3).
8. Ado Ekiti King's title, (3).
9. Anger, (3).
10. A winning serve in tennis, (3).
11. A young boy, (3).
12. Opening, (7).
16. Large deciduous tree, (3).
19. Stage of life, (3).
21. LGA in Kaduna State, (7).
25. Female mammal, (3).
26. Hebrew Judge, (3).
27. Near-Earth Asteroid, (3).
28. Biden, 46th US President, (3).
29. Saltwater food fish, (3).
30. Consume usually, (3).
31. Town located in Ondo State, (7).

• DOWN

1. LGA in Oyo State, (5).
2. Gov. Oyebanji's State, (5).
3. Excuse, (5).
4. Onitsha King's title, (5).
5. Cutting part, (5).
6. Something hoped for, (5).
13. Erect something, (3).
14. Financial Times, abbr., (2).
15. U.S. intelligence body, (3).
17. Unit of Albanian currency, (3).
18. Hawaiian, abbr., (2).
19. LGA in Lagos State, (5).
20. Authoritative command, (5).
21. Japanese martial art, (5).
22. Coat oil painting, (5).
23. Restructure, (5).
24. LGA in Edo State, (5).

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Check page 31 for solution to the puzzle

N'West leads voter register as INEC, police raise fears over insecurity, funding

From Kehinde Olatunji (Lagos) and Sodiq Omolayo (Abuja)

WITH some 100 days to the 2027 general elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) yesterday raised fresh concerns over funding and security, as the electoral body entered the final phase of preparations for what is expected to be one of the country's largest electoral exercises.

This came as the North-West emerged as the zone with the largest share of Nigeria's 103,428,715 registered voters following the conclusion of the three-phase Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) and

- Vote-buying, misinformation identified as major challenges
- IGP hints security clearance operations ongoing in Kogi, Niger, Benue, Taraba
- EU backs INEC, pledges neutrality

biometric clean-up exercise. While the INEC Chairman, Prof. Joash Amupitan, called for the prompt release of the commission's outstanding budgetary allocations to enable it to complete critical procurement and logistics, the police disclosed that the country's security crisis had created pockets of fear in parts of the country.

INEC also identified vote-buying, election-related disinformation, deepfakes, logistical and security challenges, and delays in the release of funds as major challenges that could undermine the credibility of the election.

The police said security clearance operations were being conducted around Kogi, Niger, Benue and Taraba states, as part of efforts to stabilise areas considered vulnerable ahead of the elections.

INEC also announced plans to deploy 57,000 new Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) devices, introduce Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based election-monitoring tools, and mobilise 1,414,768 ad hoc personnel for the 2027 general elections.

Amupitan, who spoke at a World Press Conference and National Stakeholders' Meeting in Abuja to mark 100 days

to the polls, said the commission had moved from planning and tendering into active production, delivery and construction.

He, however, said the remaining budgetary releases were necessary to ensure the final phase of preparations proceeded without disruption.

The INEC chairman said the commission had already awarded contracts for additional BVAS devices, voting cubicles, and ballot boxes, and that some of the newly acquired devices had already been delivered.

He added that construction of

dedicated BVAS storage facilities and local council offices was ongoing, while solar power installations across INEC offices had also been contracted.

Amupitan disclosed that political parties submitted 36 presidential and vice-presidential candidates for the 2027 election, with 18 of the 22 registered political parties participating in the presidential

race.

He said the Accord Party, All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) and Youth Party did not nominate presidential candidates, while the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) withdrew its presidential nomination during the substitution window.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

State Police Bill will be above individual abuse, says Presidency

Four states approve Constitution amendment bill, 20 more to go

From Joel Oladele, Abuja

THE Presidency has assured Nigerians that the proposed state police system will be structured to withstand the personal influence and disposition of individual office holders.

Four states have so far approved the Constitution amendment bill seeking to establish state police in Nigeria.

Secretary of the Presidential Working Group on the National Policing Bill, Nnadubem Moghalu, gave the assurance yesterday in Abuja at the second Annual Distinguished Parliamentary Lecture organised by the House of Representatives Press Corps.

The lecture, with the theme, 'Imperative of State Police: Securing Communities, Strengthening Federalism', held at the National Assembly Library Auditorium.

Delivering the lead paper, 'State Police, Community Security and the Future of Federalism in Nigeria', he said concerns about possible abuse of state police had been central to the drafting of the proposed National Policing Bill.

Moghalu explained that the proposed framework would define responsibilities clearly, establish accountability mechanisms and ensure that institutions responsible for enforcing them have the capacity to do so.

"We are trying to build a system that is as immune to the personal foibles of individuals as possible," Moghalu stated. He argued that state police had become necessary because the existing centralised policing structure was overstretched.

Nigeria has about 380,000 police officers for a population of more than 200 million, he noted, translating to roughly one officer for every 650 citizens.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng



President of France, Emmanuel Macron (right), and Nigerian Ambassador to France, Ayodele Oke, during the presentation of Letters of Credence to the President at Élysée Palace.

Nigeria breaking free from oil revenue dependence, says Tinubu

From Kingsley Jeremiah and Terhemba Daka, Abuja

NIGERIA is making a decisive break from decades of dependence on crude oil revenue, President Bola Tinubu declared yesterday, boasting that his administration has significantly reduced oil's dominance in the nation's finances and will accelerate the transition towards a diversified, gas-powered economy.

The President said the objective was no longer to build an economy that merely extracts and exports petroleum resources, but one that uses oil and gas to stimulate manufacturing, agriculture, infrastructure, jobs and investment across the country.

He said reforms in Nigeria's upstream petroleum sector had attracted or projected about \$103 billion in investment, while ensuring greater transparency in the award of oil blocks.

- Boasts of \$103b upstream investment, transparency in oil block award
- PENGASSAN urges end to casual workers in oil sector

Meanwhile, the President of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN), Bosun Olabiye-Agoro, urged the government and regulators to address contract staffing and disparities between permanent and casual workers in the upstream sector.

Speaking in Abuja at the fifth anniversary of the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), he said Nigeria's economic transformation under the Renewed Hope Agenda (RHA) was being driven by growing contributions from agriculture, manufacturing, digital economy and creative industries.

Represented by Vice President Kashim Shettima, the President said the development of the petroleum sector remained

critical to the country's economic stability, but stressed that the government was determined to ensure that oil revenues no longer defined Nigeria's economic fortunes.

"We have already reduced our dependence on oil revenue, and we intend to go further," he declared. "Our gas can power homes and factories. Petroleum earnings support a stable naira and help fund the federation."

The President's declaration came as his administration seeks to reposition the country's energy architecture around natural gas, describing the present period as "the decade of gas".

Tinubu said: "With the largest gas reserves in Africa, we will expand gas supply for power, industry and clean cooking, re-

duce flaring and methane emissions, and grow renewable energy alongside it."

He added that Nigeria would pursue an energy transition based on its own development realities, insisting that climate commitments must not undermine the country's need for energy access, industriali-

sation and economic growth.

The President also linked the country's changing economic structure to renewed confidence in the upstream petroleum sector, saying oil production had become more stable through the combined efforts of security agencies, operators, host communities and NUPRC.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Reps issue final summons as FCT council bosses shun N100b probe

Urge INEC to disqualify candidates not in submitted party registers

From Joel Oladele, Abuja

THE House of Representatives Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has issued a final seven-day summons to officials of the six Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Area Councils over unresolved audit queries involving about N100 billion.

Also, its Committee on Host Communities confirmed the receipt of a petition from the Niger Delta Oil-Producing Communities Reform Movement (ND-OCRIM) concerning the pipeline surveillance contract held by Pipeline Infrastructure Nigeria Limited (PINL).

This was as its Committee on Electoral Matters urged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to audit party membership registers and disqualify 2027 election candidates whose names were not listed as stated by the Electoral Act 2026.

The PAC took the decision after the six area council chairmen again failed to appear before it to respond to questions arising from audit reports on their financial activities.

The chairmen had requested September 22, 2026, for their

appearance before the committee. However, they neither appeared nor sent representatives to answer the lawmakers' questions.

Following their absence, the committee directed the Directors of Personnel Management, Directors of Finance and Heads of Audit of the six councils to appear on October 14, 2026.

The affected councils are Abaji, Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje and Kwali.

PAC Chairman, Bamidele Salam, said the committee had repeatedly given the councils opportunities to respond to the queries but they continued to disregard its invitations and requests for documents.

He noted that the latest summons would serve as the final opportunity for the councils to appear and provide explanations on the financial issues raised against them.

The audit queries include about N7.65 billion in outstanding liabilities recorded against the six councils in the 2021 Auditor-General's report.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

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FG plans 35 linear accelerators, six centres in fight against cancer

By Ijeoma Nwanosike

FEDERAL Government has announced that it is expanding Nigeria's cancer-treatment capacity with plans to procure 35 linear accelerators over the next three years and establish six cancer centres of excellence to improve access to diagnosis and treatment.

The Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr Izaq Adekunle Salako, disclosed this yesterday in Abuja while declaring open the 2026 International Cancer Week, organised by the National Institute for Cancer Research

• To harness AI, digital tools to strengthen cancer control • WCRF raises concern over cancer rise among younger adults

and Treatment (NICRAT). Salako said three cancer centres of excellence had already been constructed and commissioned, while another three were under construction, as part of measures to strengthen the country's capacity to manage the growing cancer burden.

He said the government was also advancing cancer care through the NSIA-Medserve Cancer Centres, the construction of the NICRAT headquarters and the introduction of immunohistochemistry serv-

ices under the Nigeria Cancer Access Partnership Programme, supported by Roche.

Also, the Federal Government has said it would continue to harness digitalisation, artificial intelligence, telemedicine, molecular diagnostics, precision medicine and data analytics to strengthen cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

The week has the theme: "United Against Cancer: Building Resilient, Innovative and Equitable Systems Across the Cancer Care Continuum."

Salako said the government

was also strengthening cancer registries and using data analytics to improve cancer control, while ensuring that emerging technologies addressed gaps in access to specialist services and clinical decision-making.

He, however, said innovations being introduced into cancer care must be affordable, appropriate, scalable and sustainable to deliver meaningful outcomes within Nigeria's health system.

MEANWHILE, the World Cancer Research Fund

(WCRF) has raised concern over a rise in early cancers among younger adults. It said its analysis of NHS data found increases in several cancer types among people aged under 50 in England.

The charity compared cancer diagnosis rates among people under 50 in 2001 and 2023, finding increases in prostate, kidney, womb, liver, pancreatic, breast and bowel cancers during the period.

According to the WCRF, the rate of prostate cancer among men under 50 rose from the

equivalent of one case per 100,000 in 2001 to 3.6 cases per 100,000 in 2023.

Among women under 50, womb cancer diagnoses increased from 1.8 cases per 100,000 in 2001 to 3.9 per 100,000 in 2023, while breast cancer rose from 42 cases per 100,000 to 47.5 per 100,000 over the same period.

The charity also reported a rise in bowel cancer among adults under 50, from 3.9 cases per 100,000 in 2001 to 8.4 per 100,000 in 2023.

Minister rallies support for National Digital Postcode, unveils Milsat

By Adeyemi Adepetun

MINISTER of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Dr Bosun Tijani, has rallied industry support for the just-activated National Digital Postcode, while unveiling the Nigerian start-up, Milsat, behind the innovation.

Tijani disclosed this yesterday in a post on X, following the October 1 launch of the new postcode system.

While unveiling Milsat, founded by Taslim Saluadeen and Adedamola Baderinwa, Tijani also acknowledged the contributions of Meeds Network Limited and the National Population Commission (NPC) to the project.

According to Tijani, Milsat moved from delivering a pilot project in 2023 to developing the technology for the national postcode system.

He said the company's work demonstrates the ability of Nigerian technology firms to develop infrastructure for local needs and subsequently take their expertise to international markets.

"From delivering a pilot in 2023 to building a national system, Milsat demonstrates the depth of Nigerian technical capability and our ability to create infrastructure that improves public services, supports businesses and opens up economic opportunities," Tijani said.

NBA raises concerns over justice, democracy, detention abuses

NIGERIAN Bar Association Section on Public Interest and Development Law (NBA-SPIDEL) has raised concerns over barriers to access to justice, delays in the administration of justice, abuses in places of detention and weaknesses in democratic institutions.

This was raised while announcing the 2026 NBA-SPIDEL Annual Conference, scheduled for November 10 to 13 at the International Conference Centre, Umuahia, Abia State.

The Chairman of the section, Uju Agomoh, also called for stronger accountability, improved legal aid, effective detention oversight, and greater use of non-custodial measures to protect citizens' rights and strengthen the justice system.

He noted that the survival of the nation's democracy and its ability to deliver the needed dividends for the citizens are dependent on the existence of strong and independent institutions.



Humanitarian Development Officer, Embassy of Ireland, Samuel Ameh (left); Executive Director, Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), Auwal Rafsanjani; Representative of the Chairman, Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC), Peace Arocha; and former High Commissioner of Nigeria to India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, Ambassador Ahmed Sule, during the National Multi-Stakeholder Policy dialogue on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in Defence and Security Operations in Nigeria in Abuja, yesterday.

PHOTO: LUCY LADIDI ATEKO

Asset forfeiture trial: EFCC says Diezani's U.K. acquittal irrelevant

THE Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has opposed the application filed by former Minister of Petroleum, Diezani Alison-Madueke, to present evidence of her acquittal by the Southwark Crown Court, London, UK.

EFCC, in a counter-affidavit to Diezani's request, prayed Justice Inyang Ekwo to dismiss the application.

The commission argued that the purported acquittal of Diezani by a foreign criminal court was not material or relevant to the specific issues for determination before the instant court.

The *News Agency of Nigeria* (NAN) had, on July 1, reported

that Justice Ekwo had granted the application filed by the ex-minister to present evidence of the London court.

The UK court had, on June 17, discharged and acquitted the embattled former minister in respect of criminal allegations of bribery brought against her.

Against this development, Diezani, in a suit filed before Justice Ekwo, sought to reclaim her forfeited assets.

In the amended originating motion marked FHC/ABJ/CS/21/2023, she sued the EFCC as the sole respondent.

Meanwhile, after Diezani's lawyer filed her further/supplementary affidavit, the anti-graft agency responded.

In a further counter-affidavit deposed to by Oyakhilome Ekienabor, a litigation officer in Oyetibo's law firm, the EFCC opposed Diezani's request to present the evidence.

When the case was called yesterday, Mrs Queen-Ubokotom Uwe, who appeared for Diezani, informed the court that the matter was slated for the hearing of the EFCC's preliminary objection and its originating motion.

She, however, told the court that the commission had just served them with a motion prior to the commencement of the hearing.

Uwe said the motion was the respondent's further counter-affidavit to their further/sup-

plementary affidavit.

She equally reminded the court of their motion to regularise their processes.

Responding, Paul Mgbeoma, counsel for the respondent, expressed surprise at how Diezani kept filing processes in the matter as though it was an election petition case.

According to the litigation officer, there is nothing in the public sale notice indicating that any of the properties listed therein belong to the applicant (Diezani).

He, therefore, prayed the court to discountenance Diezani's further/supplementary affidavit seeking to present evidence of her acquittal in the UK court.

Shettima leads team to Ethiopia for peer exchange, food security lessons

From Terhemba Daka (Abuja) and Ifeanyi Chukwu Nwannah (Gusau)

VICE President Kashim Shettima has departed Abuja for Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to lead a high-level Nigerian delegation on a government-to-government peer exchange aimed at strengthening the country's nutrition delivery system.

The visit, at the invitation of Ethiopia's Deputy Prime Minister, Temesgen Tiruneh, is expected to provide Nigeria with an opportunity to draw lessons from Ethiopia's multi-sectoral approach to tackling malnutrition, food insecurity and related development challenges.

Shettima will lead the Nigerian delegation to the inaugural

Nigeria-Ethiopia Nutrition Leadership Exchange Visit, bringing together key stakeholders to examine how both countries have deployed government-led strategies to improve nutrition outcomes at the federal, state and local levels.

The exchange is particularly significant as Nigeria intensifies efforts to address malnutrition and strengthen coordination among government institutions responsible for agriculture, food security, health, social protection and economic planning.

During the visit, the Nigerian delegation will engage Ethiopian officials and development stakeholders on strategies for building an effective government-led nutrition compact

across the three tiers of government.

The delegation is also expected to visit selected agricultural and nutrition-focused establishments to gain first-hand knowledge of Ethiopia's interventions and their impact on communities.

The scheduled visits include a wheat farm and banana plantation in Oromia; the "Bounty of the Basket" Training Centre and selected households in Mojo; as well as Jabdu Motors in Bishoftu.

The programme is designed to provide practical insights into the relationship between agricultural production, household livelihoods, food availability and improved nutrition outcomes.

Shettima is accompanied on

the trip by Zamfara State Governor, Dauda Lawal, and his Jigawa State counterpart, Umar Namadi.

Others on the delegation are the Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, Senator Abubakar Atiku Bagudu; Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Senator Abubakar Kyari; and the Director-General of the National Emergency Management Agency, NEMA, Mrs Zubaida Umar.

The visit comes against the backdrop of growing efforts by the Federal Government to adopt a more integrated approach to nutrition, linking food production and security with healthcare, social protection and economic development.

Emefiele's absence stalls trial, court adjourns till November

From Yetunde Ayobami Ojo (Lagos) and Aneh Ochojila (Abuja)

TRIAL of former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Godwin Emefiele, and his co-defendant, Henry Omoile, before the Lagos State Special Offences Court sitting in Ikeja was stalled yesterday following Emefiele's absence from court.

Justice Rahman Oshodi subsequently adjourned the case to November 11, 12 and 13, 2026, for continuation of trial.

Emefiele is facing a 19-count charge brought by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), bordering on alleged abuse of office, receiving gratification, making corrupt demands and fraudulent receipt of property in transactions involving about \$4.5 billion and N2.8 billion.

Omoile, the second defendant, is facing three counts relating to alleged unlawful acceptance of gifts as an agent.

Both defendants have pleaded not guilty to the charges.

At the resumed proceedings, Emefiele was absent from court as he was said to be attending to another trial in Abuja.

Faye seeks public trust, swears in ECOWAS Court judges

From Bridget Chiedu Onochie, Abuja

ECONOMIC Community of West African States (ECOWAS), yesterday, swore in five new judges for its Community Court of Justice.

The oath of office was administered by the Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and Government, President Bassirou Diomaye Faye of Senegal, to Mr Désiré Henri Aihou of the Republic of Benin, Justice Awa Bah of The Gambia, Mrs Charlyne Brumskine of Liberia, Mrs Henrietta Uzoamaka Didigu of Nigeria and Dr Yaouza Ouro-Sama of Togo.

Following the exercise, the judges will subsequently elect from among them the President and Vice President. However, a Nigerian is exempted from the position of the President of the Court on the ground that it is the host country of ECOWAS.

Faye charged the judges to strengthen public trust through impartial and credible justice, especially now, when the region was facing political, economic, security and environmental challenges that require a firm commitment to the rule of law and collective action.

Firm seeks state of emergency on laboratory quality assurance

By Silver Nwokoro

A HEALTH firm, Pinecrest Healthcare Limited, has called on the Federal Government, state governments and other stakeholders in Nigeria's medical laboratory sector to declare a state of emergency on quality assurance.

The firm said that reliable laboratory results are critical to patients' safety and effective healthcare delivery.

Managing Director of the firm, Dr Chijoke Onyia, gave the charge during a virtual media briefing ahead of Pinecrest Healthcare Limited's inaugural quality assurance summit scheduled for October 10, 2026, in Lagos, themed "From Bench to Benchmark - Raising Laboratory Quality Standards for Patient Care."

According to him, laboratory quality assurance should go beyond regulatory compliance and become a culture embedded in everyday laboratory practice.

He said laboratory investigations play a central role in modern healthcare, as results influence diagnosis, treatment decisions, disease monitoring and assessment of patients' outcomes.

Onyia, who warned that inaccurate or unreliable laboratory results could have serious implications for patients, stressed the need for quality throughout the entire testing process, including the period from test requests and patient preparation to sample collection and transportation, analysis, result validation, and clinical interpretation.

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

UNILAG to unveil 'Your Feedback Hub' app for complaint resolution

By Opeyemi Babalola

THE University of Lagos (UNILAG) has announced plans to launch a Quality Assurance and Servicom (QAS) application, 'Your Feedback Hub,' designed to provide students and members of staff a new direct channel to report service-related complaints and improve response time across the institution.

Director of the Quality Assurance and Servicom Unit, Prof. Olufemi Saibu, disclosed this yesterday during a media briefing to mark the university's 2026 International Customer Service Week, themed "The Extra Mile."

Saibu said that the application, developed by UNILAG students, would be unveiled today, enabling members of the university community to report service failures and provide feedback digitally.

He said the initiative was aimed at reducing delays associated with the existing complaint process and improving the university's response to issues raised by students and members of staff of the institution.

LASG pledges smart farming to enhance food sustainability

From Gbenga Akinfenwa (Lagos) and Mansur Aramide (Ilorin)

L AGOS State Government has reiterated its resolve to continuously explore new and smarter ways of increasing agricultural productivity, reducing post-harvest losses, strengthening food distribution networks, and expanding market access for Lagos residents to have access to safe, nutritious and affordable food.

Special Adviser to the Governor on Agriculture and Food Systems, Dr Oluwarotimi Fashola, who gave the assurance yesterday during a media briefing to commemorate the 2026 World Food Day, said the food security desired for tomorrow would ultimately depend on the innovations the state is promoting, the investments it is making and the partner-

Seeks partnership with Kwara govt for supply of 1,000 cattle daily

ships built today.

Fashola noted that as the state looks towards the future, its objective remains clear: to build a food system that is productive, inclusive, innovative, sustainable and resilient, capable of meeting the food needs of the growing population while creating wealth, generating employment and improving livelihoods across the agricultural value chain.

He added that the ministry would continue to deepen collaboration with farmers, private-sector investors, development partners, research institutions, technology providers and other stakeholders to accelerate innovation and investment in the sector.

He said that the activities for the yearly event will com-

mence tomorrow, October 8, 2026, with a road walk from the JJT Park to Allen Avenue Roundabout and back to JJT Park, adding that the Lagos Agric Scholars Quiz Competition will be held at Fresh Food Hub, Idi-Oro Mushin, on Wednesday, October 14, while the grand finale will be held on Friday, October 16, at the Ikeja Police College Parade Ground.

MEANWHILE, the state government has contacted its Kwara counterpart for possible supply of 1,000 cattle daily to sustain residents' heavy demand for the livestock produce.

Kwara State government disclosed this yesterday, while turning in another set of 100 livestock farmers trained in conservation and preserva-

tion of forage crops for sustainable livestock feed production through its Livestock Productivity and Resilience Support Project (L-PRES). Also, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has approved the purchase of 500,000 cattle for the state to increase milk production.

He confirmed that Kwara State government's renewed effort at marching up with the global trend in animal husbandry and handling had not only paid off, but had begun to attract patronage that has eventually added to the state's income.

The governor, represented by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Livestock Development, Yahaya Muhammed, described livestock as another goldmine for

the state.

He said: "Lagos State government has come here to seek a partnership for likely supply of 1,000 cattle every day."

Alli, APM trade words over Bala Mohammed's praise of Tinubu

From Rotimi Agboluaje, Ibadan

THE Senator Sharafadeen Alli Campaign Organisation of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Allied Peoples' Movement (APM) Governorship Campaign Council in Oyo State have clashed over comments by Bauchi State Governor and APM National Leader, Bala Mohammed, commending President Bola Tinubu's administration.

While Alli's campaign organisation interpreted Mohammed's remarks as exposing contradictions in Governor Seyi Makinde's reported presidential ambition, the APM campaign council dismissed the interpretation as political manipulation of a routine act of intergovernmental courtesy.

In a statement by its Director of Media and Publicity, Bisi Oladele, the organisation said Mohammed's comments were significant because the Bauchi governor had previously endorsed Makinde and described him as the leader Nigeria needed.

Reacting, the Co-Director, Media and Publicity, Oyo State APM Governorship Campaign Council, Dr Sulaimon Olanrewaju, accused the Alli campaign organisation of attempting to "weaponise" Mohammed's remarks for political advantage.

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

Dangote Cement launches school support initiative in Lagos host community

Donates learning facilities to Lady-Lak School in Apapa

DANGOTE Cement Plc has reinforced its commitment to educational advancement and community development with the donation of classroom furniture and learning materials to Ladi-Lak Nursery and Primary School in Apapa, one of its host communities in Lagos State.

The intervention, being carried out by the Cement's Clinker Terminal, under its school support programme, underscores Dangote Cement's continued investment in programmes that enhance the welfare and academic development of children in its host communities.

The initiative included the provision of chairs, tables and other essential educational resources designed to improve the learning environment for pupils and support teachers in delivering quality education.

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



Ekiti State Governor, Biodun Oyebanji (left); Attorney-General/Commissioner for Justice, Dayo Apata (SAN); Justice Jane Inyang; Justice Oyeibisi Folayemi Omoleye, and representative of President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Abubakar Gumel, during a special valedictory court session in honour of Justice Omoleye's retirement and 70th birthday at the High Court Complex, Ado-Ekiti, yesterday.

Adeola backs state police, pledges continuity, reforms in Ogun

By Seye Olumide and Gbenga Salau

THE governorship candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Ogun State, Senator Solomon Olamilekan Adeola, has expressed support for the establishment of state police.

He said that improved security would be central to his administration if elected in 2027.

Adeola, popularly known as Yayi, stated this during a media interaction in Lagos yesterday, where he also described President Bola Tinubu as his political father and commended Governor

Adebutu's govt will prioritise workers' welfare, says running mate

Dapo Abiodun for his administration's achievements.

The APC candidate said he would continue with policies and projects of the Abiodun-led administration that he considered beneficial to the state and make changes in areas where he believed improvements were required.

He said his administration would prioritise infrastructure and urban development as part of efforts to expand economic activities across Ogun State.

According to him, the state

needs to develop infrastructure that would make it more attractive for people who currently work in Ogun but reside in Lagos.

Adeola said Ogun should aspire to have a development relationship with Lagos similar to that between New Jersey and New York in the United States (U.S.)

He said his proposed administration would also pay particular attention to border communities, especially areas adjoining Lagos, as part of efforts to stimulate economic activities and improve

the state's internally generated revenue.

Adeola said the development of border towns would require attention to urban planning, fiscal planning, environmental management and infrastructure.

RELATEDLY, the Deputy Governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Ogun State, Hajia Yemi Sowunmi-Kolapo, has said that the party's standard-bearer, Oladipupo Adebutu, would prioritise workers' welfare if voted into office next year.

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

2027: Makinde targets 41m votes, vows to tackle rigging

From Azimazi Momoh Jimoh, Abuja

THE Makinde/Daura Presidential Campaign Organisation has set a target of securing at least 41 million votes in the 2027 presidential election.

He, however, warned against attempts to manipulate the electoral process.

The vice-presidential candidate of the Allied Peoples Movement (APM), Lawal Daura, disclosed this yesterday at the inauguration of the National Campaign

Management Committee of the organisation.

Daura, who described the task of mobilising voters for the presidential ticket as enormous, said the campaign would focus on canvassing for votes through its programmes, policies and engagement with Nigerians rather than relying on shortcuts.

He said the campaign organisation's target was based on the reported figure of about 103 million registered voters, adding that securing two-

fifths of the electorate would be a major objective of the organisation.

"We are aiming to get nothing less than two-fifths of the 103 million," Daura said.

He warned those contemplating electoral malpractice that the campaign would insist on strict compliance with the Electoral Act.

Daura said the campaign organisation was seeking to reposition the country through what he described as a "reset."

He said the task of resetting

the country would require committed and experienced personnel, noting that the campaign committee had been constituted with individuals considered capable of delivering the objective.

Also speaking, APM National Chairman, Yusuf Dantalle, said the overriding objective of the campaign was to secure victory for the Seyi Makinde/Lawal Daura ticket and form the next government at the federal level.

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

Private jet operators target boom as campaign trips, bookings intensify

By Olusegun Koiki

As political activities gather momentum ahead of the 2027 general elections, politicians and their supporters may spend millions of dollars on private aircraft and helicopter charter services traversing the entire country for almost six months.

The projected expenditure, which could make the 2027 electioneering period one of the busiest for Nigeria's business aviation sector, is expected to cover aircraft charter, crew, fuel, and other operational costs associated with nationwide campaign tours.

An investigation by The Guardian found that private jet charter rates in Nigeria currently range from about \$5,000 to \$7,000 (N6.6 million to N9.3 million) per flight hour, depending on aircraft type, capacity, route, and operating conditions.

Already, activities in the private jet segment have commenced, with politicians making bookings in bits ahead of the peak season.

One of the charter operators told The Guardian that his company had, in the last two weeks, negotiated two charter services for "politicians and personalities," all related to campaigns.

Another operator confirmed that during the same period, three charter services had been booked for politicians and election campaigns.

Unlike scheduled commercial airline services, which are largely denominated in naira, business aviation charter services are generally priced in dollars.

During campaign periods, politicians hire private jets for about four to six hours per trip to both sunset and sunrise airports, costing about

- **Nigeria's private jet fleet increases to 240**
- **'Insecurity, unreliable commercial airlines reasons for private jet preference'**
- **Stakeholders disagree over flight delays, cancellations**

\$30,000 to \$42,000 (N38.8 million and N55.7 million) in total.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has approved 22 registered political parties ahead of the 2027 general elections, with at least a quarter of them expected to charter private jets or helicopters for their election campaigns nationwide.

INEC officially declared campaigns open for the Presidential and National Assembly polls on Wednesday, August 19, while those for governorship and State Houses of Assembly officially kicked off on Tuesday, September 8.

Presidential and National Assembly elections are scheduled to hold on Saturday, January 16, 2027, while those of Governorship and State Houses of Assembly are to hold on Saturday, February 6, 2027.

Candidates and supporters of the major political parties are also expected to undertake multiple visits to states and campaign locations between now and the elections, potentially resulting in thousands of flight hours.

The projected campaign spending comes amid a massive increase in the number of private jets operating in Nigeria.

The Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, had disclosed in July that about 240 private jets were operating in the country, compared with approximately 150 aircraft barely two years earlier.

However, the growth of the sector has also raised concerns over compliance with aviation regulations, partic-

ularly allegations that some aircraft operating under Private Non-Commercial Flight (PNCF) permits are being deployed for commercial charter operations.

In June 2024, Keyamo inaugurated a seven-member Ministerial Task Force to investigate and tackle illegal air charter operations in Nigeria.

Although the committee submitted its report in March 2025, its recommendations are yet to be fully implemented.

Investigations also revealed that election periods usually provide a lucrative market for some aircraft owners, including those who may be tempted to deploy privately registered aircraft for commercial charter services to generate

revenue, support aircraft maintenance, and remunerate crew.

A private jet operator, who preferred to remain anonymous, told The Guardian that business was gaining momentum at the moment.

The source, however, dismissed the claim that the increased patronage by politicians for political campaigns was responsible for the recent flight delays and cancellations among scheduled operators.

According to him, the equipment used for charters is quite different from the one scheduled operators deploy for commercial services.

He said: "The fact is that business has picked up in the last few months, even before the

official lifting of the embargo on political activities by INEC. Some of these politicians have been moving around before then. But we are gradually approaching the peak period. "However, to say the rising political activities were responsible for recent flight delays and cancellations among the scheduled operators may not be true after all. Most of the aircraft used for charter are narrow-body rather than wide-body aeroplanes.

"Having said this, some of the scheduled operators also have jets used for charter, but a responsible airline will not list such for operations once it is scheduled for charter."

The Managing Director of Merchant Express Cargo Airlines, Samuel Caulcrick, said that the proliferation of private jets, particularly during political campaigns, was a manifestation of the country's widening income in-

equality, massive liquidity outside the formal tax net, and weaknesses in the tax system.

Caulcrick said the financial capacity of politicians and wealthy Nigerians to acquire or charter private jets had increased in recent times following market reforms and the emergence of large pools of liquidity in the economy. According to him, it costs an average of \$6,000 (N7.9 million) per flight hour, depending on the aircraft type, route and operating conditions, to charter a private jet.

Caulcrick said a politician undertaking an intensive campaign tour across four states in a weekend could spend more than \$100,000 (N132.7 million) on private aviation alone.

He, however, questioned the source of such funds amid growing poverty in the land, wondering whether the resources affected the economy.

Caulcrick, who was also a former Rector at the Nigerian College of Aviation Technology (NCAT), Zaria, maintained that the burden of inadequate taxation ultimately shifted to the entire population when wealthy individuals and businesses do not contribute proportionately to government revenue.

"Who pays for this lifestyle? The people do. When the top 10 per cent don't pay taxes, the government prints or borrows more or taxes consumption or Value Added Tax (VAT) more. Same market, same food prices.

"Their unpaid taxes become our inflation, as they can afford any price. They then use their cash to buy dollars, land and jets to beat that inflation."

Also, the Chief Executive Of-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29



Chairman, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Professor Joash Amupitan (left) with the representative of the Inspector General of Police, AIG Alonyenu Francis Idu, during the world press conference on INEC's preparation for the forthcoming January, 2027 General Elections held in Abuja, yesterday.

PHOTO: LUCY LADIDI ATEKO

U.S., Türkiye, others join Nigeria in mourning as NAF intensifies recovery of victims' bodies

From Sadiq Omolayo, Nkechi Onyedika-Ugoeze, John Akubo, Andrew Oota (Abuja) and Adewale Momoh (Akure)

THE United States and Türkiye have joined Nigeria in mourning the 25 victims of Monday's Nigerian Air Force (NAF) plane crash in Ondo, as the Air Force released their names and confirmed that no survivors were found.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu had on Monday declared a three-day national mourning for the victims and directed that flags be flown at half-mast throughout the country as a mark of respect to the departed.

The United States Mission in Nigeria, the Republic of Türkiye and the Displaced Children Foundation Canada expressed condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of the deceased.

The U.S. Mission conveyed its condolences in a post shared on its official X account yesterday, joining the growing tributes to the victims of the

- **Army, Navy condole with Air Force over loss of personnel**
- **NAF launches investigation, urges public to shun speculation**
- **Senate suspends security summit over national mourning**
- **Swamp buggies deployed as difficult terrain hampers recovery**
- **CAN, ADC demand probe, maintenance funding audit**
- **Aiyedatiwa pledges state support for search, recovery efforts**

crash.

"The U.S. Mission in Nigeria sends our deepest condolences to the families, friends, and colleagues of those lost in yesterday's Nigerian Air Force crash," the mission said.

It added that the condolences were in line with the longstanding security relationship between Nigeria and the United States.

"We stand with the people of Nigeria and remain committed to our strong security partnership," the mission said.

Similarly, the Republic of Türkiye expressed deep sadness over the loss of lives in the military aircraft crash.

The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a statement issued yesterday by the Turkish

Embassy in Abuja, extended condolences to the families of the victims and the people of Nigeria.

In the statement titled "Regarding the Military Aircraft Crash in Nigeria," the ministry said: "We are deeply saddened by the loss of lives resulting from the crash of a military aircraft in Ondo State of Nigeria. We extend our condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in this tragic accident, and to the people of Nigeria."

The ministry conveyed Türkiye's sympathy to the affected families and the Nigerian people following the incident.

The Displaced Children Foundation Canada expressed its

condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of the victims.

In a statement issued in Calgary, Alberta, yesterday, the Canadian charitable organisation said it was extending its "deepest, most heartfelt condolences" to the families, friends and colleagues of the 25 passengers and crew members who lost their lives in the NAF ATR-42 aircraft crash.

The foundation, which focuses on humanitarian efforts and supporting vulnerable children and families affected by conflict in Nigeria, said the tragedy was felt deeply across its global community.

It expressed solidarity with the Nigerian Air Force leadership, the armed forces and

the country during the three-day period of national mourning.

"Our thoughts and fervent prayers are with the grieving families who are facing unimaginable pain today," the founders of the foundation, Joseph and Karen Ogezi, said.

"We pray that they find comfort, strength, and fortitude in the days ahead, and we offer our highest assurances of our continued prayers and support."

The Nigerian Army and Nigerian Navy also commiserated with the Nigerian Air Force and families of the victims.

The Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lieutenant General Waidi Shaibu, in a condolence message on behalf of officers, soldiers and civilian staff of the Nigerian Army, expressed solidarity with the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Sunday Kelvin Aneke, and the entire Nigerian Air Force family.

Shaibu said the Army shared in the grief of the Air Force following the tragic loss of its personnel in the accident.

The COAS prayed for strength and comfort for the families of the deceased, adding that the Nigerian Army stood in solidarity with the NAF at this difficult moment.

Also, the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Idi Abbas, on behalf of officers, ratings and civilian staff of the Nigerian Navy, commiserated with Aneke and the entire NAF family.

The Naval Chief expressed condolences over the loss of the personnel and prayed for strength for the bereaved families.

The Navy said it stood in solidarity with the Nigerian Air Force and prayed for the peaceful repose of the souls of the departed servicemen.

No survivors as NAF releases names of 25 victims

THE Nigerian Air Force has released the names of 25 personnel and passengers who died in the crash.

The NAF also confirmed that no survivors have been found following the accident, which occurred while the aircraft

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

2027: Excitement as INEC updates NDC logo on portal

From John Akubo

THE opposition camp has received a fresh boost ahead of the 2027 presidential election after the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) logo appeared on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) portal.

The development has triggered excitement among supporters of Peter Obi and Rabiun Musa Kwankwaso, who are pushing the "OK" ticket as a major challenge to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC).

The NDC logo update followed a court ruling affirming the party's registration, giving fresh momentum to the political platform on which Obi is seeking to contest the 2027 presidential election.

For supporters, the develop-

Aide faults Dokubo on linking Olu of Warri to N2.7tr pipeline contract

SOLE Representative of the Olu of Warri to the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC)/JV Partners, Collins Oritsetimeyin Edema, has challenged ex-militant and maverick traditional ruler, Asari Dokubo, to produce documentary evidence showing that the Olu of Warri, Ogiame Atuwatse III, receives N2.7 trillion yearly from pipeline surveillance contracts awarded by the NNPC.

Edema said that Dokubo's public image remains deeply associated with militancy, confrontation and an uncompromising style of political expression. The Warri monarch's aide, who gave the challenge in a statement dated Tuesday, October 6, and titled 'Re: Allegation by Asari Dokubo that The Olu Of Warri Receives N2.7 trillion Annually From Pipeline Surveillance Contracts,' described Dokubo's language as frequently categorical, provocative and insufficiently restrained.

According to Edema, pipeline surveillance contracts in Nigeria are not ordinary commercial arrangements, because oil and gas constitute a critical national asset, and the security of pipelines has direct implications for crude-oil production, government revenue, foreign exchange earnings and the wider stability of the national economy.

The statement said: "Given the extraordinary nature of this allegation, its potential implications for the reputation of the Olu of Warri, and, more importantly, the strategic importance of pipeline surveillance to the Nigerian state, we consider it necessary to respond publicly and directly to the relevant institutions of the Federal Government.

Dickson lauds judiciary, electoral umpire

ment represents more than a technical update on the electoral commission's portal. They see it as confirmation that the Obi-Kwankwaso ticket is gaining institutional ground as the race for the presidency intensifies.

The growing opposition mood is driven largely by anger over worsening insecurity, rising taxes, economic hardship, and what critics describe as the APC administration's failure to deliver on its promises.

Across social media and political gatherings, supporters have intensified mobilisa-

tion with slogans including, "Our votes must count this time" and "Obi is coming."

The message is clear: supporters want the 2027 election to be fought not only at campaign rallies but also around the protection and counting of every vote cast.

The development comes amid repeated warnings by INEC against violence, intimidation and other actions capable of undermining the electoral process.

As the 2027 contest gathers steam, the political battle is increasingly shaping up as a referendum on the perform-

ance of the APC government, with opposition forces seeking to turn public frustration into electoral change.

Questions over President Bola Tinubu's capacity to continue leading the country have also entered the political conversation, adding another layer to an already heated contest.

With the NDC now visibly reflected on INEC's platform, the Obi-Kwankwaso camp appears increasingly determined to convert its growing grassroots enthusiasm into a formidable electoral challenge to the ruling party.

MEANWHILE, the national leader of the NDC, Seriake Dickson, has reacted to the upload of the party's approved logo on the INEC portal.

In a post on his verified X handle yesterday, Dickson appreciated the Nigerian judiciary and the INEC Chairman, Prof. Joash Amupitan, and all members of the commission's team for complying with the court judgment.

Dickson also extended gratitude to the National Chairman of the NDC, Moses Cleopas, and the members of the National Executive Committee (NEC) for their

hard work.

The former Bayelsa State governor called for all hands to be on deck to ensure that all candidates campaign freely and take their messages to every part of Nigeria without intimidation.

NOA decries dearth of optometrists in Cross River hospitals

Doctors confirm me medically blind, but I can see, Mbaka claims

From Solomon Azu, Calabar

THE spectre of avoidable blindness looms large in Cross River State as the entire state's civil service parades only two qualified Optometrists to serve over four million residents across 18 local council areas.

The Nigerian Optometric Association (NOA), Cross River Chapter, raised the alarm yesterday, warning that the acute manpower shortage has left millions, especially in rural communities, at the mercy of quacks.

The association chairperson, Dr Ogechi Cecilia Chukwu, who disclosed this during an advocacy visit to the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Press Centre, Calabar, ahead of World Sight Day 2026, said the situation is a public health emergency.

"Cross River State today has only two Optometrists in state government employment. How can two Optometrists serve four million people? It is impossible. Blindness is looming if nothing is done urgently," Chukwu warned.

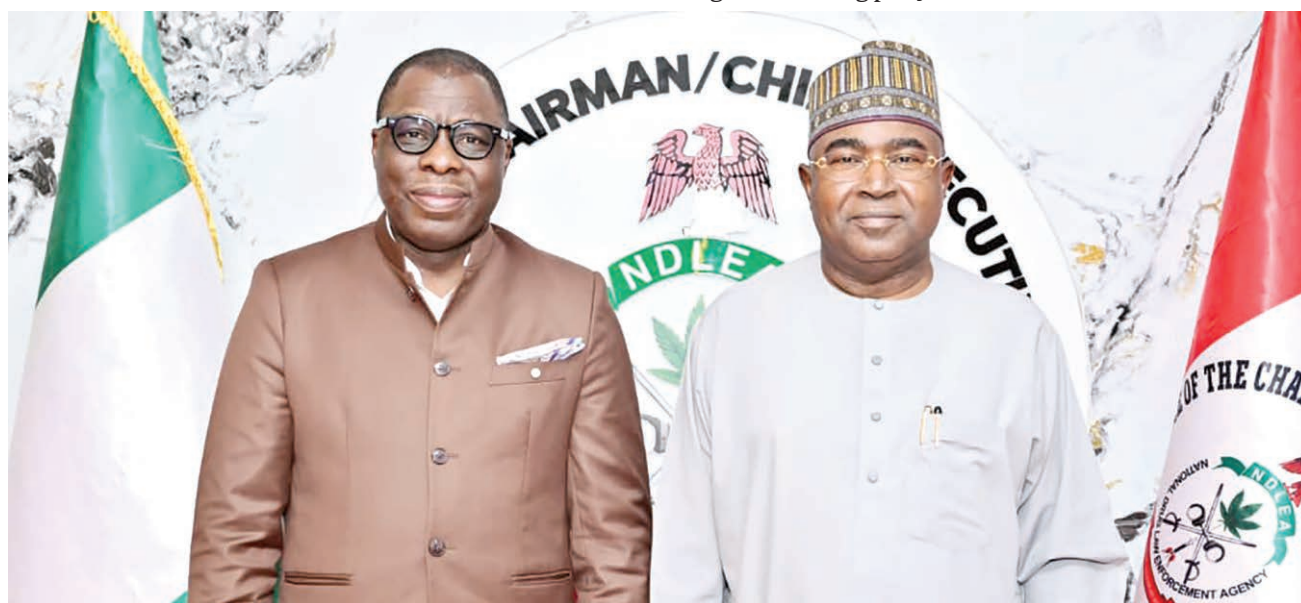
Trans-Forcados Oil Spill: Oborevwoi orders medical intervention, cleanup

From Monday Osayande, Asaba

DELTA State Governor, Sheriff Oborevwoi, has ordered immediate medical intervention and urgent measures to tackle the devastating impact of the oil spill along the Trans-Forcados pipeline, saying the state government would not allow affected communities to suffer unnecessarily.

Oborevwoi, who spoke during an inspection visit to Odidi Community, Warri South-West Local Council Area, directed the Commissioner for Health to immediately deploy medical teams to affected communities to assess residents and determine the health implications of the pollution.

The governor was accompanied by the Speaker of the Delta State House of Assembly, Emomotimi Guwor; Commissioner of Police, CP Samuel Erale; Commander, 63 Brigade, Nigerian Army, Asaba, Brig-Gen. Ibrahim Buhari; Commander, Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) Delta, Warri, Commodore Shehu Tasiu; Commander, 3144 Operating Base, Nigerian Air Force, Warri, Group Capt. Charles Abara.



Managing Director/CEO, NLNG Limited, Adeleye Falade (left) and Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Brig. Gen. Mohammed Buba Marwa (rtd), during a courtesy visit to the NDLEA National Headquarters in Abuja, yesterday.

Geometric Power targets 500MW capacity as Afreximbank backs Aba project

By Helen Oji and Waliat Musa

GEOMETRIC Power Group is positioning its Aba power project for expansion to as much as 500 megawatts as the company seeks to meet rising electricity demand across the Southeast and South-South regions.

The Group Managing Director of the company, Mrs Agatha Nnaji, disclosed this yesterday while explaining the next phase of the company's expansion and the financing support that helped it complete the Aba Integrated Power Project.

Nnaji said the company currently had 141 megawatts of

NDPHC expands dedicated power supply to businesses

installed capacity from three turbines, while the foundation for a fourth turbine had already been completed.

She said the fourth turbine would raise installed capacity to 188 megawatts, adding that the company had designed its gas infrastructure to support further expansion to 500 megawatts. "Our 12-inch gas pipeline, which is about 27 kilometres from Owaza to here, would provide enough gas for up to 500 megawatts within this footprint," she said.

Nnaji said the expansion would enable Geometric

Power to serve more customers in Aba and potentially supply distribution companies in the South-East and South-South.

She explained that the company had already supplied electricity to some underserved communities in Rivers State, although extending its operations beyond its immediate franchise area required approval from the relevant distribution company and the regulator.

She said the company's expansion strategy was based on a value chain cover-

ing gas supply, generation, substations, distribution transformers and end users.

According to her, this integrated approach would make it easier for the company to increase generation as demand grows.

MEANWHILE, the Niger Delta Power Holding Company (NDPHC) is expanding its efforts to connect more manufacturers, industries, and large commercial operators to dedicated electricity supply through its Eligible Customer Programme, as the company moves to unlock additional capacity from its generation portfolio.

Federal government to unify procurement rules as BPP takes reform to states, LGs

From Obinna Nwaoku, Port Harcourt

THE Federal Government moves to establish a common public procurement standard across Nigeria's federal, state and local governments, warning that federal reforms cannot succeed if procurement weaknesses persist at the grassroots.

The Senior Special Adviser to the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (STF), Prof. Bernard Babatunde, who represented the SGF, George Akume, at the opening of the 2026 procurement capacity training in Port Harcourt,

said procurement remained the link between government budgets and actual development.

"Public procurement is a critical instrument for translating government policies, budget and development plans into tangible benefits," he said.

Babatunde warned that poor planning, weak contract management and disregard for due process could fuel waste, delays and substandard projects, insisting that every naira must deliver measurable value.

The Director-General of the Federal Bureau for Public

Procurement (BPP), Dr Adebawale Adedokun, said that more than 700 officials had registered for the programme, which is being delivered in two batches, with about 350 attending the first session in Port Harcourt. He said the inclusion of state and local council officials was deliberate, stressing: "If the procurement process at the federal level is undergoing transformation, and you are leaving out the states and local councils, you will not be making much progress."

The DG said the programme would combine training with mentorship from expe-

rienced Nigerian and international procurement professionals to rebuild a culture of competence, ethics and painstaking preparation.

Rivers State BPP Director-General, Dr Ine Briggs, described the federal-state collaboration as a major step towards closing gaps in procurement knowledge and implementation.

"At the core of it is that public procurement is for the benefit of the people," she said, assuring that Rivers would embrace innovations designed to strengthen professional standards and knowledge-sharing.

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Ekiti court jails woman 14 years for stealing newborn, declares her fugitive

From Ayodele Afolabi, Ekiti

AN Ekiti State High Court sitting in Ado-Ekiti has sentenced a 37-year-old woman, Deborah Ayeni, to 14 years in prison for stealing a newborn baby, after she failed to appear in court during her trial.

Justice Lekan Olatawura, who delivered the judgment yesterday, also declared Ayeni a fugitive and ordered security agencies to apprehend her.

The court further sentenced her father and another surety to six months' imprisonment each for failing to produce her in court as required under the bail conditions.

Justice Olatawura directed the court registrar to forward copies of the judgment and a letter declaring Ayeni a fugitive to the Comptroller-General of Customs, the Nigeria Police and the media to facilitate her arrest.

He ordered that Ayeni's 14-year sentence should begin from the day she is apprehended.

The judge had earlier revoked the bail granted to Ayeni after she repeatedly failed to appear in court to answer to the charge against her.

Ayeni was first arraigned on September 1, 2025, on a one-count charge of child stealing. She pleaded not guilty.

According to the prosecution, led by Ibironke Odetola, Ayeni committed the offence on August 4, 2025, in Ado-Ekiti, when she allegedly stole a newborn baby belonging to Mustapher Aliu and his wife, Falmata.

Odetola told the court that Ayeni was arrested and detained at the Correctional Centre in Ado-Ekiti before being granted bail in the sum of N2 million, with two sureties required to enter recognisance in the same amount.

The prosecutor said the prosecution called four witnesses during the trial, but Ayeni disappeared while the third witness was being called.

She said Ayeni had told her counsel, Stephen Ade-muagun, that she had been kidnapped along the road, after which she stopped appearing in



court.

Odetola said Ayeni's father, who was one of her sureties, appeared in court once and told the judge that his daughter was at home when he was asked about her whereabouts.

The prosecutor said investigations revealed that Ayeni had allegedly lost a pregnancy

around May 2025 and, fearing that the development could affect her marriage, told her husband, who lives abroad, that she was pregnant and due to give birth.

According to her, Ayeni invited her husband to Nigeria for the purported delivery and used clothes wrapped around her stomach to make him believe she was pregnant.

"She thereafter went to a hospital in the Okeyinmi area of Ado-Ekiti and stole the baby from the complainants," Odetola told the court.

She said Ayeni later handed the baby to a midwife for care after telling her husband that she had buried the placenta.

The midwife, according to the prosecutor, became suspicious of Ayeni's conduct and alerted the police, leading to her arrest.

Odetola said the stolen child was subsequently rescued alive by the police.

The prosecutor said the offence contravened Section 292 of the Criminal Law of Ekiti State, 2021.

Police vow crackdown as renewed cult violence claims three lives in Bayelsa

From Julius Osahon, Yenagoo

THE Bayelsa State Police Command has ordered intensified operations against cult groups and warned their members, sponsors and collaborators that they would be arrested and prosecuted as renewed cult violence in Yenagoo, the state capital, has reportedly claimed at least three lives in three days.

The Commissioner of Police, Ajao Saka Adewale, directed Divisional Police Officers (DPOs) and tactical commanders to step up patrols in vulnerable areas, identify emerging threats and act promptly on credible intelligence about planned clashes, initiation ceremonies and recruitment.

The directive followed reports of renewed clashes between rival cult groups in parts of Yenagoo, raising concerns among residents and threatening the relative calm

that had prevailed in the state capital in recent months.

According to information by The Guardian, at least three people have reportedly been killed in the renewed violence.

In one of the incidents, a woman, said to be the mother of a leader of one of the rival groups, reportedly lost a hand while attempting to protect her son, who was subsequently killed in the Agudama area of Yenagoo.

At Swali, an area notorious for cult-related activities and gangsterism, a young man who reportedly took to roadside trading after losing his job at a filling station was attacked and shot.

He was said to have survived the attack.

Another young man, described by residents as popular in the St Peter's Street area of Down Yenagoo, was reportedly shot dead.

Mutilated body found in Plateau as gunmen kill 13 in separate attacks

• Nine passengers among victims as violence hits Jos South, Mangu, Riyom

From Isa Abdulsalmi Ahovi, Jos

THE discovery of the body of an unidentified man behind the Monday Market in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State has heightened concerns over insecurity in the state, coming barely two days after suspected terrorists killed 13 people in separate attacks in Jos South, Mangu and Riyom councils.

The body was found yesterday morning by community members, who alerted security operatives.

The remains were subsequently evacuated to the General Hospital, Pankshin, where residents gathered as efforts were made to estab-

lish the identity of the deceased.

A community source, Panshak Rogo, said: "Presently, we are at the General Hospital. We are here because there is an unidentified individual who was killed around Monday Market."

"The remains are yet to be identified because some sensitive organs have been removed from the body. His ears and nose were cut off, while his private part has also been tampered with," Rogo said.

He urged residents whose relatives or friends had been reported missing to contact the police to assist with possible identification of the deceased.

Police intensify manhunt for suspect over death of PalmPay agent in Delta

From Monday Osayande, Asaba

THE Delta State Police Command has intensified efforts to apprehend a suspect allegedly linked to the death of a PalmPay agent, Justin Azubike Owefu, popularly known as "Biggie," in Abraka, Ethiope East Local Council of the state.

The command's spokesperson, Bright Edafe, confirmed yesterday that the suspect had yet to be arrested but said operatives were actively searching for him, assuring that the police would continue their investigation into the circumstances surrounding Owefu's death and ensure that justice was served.

Owefu, who was reportedly in his 30s, was described by relatives and associates as an industrious and resourceful young man.

He hailed maternally from



Late Owefu

Obiaruku in Ukwuani Local Council and paternally from Aragba-Orogun in Ughelli North Local Council, both in Delta State.

He was a graduate of Delta State University, Abraka, married, and a father of a 10-year-old daughter. Until his death, he worked as a PalmPay agent

covering Obiaruku, Abraka and Warri.

According to accounts by his relatives and associates, the incident that led to his death was allegedly connected to a phone-financing arrangement operated through PalmPay, under which customers could obtain mobile phones and repay the cost in instalments. The Guardian learnt that the arrangement reportedly allows financed phones to be remotely restricted when customers default on agreed payments.

Owefu was said to have facilitated the purchase of a phone valued at about N185,000 by a customer, Moses Okitikpi of Abraka.

Okitikpi reportedly paid an initial deposit of N30,000 and agreed to repay the balance at N11,000 weekly.

'Don't turn Coastal Highway into inland road'

By Bertram Nwannekanma

FOR residents of Ondo State's coastal communities, the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway is being viewed as more than another road project. It represents a potential lifeline to markets, jobs, tourism and the wider economy.

But the reported decision to realign the highway through parts of Edo State, bypassing a substantial stretch of Ondo's coastline, has raised fresh concerns about

whether communities in Ilaje Local Council will be left on the margins of a project designed to transform Nigeria's coastal belt. A Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Ebun-Olu Adegboruwa, said the controversy deserved serious attention, arguing that it was not simply an Ilaje or Ondo State matter but one with wider implications for the Niger Delta and national development.

Adegboruwa said groups in-

cluding Afenifere, the Ilaje Committee of Lawyers, Itsekiri and Iwore groups, traditional rulers and other stakeholders had questioned the reported realignment and called for greater transparency from the Federal Government.

He said the approximately 100-kilometre coastline attributed to Ondo should be regarded as an economic asset, particularly as Nigeria seeks to expand its blue economy.

Four injured as truck crashes into vehicles, motorcycles in Lagos

By Benjamin Alade

FOUR people sustained serious injuries yesterday when a Mack truck carrying a 40-foot container reportedly suffered brake failure and crashed into vehicles and commercial motorcycles at First Gate, inward Mile 2, Lagos.

The crash involved the Mack truck, another truck carrying a 20-foot container, a T4 commercial bus with registration number AAA 723 YF and nine commercial motorcyclists.

Preliminary findings by security officials indicated that the Mack truck lost brak-

ing control before hitting the other vehicles and motorcycles in a chain-reaction crash.

The injured victims — three men and a woman — reportedly sustained multiple fractures to their arms and legs.

Operatives of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA), who were conducting traffic operations in the area, responded to the scene and began rescue and traffic management operations. LASTMA personnel extricated the victims from the wreckage and handed them over to officers of the Roro Police Division.



Rescuers at the incident scene.

Commuters await cheaper fares as Tinubu’s October 1 transport promise stalls

By Glory Sunday

DESPITE the Federal Government’s October 1 target for Nigerians to begin experiencing measurable reductions in transportation costs, commuters in Lagos are yet to see any significant drop in fares, with fuel prices and daily transport costs remaining high.

President Bola Tinubu had, on September 19, said Nigerians should begin to see reductions in transportation costs from October 1, following an agreement with the 36 state governors.

He said an implementation committee had been established under the National Affordable CNG Transit Programme to identify priority transport corridors, determine appropriate interventions and put the necessary arrangements in place.

Tinubu also directed state governments to work with transport unions and

commercial operators, support vehicle conversion and fleet deployment, facilitate infrastructure and ensure that savings from cheaper energy were passed on to commuters

through lower fares.

The announcement came as the Federal Government expanded its Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) public transport initiative, with Lagos

receiving 20 additional high-capacity CNG buses on September 30, a day before the October 1 target.

The buses were handed over to the Lagos Metropolitan Area

Transport Authority (LAMATA), with its Managing Director, Abimbola Akinajo, saying the additional vehicles would increase public transport capacity and connect communities across the state. The buses were expected to be deployed on routes with identified capacity gaps, particularly the Ikorodu-TBS corridor.

According to LAMATA, the latest delivery brought the number of CNG buses within Lagos’ regulated public transport system to about 170.

However, checks by *The Guardian* yesterday showed that the expected reduction in fares was not yet evident on several routes.

For instance, a trip from Ojota to Oshodi cost N1,000 on September 23, while the fare from Ojota to Toyota on the Oshodi Expressway was N1,300. The N1,300 fare was still being charged on the route yesterday.

On the Ikeja-Fagba route, commuters travelling by conventional buses paid N400 from Ikeja to Ogba and another

N500 from Ogba to Fagba, bringing the total cost to N900.

Other routes monitored yesterday also showed little evidence of a fare reduction.

A trip from Cele to CMS cost about N1,500, while commuters paid another N1,500 from CMS to Oshodi. The fare from CMS to Ikotun was N1,800.

Oshodi to Obalende cost between N1,300 and N1,600, while commuters travelling from Mowe to Adeniji paid about N1,400. A trip from Adeniji to Obalende cost N500, while another N500 was charged from Obalende to the Eko Hotel roundabout.

Passengers interviewed said they were largely unaware of the promised reduction, and in some cases, did not know where to access the government-backed CNG transport services.

A passenger, simply identified as Ejiroghene, said she was unaware of the October 1 target but welcomed any move that could reduce the burden of daily transportation.



Pi-CNG & EV Chief Operating Officer Tosin Coker (left) presenting the CNG vehicles to Lagos Commissioner for Transportation, Oluwaseun Osiyemi and LAMATA MD, Abimbola Akinajo at LAMATA PLACE in Ketu-Ojota, recently

LAWMA withdraws licences of six PSP operators over poor capacity

By Bertram Nwannekanma

THE Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) has withdrawn the operating licences of six Private Sector Participation (PSP) operators over concerns about their capacity to effectively provide waste collection services in their respective areas.

The Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of LAWMA, Dr Muyiwa Gbadegesin, disclosed this on Tuesday during a management briefing at the

Authority’s headquarters in Ijora-Olopa, Lagos.

Gbadegesin said the decision was part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the PSP waste collection system and ensure that operators entrusted with serving Lagos communities had the capacity to meet required service standards.

He said: “Our responsibility is to ensure that every operator serving Lagos residents has the capacity to deliver reliable and efficient waste collection services. Where an operator is

unable to meet the required capacity, we will take the necessary regulatory action to protect service delivery and the interests of residents.”

The affected operators are K-HS Integrated Services, formerly Gboleybos Nigeria Limited, in Igbogbo-Baiyeku; Deshasat Enterprises in Olorunda; Bailas Nigeria Company in Ojo; Guestimate Environmental Protection Company in Orile Agege; Evabol Ventures in Ajeromi-Ifelodun; and Korad Closet

Empire Limited in Ojodu.

The affected service locations are Ward C1, Slot A, Abosan, Igbogbo-Baiyeku; Ibereko (LIMCA), Olorunda; Sabo Oniba, Ojo; Papa Ashafa II, Orile Agege; Oluwa 1, Ajeromi-Ifelodun; and Oke-Ira/Powerline, Ojodu.

According to the LAWMA boss, K-HS Integrated Services voluntarily withdrew from its service area, while the licences of the other five operators were terminated following concerns over their service capacity.

So-Safe Corps arrests two Beninese over alleged theft

From Segun Ayinde, Abeokuta

OPERATIVES of the Ogun State Community, Social Orientation and Safety Corps, known as So-Safe Corps, have arrested two Beninese, identified as Monday and Vovo, over the alleged theft of pumping machines at Ajambata, Sokoto Road, Atan-Ota, Ogun State.

The suspects were arrested on Monday, October 5, 2026, following a distress call from members of the community who reported that some men had been caught with pumping machines allegedly stolen from a burgled

premises.

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

Ganzallo said operatives on patrol in the area responded immediately to the report and apprehended the suspects.

He said preliminary interrogation revealed that both suspects were natives of Cotonou, Benin Republic.

Monday reportedly told the operatives that he had been living in Atan for several years,

while Vovo said he arrived in the area a few months ago.

According to the commander, Monday denied



Suspects with recovered stolen pumping machines

personally accompanying Vovo to remove the pumping machines but admitted that he usually helped to find buyers for stolen items. Vovo reportedly confirmed the claim.

Ganzallo said the suspects and recovered exhibits were taken to the Atan Area Command, where three individuals identified and claimed the recovered items.

He added that the suspects had been handed over to the Nigeria Police Force, Atan Divisional Headquarters, for further investigation and possible prosecution.

NAF, PSNAFSA, mourn 25 victims of Ondo aircraft crash

By Ayonote Clement

THE Nigerian Air Force (NAF) has mourned the 25 personnel and passengers who died when its ATR-42 aircraft, NAF 931, crashed in the Igbokoda area of Ondo State.

The aircraft, which had five crew members and 20 passengers on board, crashed while on a routine mission from Benin to Lagos.

The NAF said search-and-rescue operations were activated immediately in coordination with relevant authorities, but no survivor had been found.

The Service subsequently released the names of all 25

people on board, confirming the full complement of those affected by the crash.

It, however, did not provide further details on the recovery or formal identification of the remains.

The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Sunday Kelvin Aneke, expressed condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of the victims, describing the crash as a deeply painful moment for the NAF and the nation.

Aneke assured the bereaved families of the Service’s support as they come to terms with the loss.

The five crew members were Squadron Leader MI Aburime, the flight captain; Squadron Leader AP Man-Ugwueje and Flight Lieutenant IS Bako, co-pilots; Warrant Officer Abubakar A, an aircraft technician; and Corporal Uguru HC, also an aircraft technician.

The 20 passengers were Flight Lieutenant TL Lazarus, Flight Lieutenant M Akinloye, Flying Officer IM Adeshina, Master Warrant Officer Onwuika F, Master Warrant Officer Matini BA, Warrant Officer Nuhu FS, Flight Sergeant James RB, Flight Sergeant Mohammed AI, Sergeant Ani AE, Sergeant

Izibenikien SI, Sergeant Alafuka C, Sergeant Mbadugha AN, Lance Corporal Ugwuba FC, Lance Corporal Eledan GE, Mrs Ezech Nneka, Godstime Tarabina, Joy Michael, Sunday Michael, Ukeme David and Gideon Omotola.

The NAF has ordered a comprehensive investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding the crash and urged members of the public to avoid speculation or the circulation of unverified information.

The Service also appealed to Nigerians to respect the privacy and dignity of the affected families as they grieve their loved ones.

Murder suspect dies after slumping in Bayelsa court

From Julius Osahon, Yenagoa

A 50-year-old murder suspect, Bethlehem Nwanlia, yesterday slumped and died while awaiting judgment in a Bayelsa State High Court case involving allegations of conspiracy, kidnapping and multiple murders.

Nwanlia reportedly collapsed shortly after the court adjourned the delivery of its final judgment to October 27, 2026, because of the absence of the presiding judge.

The incident occurred at the High Court, presided over by Justice Amadise Michael Ekadi, leaving correctional officials, police personnel, lawyers and others in shock.

Nwanlia and two other suspects, Gideon Atama, 32, and Clever Ovo, were arrested by police operatives attached to Operation Puff Adder, now known as the Violent Crime Response Unit, headed by CSP Chris Nwaogbo.

The suspects were being prosecuted over the 2022 killings of Odeinyefa Ogbolosingha, an in-law of Bayelsa State Governor, Douye Diri; the Paramount Ruler of Kalaba, Kolibo Francis Amabelimo; and Samuel Oburo in Kalaba community, Yenagoa Local Government Area.

Nwanlia was said to have developed health complications, including high blood pressure and stroke, while in custody at the Medium Security Custodial Centre, Okaka.

An eyewitness told *The Guardian* that tension rose at the court’s holding area after the adjournment of the judgment was announced.

The source said Nwanlia suddenly clutched his chest, slumped and became unresponsive.

“Immediately the adjournment was announced, one of the suspects clutched his chest, slumped and died,” the source said.

Ibusa professional women offer free medical care to over 1,500 Delta residents

By Sunday Aikulola

MORE than 1,500 residents of Ibusa in Oshimili North Local Council of Delta State have benefited from a three-day community service programme organised by the Association of Ibusa Professional Women (AIPROW) in collaboration with the Ibusa Association, USA.

The programme featured a career talk on the girl-child mandate, distribution of wheelchairs to people living with disabilities, a mental health seminar and a free medical outreach.

The medical outreach attracted residents from Ibusa and neighbouring communities and offered free consultations, vital signs checks, blood sugar tests,

eye examinations and cancer screening. Beneficiaries who required further assistance also received medications and eyeglasses.

The turnout exceeded the organisers’ expectations, with more than 600 people attending the medical outreach alone.

AIPROW President, Elizabeth Idigbe, said the crowd prompted the organisers to mobilise additional personnel and resources.

“We have more than 600 people here, and we have been attending to people continuously. Every time I looked around, I asked myself, ‘Are we really attending to everyone?’ because the crowd just keeps coming,” she said.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF BGL PLC



NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 30th Annual General Meeting of BGL Plc (the "Company") will hold virtually/through teleconference on 30th October 2026, at 10.00 a.m. You will be asked to consider and, if thought fit, to pass the following resolutions:

ORDINARY BUSINESS:

- To receive the Company's Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December, 2025 together with the Reports of the Directors, External Auditors and Statutory Audit Committee thereon.
- To authorize the Board and Company Secretary to regularize / remove from the company's corporate records at the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), names of directors who have resigned, been removed or are deceased
- To authorise the Directors to fix the remunerations of the Auditor for the 2026 financial year.
- To disclose the remuneration of the managers of the company in line with the provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020.
- To elect /re-elect members of the Statutory Audit Committee.

SPECIAL BUSINESS/SPECIAL RESOLUTION

To consider and, if deemed fit, to pass the following resolutions as Special Resolutions of the Company, subject to applicable laws and regulatory approvals

- Subject to the Company obtaining applicable regulatory approvals and the confirmation of the Federal High Court (the "Court"), pursuant to Sections 130, 131 and 145 of the CAMA, the amount standing to the credit of the Company's share premium account be reduced by such amount as will be sufficient to write-off the negative retained earnings of the Company with reference to the information in the later of (i) the Company's annual financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2025 or (ii) the Company's latest quarterly financial statements immediately prior to the date of the Court Order confirming the share capital reduction. Following the application referred to above, the remaining balance standing to the credit of the Company's share premium account, or such portion thereof as the Board may determine (having regard to the Company's working capital requirements and cash and cash equivalents as reported in the later of (i) the Company's annual financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2025 or (ii) the Company's latest quarterly financial statements immediately prior to the date of the Court Order confirming the share capital reduction by the Board.
- The Board, the Company Secretary and the management of the Company are hereby authorised to obtain all applicable regulatory approvals, take all steps and do all acts, matters and things as may be necessary, incidental or desirable for the purpose of giving effect to the foregoing resolutions, including appointing transaction advisers, approving and executing all relevant documents, filings, notices and applications, and taking such further actions as may be required by the Court, any regulatory authority or applicable law.
- Any two Directors of the Company, or any Director and the Company Secretary are hereby authorised to take all steps and do all acts that the Board may deem necessary or reasonably desirable to implement the Resolutions above.
- To authorise the Board and Management to do all acts and take all actions to give effect to the above resolutions subject to all and any regulatory authorization that may be required.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

In Respect of Special Business - Resolutions F to I (Share Premium Reduction Scheme)

1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The Board of Directors of BGL Plc (the "Company") wishes to inform Shareholders that as at 31st December, 2025, the Company has accumulated negative retained earnings of N28,804,238,000 as disclosed in the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December, 2025. The negative retained earnings position arose primarily as a result of [legacy trading losses / impairment of investments / operational losses over the years]. Under the provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020 (CAMA), a Company is not permitted to declare or pay dividend while it has negative retained earnings. This position constrains the Company's ability to return value to Shareholders despite having a significant credit balance in its Share Premium Account. The Directors have therefore proposed a capital reorganization exercise to clean up the Company's balance sheet and reposition it for future dividend payments and recapitalization.

2. NATURE OF THE SCHEME

The proposed Scheme involves:

- Reduction of the amount standing to the credit of the Company's Share Premium Account by an amount sufficient to write-off the accumulated negative retained earnings; and
- Application of the remaining balance in the Share Premium Account, if any, as the Board may determine, in accordance with the provisions of CAMA. This is to be carried out pursuant to Sections 131 and 145 of CAMA 2020 which permit a Company, subject to confirmation by the Federal High Court, to reduce its share premium account. The amount to be reduced shall be determined with reference to the later of:
 - the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December, 2025; or
 - the latest quarterly management accounts immediately prior to the date of the Court Order confirming the reduction.

3. OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME

The proposed Share Premium Reduction will:

- Eliminate the negative retained earnings and create a clean balance sheet;
- Enable the Company to be in a position to declare dividends in the future when profits are made;

- Improve the Company's financial outlook and enhance investor confidence; and
- Facilitate compliance with the provisions of CAMA 2020 on dividend payment.

4. EFFECT OF THE SCHEME

- On Share Capital: There will be no change to the issued share capital or number of shares in issue. Shareholders' percentage holding will remain unchanged.
- On Creditors: The Scheme will not affect the Company's ability to meet its obligations to creditors. The reduction is purely an accounting adjustment within equity. The creditors' interests are protected as the reduction requires Court confirmation.
- On Shareholders: No cash outflow to Shareholders. The Scheme does not involve return of capital. It will enable the Company to have positive retained earnings going forward.

5. REGULATORY APPROVALS AND COURT CONFIRMATION

The implementation of the Scheme is subject to:

- Approval of Shareholders by Special Resolution at this AGM (75% majority required);
- Confirmation by the Federal High Court; and
- Approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission and other relevant regulatory authorities.

6. ACTION TO BE TAKEN

Shareholders are requested to:

- Consider and if thought fit, approve Resolutions F to I as Special Resolutions;
- Complete the Proxy Form and return to the Registrars not later than 48 hours before the meeting if you are unable to attend virtually.

The Board of Directors recommends that Shareholders vote IN FAVOUR of Resolutions F to I as it is in the best interest of the Company and its Shareholders.

7. THE SCHEME IN NUMBERS

- The Share Premium Account of N40,033,083,000 be reduced by (N28,804,238,000) and the said sum be applied to eliminate accumulated losses in full.
- Effect after reduction:

Item	Before	After
Share Premium	N40,033,083,000	N11,228,845,000
Accumulated Losses	(N28,804,238,000)	NIL
Issued Share Capital	N8,271,907,000	N8,271,907,000
Net Assets	N16,448,634,000	N16,448,634,000
Number of Shares	16,543,814,000	16,543,814,000

No cash will leave the Company. No shareholder will receive cash. It is a book entry to clean the balance sheet

1. Proxy

A member entitled to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting is entitled to appoint a Proxy in his/her stead. A Proxy need not be a member of the company. A proxy form is attached to the Notice, and it is valid for the purpose of the meeting. All Instruments of Proxy should be duly stamped at the Stamp Duties office and deposited at the office of the Registrars, Unity Registrar Limited 25 Ogunlana Drive, Surulere Lagos or sent via info@unityregistrarsng.com or unityregistrars1@gmail.com not later than 48 Hours prior to the time of the meeting. In the case of Joint Shareholders, the signature of any one of them will suffice, but the names of all the Joint Shareholders must be stated. If the shareholder is a company, the proxy form must be under the Common Seal or under the hand of the same officer or attorney duly authorised by the company to act on its behalf.

2. Closure of Register of Members

The Register of Members and Transfer Books of the Company will be closed 9th of October, 2026 to enable the Registrar to prepare for the Annual General Meeting.

3. Live Streaming Link

The AGM will be streamed live online to enable shareholders and other stakeholders attend the meeting and effectively follow the proceedings. The live streaming link is: <https://bit.ly/BGLAGM2025>

3. Website

A copy of this Notice and other information relating to the meeting can be found at www.bglafrika.com

4. Questions from shareholders

Shareholders and other holders of the company's securities reserve the right to ask questions not only at the meeting but also in writing prior to the meeting on any item contained in the Notice. Please send questions, comments or observations to Company Secretariat Department

Dated this 7th Day of October, 2026

By Order of the Board

For: The Transaction Experts LP (Company Secretary)

BASIT OLAWOYIN
FRC/2021/PRO/00000023841



PUBLIC NOTICE

FRAUDULENT RECRUITMENT NOTICE

The attention of the Nigeria Revenue Service (NRS or the Service) has been drawn to a notice titled "Federal Inland Revenue Service – FIRS Job Vacancy – Replacement" currently circulating on social media and other platforms, purportedly advertising employment opportunities within the Service. It directs applicants to submit information to the email address recruit@replacementnhrmt.org.

The NRS wishes to state categorically that the notice is fraudulent and did not emanate from the Nigeria Revenue Service. The public is reminded that the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) has been succeeded by the Nigeria Revenue Service. Accordingly, any purported recruitment notice issued in the name of FIRS should be treated with caution and independently verified.

For the avoidance of doubt, the NRS has not authorised or commenced the recruitment exercise referenced in the notice and has not appointed or authorised any individual, agent, consultant or third party to conduct any recruitment exercise on its behalf.

Members of the public are therefore advised to disregard the notice and exercise caution when responding to recruitment advertisements, messages, links or other communications purporting to originate from the NRS.

The public is further advised not to make any payment, disclose personal or financial information, or submit certificates, identification documents or other documentation in response to the purported recruitment exercise.

Any legitimate recruitment exercise undertaken by the Nigeria Revenue Service will be formally communicated through the Service's official website and authorised communication channels. Members of the public are encouraged to verify any recruitment-related information through these channels before taking any action.

Members of the public are also encouraged to report suspicious recruitment communications to the appropriate authorities.

Signed
Management
Nigeria Revenue Service

FOUNDER: ALEX U. IBRU (1945 – 2011)

Conscience is an open wound; only truth can heal it. Uthman dan Fodio 1754-1816

Editorial

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Affordable transportation: Time for govt to get serious

THE Federal Government's promise in August to slash transport costs by October 1st sounded exciting, but the magic to make it happen in a matter of weeks has yet to become a reality. This government had all the time to lower the cost of living, including transport, but it's been promises not matched by commitment. Mr President, Nigerians are tired of stories.

In three years, after the removal of the petrol subsidy, transport has been a major driver of inflation and household spending, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). Between 2023 and 2024, the NBS reported a 77 per cent increase in fares. SBM Intelligence similarly reported that the removal of the fuel subsidy pushed transport costs up by the same amount. It has refused to come down.

Following a meeting with governors on August 27, 2026, President Bola Tinubu announced that a joint federal and state committee would implement immediate measures to bring down the cost of transport in their respective states, by leveraging lower-cost opportunities in Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and electric vehicles.

President Tinubu said: "I am pleased with my discussion with the Governors' Forum this afternoon. The governors have, on their own initiative, resolved to take immediate measures to bring down

the cost of transport in their states, with a strong focus on leveraging the cost benefits of CNG and electric vehicles." He said the Federal Government had already invested significantly in the energy transition through the Presidential CNG Initiative, with over 120,000 vehicles converted nationwide and more than 100,000 additional conversion kits in the works.

Tinubu added: "At the same time, we continue to expand conversion centres and refuelling infrastructure nationwide. The Federal Government, through the Midstream and Downstream Gas Infrastructure Fund, is currently financing more than 100 gas projects across the country, including 15 CNG mother stations and 86 daughter stations. In May, I commissioned four of these projects in Lagos, Abuja and Owerri, including a 12-station refuelling network in Lagos and an Abuja facility that can serve 1,000 cars and tricycles and 50 trucks and buses a day."

Too little, too late, Mr President. While it is commendable that government has admitted the hardship caused by subsidy removal, we still don't see the urgency and commitment in this latest promise. We rather see a government that is profuse in promises and poor in delivery. This government has three and a half years to plough back subsidy proceeds into safety nets for the benefit of Nigerians. That did not happen. Now that elections are months away, it's time for another round of promises. Nigerians are wiser.

We take note that President Tinubu's government merely reacted to the counterargument by Atiku Abubakar, candidate of the African Democratic Change (ADC), to redesign the fuel subsidy policy to alleviate its impact on citizens. Whatever the nuances of the subsidy debate, we demand that the welfare of Nigerians must be prioritised by the government. It is unserious for the government and the political class to exploit the welfare of citizens for podium rhetoric.

We recall that in August 2023, President Tinubu promised Nigerians 3,000 units of 20-seater CNG buses. That was supposed to be a N100 billion investment targeted to deliver in March 2024. The vehicles were to be shared with states and local governments "based on intensity of travel per capita." The government also promised credit facilities to transport companies at nine per cent interest for five years. The Presidential Initiative on CNG promised 5,500 CNG vehicles, 100 electric buses, 20,000 conversion kits, 100 conversion workshops, and 60 refuelling sites across 18 states. Between March 2024 and August 2025, the Federal Government said it shared N2.45 trillion in infrastructure support for states to intervene in transport, health, education and rural roads.

But the reality today is that the CNG intervention has delivered barely 12 per cent of what the government promised, with Nigerians still spending heavily on petrol. Latest field reports say there are just 90 functional CNG refuelling stations

nationwide. The \$2 billion investment promised to deliver around 120,000 conversions at around 400 conversion centres remains far short of the one million vehicles targeted. The cost of retrofitting personal and commercial vehicles is still high, despite government intervention. There are also poor distribution networks and limited gas transport trucks to support the system.

Though states have launched CNG schemes, the deployment of CNG buses is too few to make an impact. Lagos, with a huge population of workers, is yet to scale up the CNG transition. It has deployed just 20 CNG buses since November 2024. For other states, the investment in CNG is stuck at a pilot phase. Many states are still at the policy stage and are yet to have CNG filling stations. We could not see the magic they would have performed in weeks.

We urge the government to match words with action. Where there is a will, government can achieve a lot.

Besides, the safety aspects of CNG must be taken seriously. The larger population is yet to acclimatise to the technology. CNG is safe when installed and maintained according to standards. We recommend more education and training for users. We urge the government to avoid a knee-jerk approach to solving problems. Let there be processes and procedures for governance. Let the government keep its promises.

LETTER

Will Wahab's environmental reforms outlive him?

SIR: Strong personalities can accelerate decisions and challenge bureaucratic inertia. But personality is not legacy. Institutions are.

That distinction matters in assessing environmental governance in Lagos State. Since becoming Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources in 2023, Tokunbo Wahab has been a prominent figure in debates over flooding, drainage encroachments and compliance. His visibility has clarified responsibility and given enforcement urgency. But it also raises a question: what happens when he leaves?

Environmental governance is already larger than one commissioner. The Lagos State Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) manages solid waste; the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA) regulates pollution; the Lagos State Parks and Gardens Agency (LASPARK) oversees parks, trees and urban greening; and the Wastewater Management Office handles sewage and wastewater.

Drainage and water-resources structures, local governments, planning agencies, transport authorities and public-health institutions share related responsibilities. The challenge is making this network function as a coherent system.

Consider drainage. If the ministry identifies a channel as environmentally critical while a planning authority permits development across it, government creates tomorrow's demolition controversy. Environmental information and planning ap-

provals should rely on the same authoritative spatial data, so developers know whether a drainage corridor, wetland, floodplain or other restriction affects a property. Prevention should come before construction, not demolition after violation.

The same principle applies to waste. LAWMA cannot produce a clean city if large developments lack adequate storage and collection arrangements. Private operators need functional equipment, residents need reliable services, and government must not demand citizen discipline while its own system fails.

The waste-evacuation difficulties of 2026 illustrated this reality. Wahab apologised after a significant deterioration in collection, while the governor ordered LAWMA and related agencies to scale up evacuation. The lesson is that credibility can grow when government acknowledges failure and corrects it. The next step is making correction automatic rather than dependent on political intervention.

Institutions should establish what happens when operators miss routes, which thresholds trigger action, where complaints go, how quickly they are resolved and what data show whether an intervention worked. Those answers should not depend on a commissioner seeing a photograph on social media.

The same applies to enforcement. LASEPA's regulations should operate regardless of its

leadership. Noise limits, industrial pollution standards and drainage setbacks should not fluctuate with political influence.

In July 2026, Wahab clarified that Lagos's monthly environmental sanitation exercise did not restrict movement and that arrests merely for moving around were unlawful. The episode underscored the need for rules that are clearly written, understood and consistently applied. Institutionalisation reduces the risk that enforcement becomes whatever an officer believes government policy means.

Technology can strengthen continuity. Air-quality measurements can be published; drainage infrastructure, trees and wetlands can be mapped; waste trucks can be tracked; complaints can receive reference numbers and closure timelines; and enforcement notices can be documented electronically. Public dashboards could show whether government is meeting its targets.

Continuity matters because Lagos's environmental problems operate on timelines far longer than political tenures. The Lagos Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan addresses sea-level rise, extreme rainfall and heat through investments in resilient infrastructure, wastewater treatment, waste management and coastal protection.

Read the remaining part of this letter on www.guaedian.ng
Olayinka Balogun wrote from Okota, Lagos.



Opinion

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Nigeria, her 36 prodigal sons and 774 insouciant grandchildren

By Akin Olukiran

ON October 1, 2026, I turned 66. Sixty-six years is a long time in the life of a nation! Long enough, one would imagine, for a child to have found her feet, discovered her purpose and begun to justify the considerable expectations that accompanied her birth. Yet, as I prepared once again to celebrate my Independence Day, I could not help but wonder whether I have fulfilled the promise with which I entered the world.

I was born on October 1 1960 - beautiful, gifted and extraordinarily endowed. I inherited an enviable diversity of peoples and cultures, an abundance of natural resources and a land blessed with almost every ecological zone imaginable. Nature, it seemed, had been unusually generous to me. But I ended up having 36 sons. These are my states: 36 political offspring, each with a governor, a territory, a history and in varying degrees, an abundance of natural and human resources. Beneath them are my 774 grandchildren - the local government areas.

Every month, my sons make the pilgrimage to Abuja, my federal home, to collect their share of the family inheritance. With unbridled profligacy, they squander and fritter away these resources like the biblical prodigal son, only without his discernment, contrition or eventual repentance. Unashamedly, they return again, cap in hand, the following month, for yet another allocation. I sometimes wonder whether we have inadvertently raised a generation of dependants.

But I remember another Nigeria. Before my 36 sons came into existence, I had regions. And those regions understood something that my children appear to have forgotten: that prosperity is not merely distributed, it is created. The Western Region invested heavily in education and agriculture. The Northern Region began to harness its vast agricultural potential. The Eastern Region developed commerce, enterprise and industry. There was competition, not simply for political supremacy, but for development. Each region had an incentive to demonstrate that it could build, produce and prosper.

Then came 1966. The first military coup did more

than change my political trajectory. The upheavals that followed gradually dismantled the federal architecture within which my regions had pursued distinctive development paths. Over the decades that followed, power, resources and responsibility became increasingly concentrated at the centre. And somewhere along that journey, my children learnt a dangerous lesson: that the road to prosperity ran through Abuja rather than through their own soil, ingenuity and enterprise.

The consequences have been profound. I became a federation in which the federal government is expected to do almost everything, while many of my constituent parts wait for the centre to provide the resources with which they might begin to do something themselves.

Yet there is an extraordinary paradox at the heart of my predicament. I am one Nigeria, but I am not one economy. I am a federation of profoundly different ecological, cultural, demographic and economic possibilities. Why, then, should every part of me aspire to become a replica of every other part? Sir Michael Lyons's influential 2007 report on the future of local government in the UK provides a compelling intellectual framework for this dilemma. His concept of "place-shaping" emphasised the primacy of place - the creative use of powers and influence to promote the general well-being of a community and its citizens. Applied to my 36 sons, it suggests that development should not be a uniform prescription dispensed from Abuja, but a deliberate effort to understand, shape and unlock the distinctive potential of each place.

Why should a state blessed with fertile land not become an agricultural powerhouse? Why should another endowed with mineral resources not develop a serious mining and processing industry? Why should my coastal states not exploit their maritime economies? Why should states blessed with universities, young people and entrepreneurial talent not become centres of knowledge, technology and innovation? Perhaps the problem has never been that I lack resources. Perhaps I have simply failed to organise them intelligently. And this is why I find the current moment intriguing.

Quietly, under the current administration and perhaps without sufficient public recognition of its historical significance, Nigeria appears to be rediscovering an idea that should never have been abandoned: that national prosperity can be built through regional and sub-national development, rather than through perpetual dependence on the centre.

The language emerging from the present administration increasingly speaks of comparative advantage, sub-national competitiveness, regional development and the unlocking of economic potential beyond Abuja. The 2026 National Development Plan expressly identifies sub-national competitiveness based on comparative advantage as a development priority. The emergence of regional development commissions is equally significant.

This is not, as some might fear, a repudiation of Nigeria's unity. Quite the contrary. A strong federation needs not mean 36 economically dependent states waiting perpetually for monthly allocations. It can mean 36 productive economies contributing to a stronger whole. There is an important distinction between political unity and economic uniformity.

And my 774 grandchildren must equally understand that local government should not merely be the lowest rung of political administration. It should be the foundation upon which grassroots economic development is built.

At 50, when I last told my story, through this same writer, in ThisDay newspaper on 11 December 2010, I was angry. I looked older than my years. Subsidy fraud was hemorrhaging my finances, foreign-exchange arbitrage was bleeding my economy, my educational institutions were struggling, and my children seemed more interested in fighting over my inheritance than in multiplying it. I ended that story by asking my children to repent, reform and give their mother something to celebrate when she turned 60.

I am now 66. I did not get everything I asked for. But perhaps with the ongoing reforms, I have finally begun to see the possibility of something more fundamental: a rethinking of how

my enormous potential is organised. The answer may lie neither in excessive centralisation nor in fragmentation, but in a federation where each constituent part is encouraged to discover, develop and exploit its comparative advantage.

Let the North feed the nation and industrialise its agriculture. Let the South deepen its maritime, manufacturing and commercial possibilities. Let the East and West build upon their traditions of enterprise and innovation. Let mineral-rich states develop value chains rather than merely extractive economies. Let every state identify the economic DNA that makes it distinctive and then invest deliberately in turning that advantage into prosperity. And let Abuja do what a federal centre ought to do: provide the enabling environment, establish the rules, build national infrastructure, protect the federation and allow the constituent parts to flourish. My sons have spent too many years quarrelling over the inheritance. It is time they began creating wealth.

And perhaps this is the most important lesson for my grandchildren: a nation does not become prosperous because it possesses resources; it becomes prosperous when it learns how to convert those resources into productive capacity.

So, on October 1, when the flags were raised and the familiar songs of Independence reverberated across my 36 states and 774 local government areas, I celebrated, not because everything was well, but because perhaps, at last, we were beginning to understand what went wrong.

At 66, I do not need another birthday celebration paid for by money borrowed from tomorrow. I need productivity. I need enterprise. I need competition. I need responsible sons and industrious grandchildren. Above all, I need them to understand that I have never been poor. I have merely been prodigiously endowed and insufficiently organised.

My 36 sons have spent too long asking what Mother Nigeria can give them. Perhaps, at 66, it is time they asked themselves a more consequential question: What can we finally give our mother? *Olukiran, a social and political analyst wrote from London. He can be reached via: olukiran@yahoo.co.uk*

When political loyalty meets cost of living

By Abba Dukawa

SOME people might strongly support a political party because of their identity, beliefs, or past loyalty while, at the same time, struggling with the rising cost of food and other essential goods. This creates a conflict between their political loyalty and their personal economic experience.

For millions of citizens eligible to vote in the upcoming election, this presents a difficult dilemma, particularly as the country's recent economic reforms have generated considerable debate. The removal of the petrol subsidy and changes to the exchange-rate system were intended by the government to address long-standing economic distortions and improve fiscal and market conditions. At the same time, these measures have contributed to significant increases in the cost of living and placed substantial financial pressure on households across the country.

As Nigeria moves toward another general election, let us, regardless of party affiliation, place the future, unity, and well-being of our nation above partisan interests. Whether you support or oppose President Bola Tinubu's administration, our shared responsibility as citizens is to look beyond political loyalties and honestly confront the realities facing ordinary Nigerians. We should ask ourselves, with a sense of national duty and an eye toward the future, what kind of leadership, policies, and institutions will best serve the interests of our country and improve the lives of its people in the years ahead.

For instance, the fact that a litre of petrol now costs as much as N1,500 at some filling stations is a reality that deserves serious attention. Beyond political loyalty or opposition, these are the issues that should shape our daily conversations, inform our choices, and define our expectations as citizens.

Look at the markets, where a bag of rice has become a luxury for millions of families. Look at our hospitals, where doctors and other health workers continue to demand better working conditions. Look at our schools, where parents struggle to keep their children enrolled, while students increasingly turn to loans simply to remain in school.

Look at the Nigerians who are maimed or killed by bandits and kidnappers. Look at the families of kidnapped victims who are pushed into financial ruin as they struggle to raise money for ransom payments. Look at the fear gripping travellers on our highways, where many Nigerians no longer feel safe simply trying to get from one destination to another.

These are not abstract political arguments. They are the realities of everyday life for millions of Nigerians. They demand honest con-

versation, responsible leadership, and a citizenry willing to look beyond partisan loyalty and confront the issues that affect our collective wellbeing.

Then ask yourself one simple question: You can continue to stand with Tinubu. But is Tinubu's administration standing with you? This is not merely a political attack. It is a question of accountability. It is an invitation to examine what Nigerians have experienced since President Bola Tinubu took office in May 2023 and to ask what those experiences might mean for the future.

Politics should not be reduced to personalities, party colours or social-media arguments. Governments should ultimately be judged by what their policies mean for people's lives: the cost of food, transportation, electricity, healthcare, education, employment and security. By these measures, there are legitimate questions that deserve serious public discussion.

The administration argued that the removal of petrol subsidy would free resources for investment in infrastructure, healthcare, education and other national priorities. But for many ordinary Nigerians, the immediate experience was dramatically different.

The naira was subsequently allowed to trade more freely, and its sharp depreciation added another layer of pressure to an economy already struggling with inflation. Supporters of the reforms have argued that they were necessary to correct longstanding distortions in the Nigerian economy. Critics, however, have pointed to the enormous social costs and questioned whether the benefits have been distributed fairly.

There was 300 per cent increase for Band A customers, pushing the electricity tariff from N68 per kilowatt-hour to N225. Someone who has consistently defended this government recently took to Facebook to lament that he and his family now have to switch off their air conditioners, refrigerators, and lights because they can no longer afford the electricity bills. If progovernment is struggling to cope with the cost of electricity, what does that say about the reality facing the ordinary Nigerian? This is the harsh reality of rising electricity costs for households already struggling with the broader cost-of-living crisis.

That distinction matters. A reform can be economically defensible in principle while still imposing severe hardship if the transition is poorly managed or adequate protection for vulnerable citizens is absent. For millions of Nigerians, therefore, the question is not simply whether subsidy removal was necessary. The bigger question is whether the government has done enough to ensure that ordinary people are not crushed by the consequences.

Without any partisan motive, the reality on the ground must be acknowledged: Nigeria's poverty and cost-of-living crisis has be-

come one of the defining issues of the Tinubu administration.

The important question is not simply how many Nigerians are poor, but why so many people feel poorer despite repeated assurances that economic reforms will eventually produce prosperity. Equally important is the question of why government interventions are not reaching those who need them most.

Nigerians have heard promises about fighting corruption from successive governments, and the Tinubu administration is no exception. Yet allegations surrounding budgetary allocations, questionable procurement processes and the existence of purportedly fraudulent government structures have continued to generate public concern.

Reports concerning the alleged allocation of N1.3 billion to a purportedly fictitious agency, as well as investigations into other suspicious entities and bank accounts, require thorough and transparent examination. The appropriate response to such allegations is neither blind defence nor automatic conviction. Who created the entities? Who authorised their funding? Who received the money? What services, if any, were delivered? Which officials approved the transactions? These questions should be answered with documents and evidence, not propaganda.

As the nation marches towards the general elections, which are expected to be hotly contested between those advocating continuity and those pursuing change, it is important to remember one thing: you can stand with any politician. That is your right. You can defend them on social media. You can even wear their campaign cap. But political loyalty should never require you to close your eyes. When you defend a government, ask: Who is defending your interests? When you celebrate an economic reform, ask: What does it cost the family next door? When you applaud a budget, ask: What does it contain for the hospital, the school, the farmer, the worker and the unemployed graduate?

When billions of naira are allocated, ask: Where does the money go? And when the government asks citizens to sacrifice, ask whether those making the decisions are sacrificing too. The ultimate issue is not whether President Tinubu deserves anyone's loyalty. It is whether the government deserves scrutiny, regardless of who occupies the presidency.

Democracy is not a contract to defend a politician at all costs. It is a system in which citizens are entitled to ask difficult questions of the people they put in power. So, before you stand with any politician, make sure you are also standing up for yourself, your family and the future you want for Nigeria.

Dukawa wrote from Abuja and can be reached via: abbahy-dukawa@gmail.com

Opinion

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Nigeria at 66: An overview

By Victoria Ngozi Ikeano

ANYONE who has clocked 66 years is a fully grown up adult that is heading towards being an elder, indeed, already an elder in many settings. In African societies, not least Nigeria, an elder is accorded much respect because he/she is viewed as someone that is imbued with invaluable wisdom owing to accumulated experiences from his/her long years of existence.

Recall the African proverb that says that what an elder can see sitting down, a child atop a tree cannot see. Nigeria is now 66 years old having literally cut the umbilical cord that tied it to its erstwhile colonial master, Britain on October 1, 1960. From thence it began to direct its political affairs largely by itself.

However, it is doubtful whether Nigeria at 66 is really independent, free in all ramifications, in the true sense of the word 'freedom'. Although we have been a self-governing nation, our country is still reliant on foreign nations for a number of things, not least, consumer, industrial, technological goods and services.

Over the years we have experienced a lot of things cum changes. Nevertheless, a sticking point remains which is that at 66, Nigeria is still grappling with the 'national question' - issue of national integration, unity, etc. The schisms among Nigerians are more than they were in the 1960s. Our fault lines have amplified.

Mistrust, hatred rule many Nigerians' hearts. Evil now stalks our land. Life is no longer sacred as blood is now shed with reckless abandon all across the country by terrorists, bandits, robbers, unknown gunmen; men/women are killing their lovers/husbands/wives and even children are killing either of their parents out of anger or (hard) drugs-induced delusion.

This wanton killing, alien to our culture, may be said to have started in 1966, barely six years after the country's independence, with the first military coup that toppled Nigeria's first indigenous government.

In that coup, some notable Nigerian politicians and army generals were killed in cold blood.

It led to three years of bitter civil war when the eastern part sought to secede from Nigeria. Then Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon was the war hero, declaring at end of the war in 1970 that there was 'no victor, no vanquished', although people from the south east zone still feel marginalised till today.

There have been other military coups since then, including the palace coup wherein General Murtala Muhammed was announced as Head of state to replace Gowon who was attending an OAU meeting in Kenya at the time. General Muhammed was himself killed in a failed coup attempt on February 13, 1975.

His second in command, General Olusegun Obasanjo replaced him. Obasanjo organised elections during his time and handed over to the elected civilian president, Alhaji Shehu Shagari in 1979. Shagari was sacked by the military in 1983 with General Muhammadu Buhari installed as Head of state. Buhari gave way to General Ibrahim Babangida in yet another in the series of coups. Babangida was later to 'step aside' for General Sani Abacha who died in controversial circumstances and General Abdusalam Abubakar took over. General Abubakar midwived this republic in 1999.

There has been uninterrupted democratic rule since then to-date. First under this dispensation was President Olusegun Obasanjo, followed by President Umaru Yar'Adua whose tenure was short-lived as he passed during his time in office.

President Goodluck Jonathan then took over, first, under the "doctrine of necessity" and completed late President Yar'Adua's remaining tenure. He subsequently won the next election in 2011 but was defeated in the 2015 polls (after 16 years of PDP rule) by the APC (a merger of some political parties). And APC has been in authority since then, from late Muhammadu Buhari to current President Bola Tinubu.

Our villages considered as the bastion of our ethical values are crumbling to the rapidly

spreading fire of immorality. Consumption of illicit hard drugs by especially youths is now almost as common in the villages as it is in the cities where this dangerous habit first emanated and is rooted. Nigeria's population has also more than doubled since independence, from about 50 million to over 200 million today! More than half of Nigerians living today were not yet born in 1960. A great proportion of these were born in the 21st century, the internet age.

They are called netizens, that is, internet bluffs. Internet-enabled phones are their constant companion.

Always, they are tapping their phones, from sunrise to sunset and beyond, until nature forces them to fall asleep at midnight or thereabout. They refer to their parents as analogue people and themselves as digital persons. There was no internet at independence and for many decades thereafter. Today, every adult and many children in Nigeria have a GSM handset. Cyber (internet) frauds have surfaced and 'yahoo boys' have emerged.

More children now go to school and Nigeria's literacy level has increased overall. From going to school barefooted and trekking over long distances, not a few pupils now attend schools in chauffeur-driven limousines, decked in smart uniforms with shoes and socks to match.

But the standard of education is falling unlike what obtained at independence. One who passed out from primary school with a 'First School Leaving Certificate' in the 60s is equivalent to a secondary school graduate of today.

Our school system has been tinkered with in last 66 years; from the eight years primary school tenure where you graduate after Standard Six, five years secondary school, two years post-secondary education and three years in the university.

Now we have six years of basic school that terminates in Primary Six; six years of secondary education thereafter (JSS 1 to 3, SSS 1 to 3). The accompanying certificates have also changed from General Certificate of Education (GCE), Higher School Certificate (HSC) to West African School Certificate (WASC), NECO and Technical

education certificates.

In the 1960s public schools were the preferred educational institutions, private schools were virtually non-existent. Today, there are as many privately-owned secondary schools as public ones in Nigeria. Private schools are even more in some cities. University education, a rare commodity in the first decade of our independence, is now widespread as universities, both public and private are now practically in every nook and cranny of our country.

Increasingly though, many citizens now have to provide certain amenities for themselves. Some social services that were wholly provided by government and taken for granted by the citizenry because of their steady service are becoming hard to come by. For example, many government-run Water Works (water corporations) that used to supply people water have packed up. The few that are still functional work only occasionally.

Boreholes now abound in many residential houses. In the same vein electricity supply from the national grid has become epileptic. This is despite the name change and reforms in the electricity sector since independence, namely, Electricity Company of Nigeria (ECN), National Electric Power Authority (NEPA), now split into three companies. They are Generating Company (GENCO), Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) and Distribution Company (DISCO). Nigerians are slowly embracing a new way of getting electricity which is solar energy.

Solar panels now dot our landscape. In the 1970s money was said not to be Nigeria's problem "but how to spend it". However, the country has gone abhorring in the last few decades. Nigeria's three refineries were fully functional since the 1970s but they have become comatose since the 21st century. Overall, Nigeria at 66 is yet to realise its full potentials as a full fledged adult. Challenges still abound but they are not insurmountable. There is hope.

Ikeano, a one-time media aide to a former governor, wrote from Lafia, Nasarawa State.

Nigeria must stop tolerating waste and corporate misconduct (2)

By Donald Ikenna Ofoegbu

ENVIRONMENTAL degradation in Nigeria is inseparable from corruption. Pollution frequently begins with an official signature: a licence issued without adequate scrutiny, an assessment approved despite serious gaps, a prohibited shipment cleared at a port, an inspection report altered, or a sanction quietly withdrawn.

When officials place private gain above public safety, environmental regulations become commodities for sale. Corporations learn that political access is more valuable than compliance. Communities learn that their constitutional rights can be traded for personal benefit. This is the negative multiplier effect of corrupt leadership.

Once senior officials demonstrate that rules can be suspended for politically connected investors, regulators further down the system receive the same message. Inspectors become afraid to act expect payment before acting. Consultants produce favourable reports. Local authorities silence community complaints. Security agencies protect company facilities while citizens protesting pollution are treated as threats. In such a system, Nigeria becomes a dumping ground for three interconnected things: waste, corporate misconduct and official corruption.

People living in project locations are not expendable populations occupying land required for investment. They are citizens with rights. Communities must receive complete and understandable information about proposed projects before approval. Technical documents should be translated into accessible language and, where necessary, local languages. Consultations must include women, young people, persons with disabilities, farmers, fishers and groups whose livelihoods depend directly on the affected environment.

Consultation cannot mean inviting selected traditional leaders to a hotel, collecting signatures and presenting the exercise as community consent. Nor should community representatives be handpicked by companies or political authorities.

For projects involving substantial land acquisition, displacement, toxic materials or serious environmental risk, Nigeria

should apply a clear standard of free, prior and informed consent. Communities must be able to obtain independent legal and scientific advice. They must also have functioning grievance mechanisms and access to courts without intimidation or prohibitive costs.

What Nigeria must do now? Nigeria can reverse this pattern, but the response must go beyond speeches and ceremonial environmental campaigns.

Responsibility must begin with the Federal Ministry of Environment, led by Minister Balarabe Abbas Lawal. Its Environmental Assessment Department, headed by Mrs. R. A. Odetoro, should require every major investor to disclose its international record on pollution, emissions, litigation, workplace safety, human rights and community disputes. The department must ensure that environmental and social impact assessments are independently prepared, publicly disclosed and reviewed before approvals are granted not after political commitments have been made.

The National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency, led by Professor Innocent Barikor, must monitor companies after approval, conduct unannounced inspections, publish violations and enforce sanctions. State ministries of environment and local governments must complement this work by monitoring conditions within host communities and responding promptly to complaints about pollution, unsafe waste disposal and public-health risks.

The Nigeria Customs Service, led by Comptroller-General Adewale Adeniyi, should work with NESREA, the Nigerian Ports Authority and port health officials to track and inspect shipments of used electronics, batteries, chemicals and other potentially hazardous materials. Importers and exporters not Nigerian taxpayers must bear the cost of returning illegal, falsely declared or non-functional shipments.

The National Assembly should strengthen the Environmental Impact Assessment Act by providing clear rules on corporate due diligence, community consultation, environmental bonds, compulsory liability insurance, compensation and remediation.

The Federal Ministry of Justice, led by the Attorney-General of

the Federation, Lateef Fagbemi, should ensure that officials who approve fraudulent assessments, conceal violations or accept bribes are prosecuted. Companies that falsify environmental information or repeatedly violate standards should face substantial fines, licence cancellation and exclusion from public contracts.

Affected communities must also have enforceable rights to information, participation, independent advice, compensation and appeal. High-risk companies should deposit environmental performance bonds before commencing operations so that funds are available for emergency response, compensation and ecological restoration. Nigeria must welcome responsible investment, but no amount of capital should purchase exemption from its environmental laws or transfer private corporate liabilities to the public.

Nigeria cannot claim to be the Giant of Africa while acting as a rubber stamp for every investor carrying a large cheque. National dignity is not expressed through slogans, motorcades or ceremonial receptions. It is demonstrated by the capacity to protect citizens, enforce standards and tell even the most powerful corporation: You must obey our laws.

We should welcome responsible investment, useful technology and genuine partnerships. But we must reject investments that depend on regulatory weakness, community dispossession, environmental destruction or political corruption.

Nigeria is not a wasteland. Nigerians are not expendable. Our rivers, forests, farmland and communities are not commodities that public officials may secretly exchange for personal enrichment.

The choice before us is clear: Nigeria can remain a destination where the world sends what it no longer wants and corporations practise what they cannot defend elsewhere, or it can build a regulatory system that places human life above political connections and corporate profit.

Nigeria must choose dignity. It must choose accountability. It must choose life.

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

CRUDE OIL PRICE UPDATE

Brent crude: \$108.6 | WTI crude: \$105.9

FOREX MARKET UPDATE

I&E Window: NI,332.69

Tinubu commits to 20 per cent manufacturing GDP by 2030

By Victoria Nwachukwu

PRESIDENT Bola Ahmed Tinubu has committed to raising manufacturing's contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) to between 20 and 25 per cent by 2030, pledging increased access to power, credit, raw materials and markets to drive the expansion.

Tinubu, who spoke yesterday through the Minister of State for Industry, Trade and Investment, John Owan Enoh, at the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria's (MAN) 54th yearly general meeting held in Lagos, said the target could not be achieved through policy documents alone.

He said manufacturing's contribution to real GDP fell from 9.57 per cent in the first quarter of 2026 to 7.72 per cent in the second quarter, even as manufacturing output grew by 3.29 per cent and 3.24 per cent, respectively.

"It will be reached by power in your plans, by credit in your accounts, by raw materials at your gates and markets for your goods," he said.

Tinubu said the government's industrial policy envisaged channelling up to five per cent of GDP into industrial financing, adding that implementation would be driven by seven strategic thrusts.

He said the Industrial Revolution Work Group, chaired by Enoh, brings government, the organised private sector, financiers and development partners together under a common score-

card.

The scorecard, he said, would measure progress by factories reopened, capacity utilisation, jobs created, exports shipped and new factories established.

The President also said he had directed the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, through the Industrial Revolution Work Group, to hold quarterly delivery dialogues with MAN.

According to him, the dialogue would enable the association to hold the government accountable for implementation of the industrial policy.

On financing, Tinubu said the government would work with the Bank of Industry, development finance institutions and commercial banks to provide patient, affordable and long-term funding for productive enterprises.

He also said the government would continue to prioritise gas for industry and reliable electricity for industrial clusters, while public procurement would favour Nigerian-made goods that meet required standards under the Nigeria First policy.

He added that industrial corridors, highways and supply routes would be protected, while trade facilitation measures, including the National Single Window, would reduce the time and cost of moving goods across ports and borders.

FG clears N758 billion backlog, funds pension payments till 2029

By Gloria Nwafor and Bankole Orimisan

THE Federal Government has cleared N758 billion in inherited pension liabilities and moved ahead of scheduled retirements in funding accrued pension rights, with payments for some federal retirees secured through December 2029.

The Director-General of the National Pension Commission (PenCom), Omolola Oloworaran, disclosed this yesterday at the 2026 PenCom Media Conference in Lagos, saying the intervention had benefited 957,045 Nigerians.

She said the government had not only settled pension obligations dating back to 2007 but has also funded accrued rights beyond the current retirement schedule, with 73,732 beneficiaries now covered by payments representing a 41-month surplus.

Oloworaran said the N758 billion Federal Government Pension Bond had been used to clear obligations inherited from previous administrations. She said the government inherited 21 months of unpaid accrued pension rights but had now moved to a position where payments had been made through December 2029 for affected beneficiaries.

According to her, the significance of the intervention went

beyond the N758 billion involved, as it marked a departure from the practice of pension obligations being carried from one administration to another.

Oloworaran said the development was particularly important for retirees who had completed their years of service but had been forced to wait for benefits they had already earned.

She said the commission was determined to ensure that retirement no longer came with prolonged uncertainty over when benefits would be paid.

The PenCom boss also disclosed that pension assets had risen to N31.48 trillion from N20.79 trillion in July 2024, representing an increase of more than N10.7 trillion, or about 51 per cent, in two years.

The growth, she said, was accompanied by the enrolment of 938,229 new contributors into the Contributory Pension Scheme during the period.

The number of contributors rose from about 10.42 million in July 2024 to 11.32 million by July 2026.

Oloworaran attributed the growth in pension assets to wider participation, contributor confidence and investment returns, adding that the commission was working to deploy pension funds into productive investments without compromising contributors' interests.



Leadership, Child Rights and Gender Advocate, Oluwaseyi Salam (left); Member, House of Representatives, Bamidele Salam; Group Head, Retail Banking Group, FirstBank, Bashir Adepoju; Business Development Manager, Retail Banking Group, Osun, FirstBank, Ademola Adesoji; Media and Communications Executive, Jane Onwuegbu and Public Policy Analyst and Founder, ERGAF Africa, Sunday Chibuzo Okereke at the 2026 Teenage Leadership Bootcamp held in Osun State, recently.

Nigeria's next economic test is turning growth into jobs, says World Bank

From Collins Olayinka (Abuja) and Abigail Ikhaghu (Lagos)

NIGERIA'S next economic frontier is moving from macroeconomic stabilisation to creating productive jobs, raising household incomes and reducing poverty, the World Bank has said.

In its October 2026 Africa Economic Update, released yesterday, the World Bank Group said sub-Saharan Africa's economy remained resilient despite geopolitical tensions, climate shocks, declining development assistance and fiscal pressures. It projected regional growth to rise from 4.1 per cent in 2025 to 4.3 per cent in 2026, 0.3 percentage points above its previous forecast.

The bank attributed the improved outlook to stronger macroeconomic resilience, rising domestic demand and investments linked to the global energy transition and digital technologies.

However, it warned that conflicts in the Middle East, trade policy uncertainty, tighter financial conditions, natural

•Worried over 3.5m annual job entrants, raises growth forecast to 4.3%

disasters, disease outbreaks and insecurity continued to weigh on economic activity across several countries.

It said the region's growth remained insufficient to substantially reduce extreme poverty or create enough jobs for its rapidly expanding labour force.

For Nigeria, the World Bank raised its 2026 growth forecast to 4.3 per cent from four per cent in 2025, with growth projected at 4.4 per cent in both 2027 and 2028.

The upgraded outlook reflects improving macroeconomic stability, stronger investor confidence and a gradual recovery in private investment, it said.

But the bank cautioned that the significance of Nigeria's improving growth would increasingly be measured not by GDP figures alone, but by the economy's capacity to create sustainable and productive jobs.

Nigeria needs to absorb about 3.5 million people entering the labour force every year, making employment creation one of

the biggest tests of the country's economic recovery.

The World Bank said weak job creation and limited entrepreneurial opportunities remained persistent constraints, stressing that current growth was still insufficient to generate enough productive jobs and materially reduce poverty.

Nigeria's real GDP growth has strengthened from the relatively weak performance recorded in the years preceding the current reform cycle. World Bank data put growth at 3.3 per cent in 2023, 3.4 per cent in 2024 and four per cent in 2025, with a further acceleration projected for this year.

The improvement indicates that the economy is gradually responding to reforms aimed at restoring macroeconomic stability. But the critical question is whether the expansion is occurring quickly enough, and in sufficiently productive sectors, to provide livelihoods for a rapidly growing working-age popula-

tion.

The World Bank has repeatedly distinguished between employment and productive employment in Nigeria. Unemployment alone, it noted, does not fully capture the country's poverty challenge because many Nigerians work but remain poor.

What people do for a living, the productivity of their activities and the income they earn are therefore critical determinants of whether employment can lift households out of poverty. The bank said the 4.3 per cent growth forecast, while an improvement, should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of sufficient economic transformation.

For growth to translate into meaningful improvements in living standards, a greater share of economic activity must result in business expansion, increased investment, movement of workers into more productive occupations and rising real wages.

IMF: Nigeria, other developing economies to benefit more from tougher tax regime

By Isaac Chibuike

MORE than others, Nigeria and other emerging markets would benefit from tighter international rules against tax avoidance, with a stop to profit shifting expected to protect government revenues and fiscal space, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has observed.

The IMF said this in its October World Economic Outlook analytical chapter, which examined how changes in international tax rules are reshaping competition for multinational investment and profits.

The full report, scheduled for release on October 13 at the 2026 Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank, scheduled to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from October 12 to 18, will examine global growth prospects in light of ranging geopolitical tensions.

Nigeria is said to have lost an estimated \$18 billion yearly to

tax-related illicit financial flows, including profit shifting, a challenge partly blamed for the country's revenue crisis.

The IMF said intangible assets, including data, patents, software and trademarks, have made it easier for multinational companies to report profits in low-tax jurisdictions, even when the underlying economic activity took place elsewhere.

It, however, noted that stronger anti-avoidance measures were beginning to change the trend, with multinational companies increasingly reporting profits in the countries where they invest. The Fund also said competition over headline corporate tax rates had eased since the mid-2010s, alongside stronger rules aimed at curbing base erosion and profit shifting.

Reported profits now respond less to differences in tax rates, while actual investment responds more strongly, it said. "Tax competition has not disap-

peared, but its character appears to be changing," the IMF said.

On investment, the Fund found that a one percentage-point increase in a country's corporate income tax rate relative to other countries was associated with a cumulative decline in foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows of about 0.5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) over three years.

It also found that corporate tax cuts in major economies could reduce output in other countries, suggesting that tax competition may shift economic gains between countries rather than generate new gains globally. The impact, however, depends on how tax cuts are financed, the IMF said.

According to the Fund, financing tax cuts through borrowing could push up real interest rates and limit investment gains, while spending cuts or higher taxes elsewhere could reduce

resources available for public investment.

Emerging markets and developing economies could benefit more from stronger anti-avoidance measures because they rely more heavily on corporate income tax to finance infrastructure, education, healthcare and other public services, the IMF said.

Stronger measures to prevent profit shifting could therefore help such economies protect revenues and preserve fiscal space for development spending.

The findings are particularly relevant to Nigeria, where improving tax compliance and raising non-oil revenue remain central to ongoing fiscal reforms.

For Nigeria, stronger enforcement of corporate tax rules could potentially help limit revenue leakages while ensuring that economic activity taking place within the country contributes more fully to public finances.



**NIGERIAN
ENVIRONMENTAL
SOCIETY**



35TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE & 36TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

CONFERENCE THEME:

**REIMAGINING
ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS:**
DIGITAL INNOVATIONS, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE,
AND INCLUSIVE FINANCING IN NIGERIA.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Mattie Yeta
Chief Sustainability Officer
CGI United Kingdom



GUEST SPEAKER

Dennis Van Peppen
Director International at the
Netherlands Commission for
Environmental Assessment (NCEA)



CHIEF HOST

His Excellency
Sen. Monday Okpebholo
Executive Governor, Edo State



HOST

Dr. Efegbidiki Okobia, FNES
National President, Nigerian Environmental Society

SPECIAL GUESTS



Balarabe Abbas Lawal
Honourable Minister
Federal Ministry of Environment



Sen. Olubiye Oluwole Fadayi
Senate Committee Chairman
on Environment



Rt. Hon. Dekor Durmamene
House of Representatives Committee
Chairman on Host Communities



Hon. Seriake Dickson
Senate Committee Chairman
on Ecology and Climate Change



Hon. Mike Eteba
House of Representatives
Reaffirms Commitment
to Environmental Sustainability



**Omo N'Oba N'Edo,
Uku Akpolokpolo Oba
Ewuare II,
Oba Benin**



HRM Michael E. O. Sado
Okuokpellagbe of Okpella



**8TH-10TH
OCTOBER, 2026**



VENUE:
Randekhi Hotel Main Hall,
Uhenuyi Street, GRA,
Benin City, Edo State



TIME:
**10:00AM
PROMPT**

CONFERENCE CONTACT PERSONS

National President
Dr. Efegbidiki Okobia
President@nes.org.ng

National Secretary
Dr. Adewale Adeyemi
+234 805 638 4823

LOC Chairman
Prof. Myke Omoigberale
+234 802 075 5024,
+234 806 516 4993

Prof. Muhammed Bashir Nuhu, FNES, FNIVS, FCAI, FICA, MRICS.
(Editor-in-Chief of the Nigerian Environmental Society Journal and Chairman NES 2026
Technical Committee) 08023736062, 08037250279, 08055956003

...Think, Act & Sustain the Environment



Central Bank of Nigeria

www.cbn.gov.ng

In furtherance of the transparency and full disclosure stance of the Central Bank of Nigeria, the Monetary Policy Committee has decided that henceforth the lending rates obtainable in all Deposit Money Banks (DMBs) be made public to guide business decisions. Consequently, find below the applicable rates for each of the DMBs as at October 2, 2026. The rates will also be available on the website of the Central Bank of Nigeria

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Insider threats pose growing risk to aviation safety, experts warn

By Olusegun Koiki

AVIATION safety and security experts have urged civil aviation authorities to strengthen measures against insider threats following last week's alleged attempt by a co-pilot to hijack a FlyDubai aircraft. The experts, in separate interviews with The Guardian yesterday, warned that aviation security must move beyond passenger screening to focus more closely on safety-critical personnel. They said the incident exposed vulnerabilities within the aviation security system, particularly the risks posed by trusted personnel with legitimate access to aircraft, restricted areas and safety equipment. The experts called for more fre-

quent background checks, psychological assessments and intelligence-sharing mechanisms for pilots, cabin crew, engineers, ground handlers and other personnel whose duties have direct implications for aviation safety and security. The former Rector of the Nigerian College of Aviation Technology (NCAT), Samuel Caulcrick, said the aviation ecosystem was fundamentally built on trust, but warned that the system could be compromised when that trust was abused. Caulcrick said the FlyDubai Flight FZ1073 incident had underscored the need for the industry to re-examine its approach to insider threats. He identified operational trust,

systemic trust and regulatory surveillance as major pillars supporting aviation safety. He said: "Pilots step into the cockpit trusting that engineers have released a perfectly airworthy machine, handlers have loaded cargo correctly and fuelers have provided the right grade and

amount of fuel. "Trust is not left to chance. It is maintained through continuous surveillance, unannounced audits, mandatory safety reporting and strict licensing. This is why aviation relies on a 'Just Culture' that encourages transparent error reporting." According to him, the FlyDubai

incident demonstrated the vulnerability inherent in a system where a trusted professional could potentially turn against it. Caulcrick said the incident also raised fundamental questions about the effectiveness of existing aviation security measures, including reinforced cockpit doors,

access control and the monitoring of safety-critical personnel. He noted that the FlyDubai incident, alongside the 2015 Germanwings crash, demonstrated that security measures designed to keep outsiders out could create vulnerabilities when the threat came from within the cockpit.

Etihad Airways, Ibom Air sign interline deal for five Nigerian cities

By Olusegun Koiki

ETIHAD Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ibom Air have signed an interline agreement that will enable passengers travelling with Etihad to connect beyond Lagos and Accra to five Nigerian cities on a single ticket. The agreement will take effect from March 23, 2027, when Etihad Airways is scheduled to resume operations in Nigeria, according to a statement by Ibom Air. Etihad will recommence operations in the Nigerian market with four weekly flights. Under the agreement, Etihad passengers arriving in Lagos or Accra will be able to continue their journeys on Ibom Air to Abuja, Uyo, Port Harcourt, Calabar and Enugu. Connections will also be available between Accra and Abuja and between Accra and Uyo. The arrangement will allow passengers to make the entire

journey on a single booking, with baggage checked through to their final destinations. Uyo and Calabar join Abuja, Port Harcourt and Enugu as Nigerian cities accessible on a single ticket with Etihad, whether passengers are travelling for business, family visits or tourism. Commenting on the partnership, Etihad Airways Commercial Officer, Arik De, said the airline's ambitions in Africa were long-term and that Nigeria was central to them. He said Ibom Air had built a strong domestic network from its Uyo base and that partnerships with airlines with deep knowledge of their local markets were important to expanding across the continent. Managing Director of Ibom Air, George Uriesi, said the agreement marked a significant milestone in the airline's ambition to become a world-class African regional carrier.

Airtel pledges better service as MTN compensates subscribers over poor network

By Adeyemi Adepetun

AIRTEL Africa has reiterated its commitment to improving customer experience through continued investment in its network, advanced technologies and strategic partnerships to expand coverage and capacity across the continent. Speaking at the beginning of Customer Service Week 2026, Airtel Africa's Chief Executive Officer, Sunil Taldar, said the theme of this year's event, "The Extra Mile", aligned with the company's commitment to improving customer experience. He said Airtel Africa would continue to transform customer experience by listening to consumers, understanding their needs and responding to their expectations. "By digitising our services and broadening access to connectivity, we are helping to unlock extraordinary opportunities for people, businesses and economies across the continent," Taldar said. He referred to Airtel Africa's

recent commercial deployment of direct-to-device satellite connectivity in underserved rural communities, which enables customers with compatible smartphones to remain connected in areas beyond the reach of terrestrial mobile networks, provided they have a clear view of the sky. Over the last year, Airtel Africa has added more than 3,250 new sites and 3,200 kilometres of fibre, alongside investments in retail outlets, distribution channels and artificial intelligence tools aimed at improving customers' digital experience. To protect customers from spam and potentially fraudulent messages, the company also pioneered its AI-powered Spam Alert service, which is available free to subscribers to identify and block suspected spam SMS messages and provide real-time updates. The company said its employees would join frontline teams across its 14 markets to engage customers, assess their experiences and identify ways to improve service delivery.

Africa's infrastructure finance market shifts to bankable projects, climate outcomes

By Benjamin Alade

AFRICA'S infrastructure finance market is increasingly shifting from capital mobilisation to the development of bankable projects capable of delivering measur-

able economic and climate outcomes, industry analysts have said. The changing investment landscape is placing greater emphasis on the link between policy frameworks, project

pipelines, risk assessment and the ability of project developers to translate financing commitments into actual implementation. The trend is examined in the Industry Insights Finance and

Investment Volume, published by ESI Africa, a media brand under VUKA Group. The publication explores developments shaping infrastructure finance across African markets, including energy innovation funding, patient capital, green and transition finance, carbon markets, critical minerals and venture investment. It also highlights an investable project pipeline across the continent, linking financing structures with infrastructure opportunities requiring capital and project-development support. According to the publication, the growing availability of global capital does not automatically translate into infrastructure development, as investors continue to assess the commercial viability of projects, country and credit risks, regulatory conditions and prospects for successful execution.



Executive Director at FMBN, Alhaji Luqman Mustapha (left); Dr Josh Oyeibisi and Managing Director/ Founder of Taj Bank, Hamid Joda attended the special dinner amongst other dignitaries to mark the retirement of Dr Oyeibisi as the Founder, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer at Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja.

Dangote cuts diesel price to N1,700 as crude, import costs fall

By Waliat Musa

DANGOTE Petroleum Refinery has cut the price of automotive gas oil (AGO), commonly known as diesel, by N80 per litre, reducing its gantry price from N1,780 to N1,700 as international crude prices and diesel import-parity costs decline. According to a notice issued by the refinery to its customers, the new price, representing a

4.5 per cent reduction, takes effect from today. The latest adjustment is the second reduction in Dangote Refinery's diesel price within a month and comes as lower crude prices and softer import-parity costs ease the cost of diesel supply in the domestic market. Data from the Major Energies Marketers Association of Nigeria (MEMAN) showed that the esti-

mated spot landing cost of diesel fell by N127.28 per litre in two days, from N1,823.68 on September 30 to N1,696.40 on October 2. MEMAN's Energy Bulletin also showed that the seven-day average AGO import-parity cost declined from N1,871.34 to N1,823.19 per litre over the same period. The decline in import costs coincided with movements in

international crude prices. Data from OilPrice.com as of 4:55 pm yesterday showed Brent crude was trading at \$98.48 per barrel, down 1.83 per cent, while West Texas Intermediate (WTI) stood at \$88.23, representing a 1.34 per cent decline. The latest price puts its N1,700 per litre gantry price just N3.60 above MEMAN's N1,696.40 spot import-parity cost recorded on October 2.

Tinubu to present NASENI innovation grants to winners

PRESIDENT Bola Ahmed Tinubu will present cash grants to winners of three innovation competitions organised by the National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure (NASENI) today. This comes as the agency steps up efforts to support the commercial development of technology-driven ideas, a press statement by NASENI said.

The presentation will take place at the Banquet Hall of the State House, Aso Rock, Abuja, bringing together winners of the InnovateNaija competition, FutureMakers by NASENI and the Intra-Inter Agency Innovation competitions. The awards mark the completion of NASENI's maiden innovation competitions, designed to identify ideas with potential to become

commercial ventures, create jobs and contribute to Nigeria's technological and industrial renewal. The biggest prize pool will go to winners of the InnovateNaija competition, with the national champion receiving N100 million, while the second- and third-place winners will receive N30 million and N20 million, respectively, to develop their ideas into

commercial ventures. Three national winners will emerge from the 37 state winners who reached the final stage of the competition. The awards will also include N162 million for the top six winners of NASENI's Intra-Inter Agency competitions involving its headquarters, development institutes and ministries, departments and agencies.

Kenya clears GDR hurdle to Dangote Refinery IPO investment

By Helen Oji

KENYA'S Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has approved a Global Depositary Receipt (GDR) structure that will enable eligible Kenyan investors to participate in the ongoing Initial Public Offering (IPO) of Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals in Nigeria. The approval followed a Short Form Prospectus submitted by Renaissance Capital (Kenya) Limited, a licensed investment bank, for the GDR arrangement. The Dangote Refinery IPO opened on September 14 and is scheduled to close on October 13, 2026, offering 4.1 billion shares at

N525 each. Under the arrangement approved by the CMA, Renaissance Capital Kenya will establish custodial arrangements for funds received from investors and work with Renaissance Capital Africa, which is licensed in Nigeria, to participate in the Nigerian offer. Following the close of the Nigerian offer and confirmation of the allocation of Dangote Refinery shares, Renaissance Capital Kenya is expected to structure the GDRs for listing on the Nairobi Securities Exchange. The proposed listing remains subject to the necessary approval from Nigeria's Securities and

Exchange Commission (SEC), as well as successful fundraising and allocation of the underlying Dangote Refinery shares. A GDR is a negotiable certificate issued by a depository institution to represent shares in a company listed in another country. The structure allows investors to gain exposure to a foreign company through their domestic capital market. The CMA said the arrangement would provide Kenyan investors with access to the Dangote Refinery offer while expanding opportunities for cross-border investment within Africa. The regulator said the transaction was the first of its kind since

Kenya issued its Policy Guidance Note on Global Depositary Receipts and Global Depositary Notes. The development could deepen links between the Nigerian and Kenyan capital markets by providing investors in Kenya with a mechanism to participate in a major Nigerian equity offering without directly purchasing the underlying shares on the Nigerian Exchange. The CMA, however, clarified that its approval relates to Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals in Nigeria and does not represent an offer of shares in any proposed Dangote refinery project in Kenya.



Indian Cultural Association

इंदरवाजाना

FROM
GANDHINAGAR
TO NEW DELHI

SHRI NARENDRA MODI



GANDHINAGAR - 2001

NEW DELHI - 2026

25

YEARS IN
GOVERNANCE

**BEST WISHES FROM
THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN NIGERIA**

Industry

LCCI rallies for friendly business environment, industrial growth

By Tobì Awodipe

THE Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has called on the Federal Government to accelerate measures to create a more competitive business environment, insisting that Nigeria's transition from economic stabilisation to widespread prosperity must translate into lower production costs, stronger industrial capacity, increased investment and improved living standards.

LCCI President, Leye

Kupoluyi, said the President's claim that the country was moving from reform to prosperity must be measured not only by macroeconomic indicators but also by the extent to which Nigerian businesses can invest, produce, employ, compete and expand.

He said the test must equally include whether households were experiencing improvements in purchasing power and living standards.

Kupoluyi stressed that the next phase of the economic programme must be defined by a relentless focus on reduc-

ing the cost of doing business, expanding productive capacity, and creating an environment in which investment decisions can be made with greater confidence.

He said lowering the cost of producing and moving goods was perhaps the most important economic challenge confronting Nigerian businesses, noting that manufacturers, farmers, logistics operators, retailers and millions of small and medium-sized enterprises continued to face elevated costs arising

from energy, transportation, multiple taxation, infrastructure gaps, financing, regulatory charges, insecurity and logistics inefficiencies.

He said the next phase of economic policy should therefore place enterprise competitiveness at the centre of economic management.

Beyond the deceleration of inflation from its peak, Kupoluyi said Nigerians needed to see sustained moderation in the prices of food, transportation, energy and other essential goods.

"Gross domestic product

growth must generate productive employment and expand household incomes, while FX market stability must enable businesses to access FX predictably and at costs that allow them to remain competitive. The ultimate test of the reforms is whether businesses can produce more at lower cost and households can afford more with their incomes," he said.

Welcoming the President's commitment to bringing factories back to life and promoting Nigerian-made products, he stressed that Nigeria could not sustainably achieve mass employment and broad-based prosperity without a strong manufacturing and industrial base.

He urged the Federal Government to move rapidly from announcements to implementation by reducing industrial energy costs, improving electricity reliability for productive enterprises, accelerating gas-to-industry projects and expanding access to affordable, long-term financing for manufacturers.

He also called for measures to address infrastructure deficits in industrial clusters, improve access to working capital for SMEs, reduce regulatory and administrative costs, strengthen local sup-

ply chains, promote exports of manufactured and processed Nigerian products and prevent policies that unintentionally increase production costs.

A competitive manufacturing sector, he said, would simultaneously address several of Nigeria's challenges, including unemployment, low productivity, import dependence, export diversification, technology transfer and government revenue.

Kupoluyi said the most sustainable solution to the cost-of-living crisis was to increase the supply of affordable goods and services while expanding productive employment and household incomes.

Welcoming the President's call for businesses to expand production and compete globally, he regretted that businesses alone could not deliver prosperity, noting that the government creates the policy and institutional environment within which businesses make long-term investment decisions.

He called for regular engagement between the government and the private sector on policy implementation, as well as a mechanism for tracking the impact of major policies on enterprises.



Head of Product and Market Department, Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC), Lagos Regional Office, Afanide Patience (left); Executive Director, Corporate Services, Origin Tech Group, Olusesan Ayeni; Chairman, Agro and Allied Group, Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), Omutunde Banjoko; Managing Director, Funtuna Foods and Drinks Ltd, Animal Care, Tolulola Olumide and Bank of Agriculture, South West Zonal Office, Ibadan, Durojaiye David Olusiji during the 2026 Agric Symposium and Exhibition held at LCCI Conference and Exhibition Centre, Ikeja, Lagos...recently.

72% of goods trade still conducted under WTO rules, says Okonjo-Iweala

By Tobì Awodipe

DESPITE growing global trade tensions, tariff disruptions and other economic shocks, about 72 per cent of world goods trade is still conducted under the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Most Favoured Nation (MFN) terms, Director-General of the WTO, Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, has said.

Okonjo-Iweala said the resilience of the multilateral trading system was largely driven by businesses' need for stability and predictability in international trade, noting that WTO rules continued to provide that foundation despite growing pressure on the global trading system.

Speaking on the state of global trade, she said, "Despite the turmoil and uncertainty in the last year, we are surprised by its resilience and remain grateful for it."

She said the organisation had examined how much of world trade was still taking place in accordance with WTO rules, against the backdrop of a changing global economic environment in which multilateral trade rules were under pressure.

According to her, despite global shocks

and tariffs, international trade continued to grow, exceeding the WTO's projections.

She recalled that the organisation had projected goods trade growth of about 2.4 to 2.5 per cent last year, but actual growth came in at 4.6 per cent, almost twice the initial estimate.

She attributed much of the stronger-than-expected performance to trade in artificial intelligence (AI)-related goods, which grew by 42 per cent.

She said the growth included trade in semiconductors, processors, hardware and software, reflecting the increasing importance of AI and related technologies to global commerce.

For the current year, she said the WTO had taken into consideration several risks, including United States tariff measures, problems surrounding the Strait of Hormuz and rising energy prices, before projecting global goods trade growth at 1.9 per cent.

However, she said first-quarter performance was stronger than expected, with global goods trade growing by 3.2 per cent.

"To our utmost surprise, Q1 delivered 3.2 per cent growth in global goods trade, far more than what was projected," she said.

The WTO chief, however, warned against complacency, stressing that the strong performance was not necessarily an indication that the trend would continue indefinitely.

She said the rapid growth in AI-related trade remained uncertain, noting that it was unclear whether the current expansion could be sustained or represented a temporary bubble.

"This doesn't mean we should become complacent, as AI has a lot of uncertainty, and we do not know if this can be sustained or if it is just a bubble. We have to watch and see," she said.

She also expressed concern that the benefits of AI-driven trade expansion remained largely concentrated in East Asia and North America, particularly in the United States.

She warned that the concentration could become problematic if other parts of the world were not brought into the expanding trade opportunities.

NIPSS urges manufacturers to deepen local sourcing of raw materials

By Victoria Nwachukwu

THE National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) has challenged the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) to analyse the sources of raw materials used by manufacturers and identify production inputs that could be sourced or produced locally.

Director-General of NIPSS, Professor Ayo Omotayo, made the call at the opening of MAN's 54th Annual General Meeting and Made-in-Nigeria Exhibition in Lagos.

He challenged MAN to work with the institute to analyse the sources of raw materials used by manufacturers as part of efforts to reduce the country's costly dependence on imported inputs.

He said greater local sourcing would help reduce production costs, strengthen domestic value chains and retain more economic value within the country.

Omotayo also called for a spe-

cial policy on raw materials, noting that Nigeria should not continue to spend billions of naira annually importing inputs that could potentially be produced domestically.

"We should have a special policy on raw materials so that we do not spend N3.4 trillion importing raw materials yearly," he said.

He also challenged MAN to examine the materials currently imported for manufacturing and determine how many could be sourced or manufactured within Nigeria.

Omotayo called for stronger collaboration between universities and the real sector, noting that universities could make significant contributions to industrial development through research, innovation and skills development.

He said NIPSS would continue to support the manufacturing sector, adding that manufacturing remained the soul of development and a critical driver of economic growth.

'Tax, insecurity, interest rates remain top business constraints'

By Tobì Awodipe

NIGERIAN businesses grappled with multiple taxation, insecurity and high interest rates in September 2026, with the three factors emerging as the leading constraints to business activity during the month.

This was contained in the latest Business Expectations Survey (BES) of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), which showed that despite the pressures confronting firms, business sentiment remained posi-

tive during the review period.

The survey put the Business Confidence Index (BCI) at 13.4 points in September, a slight decline from the previous month.

According to the survey, high or multiple taxation recorded the highest constraint index at 67.1 points, followed by insecurity at 66.2 points and high interest rates at 64.3 points.

An unfavourable political climate was the next major constraint, recording 61.8 points, while high bank charges stood at 61.5 points. Competition followed with 60.2

points, while unclear economic laws and an unfavourable economic climate each recorded 58.7 points.

Financial constraints and poor infrastructure ranked lowest among the top 10 constraints identified by businesses, with 57.5 points and 55.0 points, respectively.

Despite the challenges, the survey showed that firms remained optimistic about business conditions, with increased demand, economic diversification and access to finance identified as the major factors supporting the positive outlook.

"Respondents' positive outlook could be attributed to increased demand (29.3%), economic diversification (18.9%) and access to finance (13.5%," the report stated.

Sectoral performance showed that the industry sector recorded the greatest improvement in confidence during the month, with its confidence index rising from 17.1 points in August to 19.4 points in September.

However, confidence in the services sector moderated from 13.3 points to 10.2 points, while the agriculture sector declined from 13.9 points to 12.8

points.

Despite the varying movements across sectors, all three maintained positive business sentiment during the review period.

The report also noted that businesses expected confidence to improve further in the months ahead, projecting the Business Confidence Index at 23.6 points in December 2026 and 36.1 points by March 2027.

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

'Infrastructure, skills, costly capital threatening oil sector'

From Kingsley Jeremiah, Abuja

NIGERIA's efforts to attract private-sector investment into refining, gas processing and other midstream and downstream petroleum businesses face infrastructure deficits, shortages of technical skills and high financing costs, industry stakeholders have said.

They spoke at the inaugural Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) Journal Summit 2026 in Abuja, where operators, regulators, lawmakers and academics examined private-sector participation in the petroleum value chain.

In his keynote address, Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Waltersmith Petroman Oil Limited, Oladapo Filani, identified infrastructure, human capital and financing as major constraints affecting

the economics of petroleum projects.

Filani said Nigeria's challenge was no longer about producing skilled professionals but retaining them and creating opportunities for them to apply their expertise.

According to him, the country still faces constraints in gas gathering and processing, pipelines, storage and terminals, distribution infrastructure, refining support infrastructure and product logistics.

He said pipeline vandalism, theft and integrity problems continued to disrupt supply, while inadequate gas processing and evacuation infrastructure was limiting gas monetisation.

"These challenges are infrastructure deficits and reliability constraints; human-capital and technical-capability gaps; and financing, commercial

viability and investment constraints," Filani said.

He said the consequences included higher operating costs, supply disruptions, lower asset utilisation and weaker investment economics.

Filani called for greater use of shared infrastructure, including pipelines, gas processing, storage, power and logistics facilities, to serve multiple operators and end users.

He also identified gas as an input for power generation, refining, fertiliser production, petrochemicals, compressed natural gas, liquefied natural gas and gas-based manufacturing.

Filani called for stronger collaboration between PTDF and private-sector operators to address technical and human-capital gaps.

He said the sector needed

engineers, project managers, process specialists and commercial professionals capable of operating increasingly complex petroleum assets.

Earlier, the Executive Secretary of PTDF, Prof. Shuaibu Shehu Aliyu, said investors were increasingly interested in refining, gas processing, logistics, storage and petroleum-products distribution but faced financing, infrastructure, regulatory, technology and technical-capacity challenges.

Aliyu said investment and infrastructure alone would not unlock the sector's potential without appropriate policies, technical capacity, technology, research and collaboration among government, industry and academia.

He said research supported by PTDF should move beyond publication towards practical application, intellectual property development and commercialisation.

Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), Ekperikpe Ekpo, also identified infrastructure gaps, high financing costs, project-development risks, regulatory bottlenecks and limited access to reliable energy infrastructure as constraints to private investment.

Represented at the event, the minister called for investment in gas processing, transportation and distribution infrastructure, alongside improved collaboration among government, investors, financial institutions and technology

providers.

He also called for policy consistency, more efficient regulatory processes, improved security of critical infrastructure, innovative financing and greater indigenous technological capacity.

Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil), Heineken Lokpobiri, represented by his Technical Adviser, Emmanuel Sinimie, said private-sector participation was necessary for the development of the petroleum sector.

He said reforms were aimed at improving regulatory certainty, adding that increased upstream activity would require corresponding investment in transportation, storage, refining and markets.

On his part, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Petroleum Resources (Upstream), Senator Eteng Williams, said private capital remained important for infrastructure, technology deployment and the expansion of refining, gas processing, petrochemicals and distribution.

Deputy Chairman of the House Committee on Petroleum Resources (Training Fund/PTDF), Ajilo Umar, urged the government to provide policy stability and called on the National Assembly to strengthen legislation and oversight.

He also urged financial institutions to provide longer-term capital for petroleum projects.

1MW gas plant powers Lagos cold-storage facility

By Waliat Musa

ACOLD-storage and frozen-food distribution company in Lagos has commissioned a 1MW gas-fired power plant supplied and installed by Clarke Energy.

The plant will provide electricity for refrigeration systems and other facility operations, reducing the company's reliance on diesel generators and the national grid.

The project comes as cold-storage operators face high electricity requirements because refrigeration systems have to operate continuously to prevent spoilage of temperature-sensitive products.

Managing Director, Clarke Energy Sub-Saharan Africa, Yiannis Tsantilas, said reliable electricity is essential to cold-chain operations.

"The cold-chain industry plays a vital role in food preservation, food security, and the reduction of post-harvest losses," Tsantilas said. He said uninterrupted refrigeration required a reliable electricity supply and that gas-fired generation could provide an alternative for facilities with high and continuous power demand.

Tsantilas said investment in food storage, processing and distribution infrastructure would increase demand for reliable electricity.

The 1MW plant is expected to supply power to compressors and other refrigeration equipment at the facility.



'Infrastructure, pricing challenges undermine key gas projects'

By Victoria Nwachukwu

INDUSTRY leaders at the fourth Gas Investment Forum have identified inadequate infrastructure, weak bankable demand and uncertainty around domestic gas pricing as major constraints to increasing gas production in Nigeria.

Group Chief Technical Officer, NewcrossEP, Dr Abiodun Ogunjobi, said infrastructure remained a major constraint to developing new gas projects.

Ogunjobi said some existing infrastructure was already operating at capacity, while third-party facilities might not have the capacity to accommodate additional production.

"Infrastructure is the key bottleneck," he said, adding that producers could not invest in new infrastructure where projects were not commercially viable.

He also identified cash flow and payment challenges as factors affecting project development, particularly the cost of surface facilities required to move gas to the market.

General Manager, Gas Commercial, Sahara Group, Mariah Lucciano-Gabriel, said the viability of gas projects should be assessed beyond headline gas prices and the

fiscal regime.

She said investors also had to consider the total risk-adjusted cost and the time required to move gas from the reservoir to the customer.

According to her, delays associated with pipelines, community issues and securing bankable demand could weaken project economics.

Lucciano-Gabriel identified infrastructure, regulatory certainty, project economics, bankable demand and execution as key factors in deter-

mining the viability of gas projects.

She said power and fertiliser companies could serve as anchor customers because of their capacity to take large volumes, but added that demand had to be bankable.

Associate Vice President, Gas Business, Heirs Energies, Joseph Adetuberu, said Nigeria should focus on maximising existing gas resources rather than concentrating solely on new exploration.

He said more than half of current gas production was held by independent producers, which might not have the financial capacity of international oil companies for large-scale exploration.

Adetuberu said a significant portion of Nigeria's gas reserves was associated gas, adding that higher oil production could result in additional gas production.

He, however, stressed the need to convert domestic demand into bankable

demand and urged independent producers to maintain financial discipline.

Council Chairman, Society of Petroleum Engineers,

Nigerian Council, Francis Nwaochei, said technology could help lower the cost of developing and distributing gas.

Poor financing threatens commercial exploitation of solar energy

By Waliat Musa

ACCESS to financing is emerging as a major constraint for commercial and industrial businesses seeking to deploy distributed solar across Africa.

According to ESI Africa, about 80 per cent of distributed solar capacity on the continent serves commercial and industrial customers.

Speaking during a webinar, Editor-in-Chief of ESI Africa, Nicolette Pombo-van Zyl, said the financing structure of solar projects was becoming as important as system design and expected electricity generation.

She said businesses needed to assess project economics, risk allocation, cash flow and implementation timelines when considering solar investments.

Pombo-van Zyl said the availability of capital did not necessarily mean projects would secure financing, as developers and businesses still had to meet lenders' requirements.

Commercial solar projects can be financed through power purchase agreements, leases, bank loans or upfront capital investment. Each model carries different implications for project costs, cash flow, risk and operational responsibility.

Pombo-van Zyl said the choice of financing model should reflect a company's cash flow and risk appetite, as well as its willingness to retain or transfer operational responsibilities.

She identified upfront cost as a major hurdle for businesses considering solar installations.

The financing issue comes as businesses increasingly turn to distributed generation to manage electricity costs and reduce exposure to unreliable grid supply.

For commercial and industrial users, the choice of financing structure can therefore affect whether proposed solar projects progress from planning to implementation.

'N671b gas FIDs to unlock N1.6tr investments, boost supply by 25.2%'

By Waliat Musa

THE Midstream and Downstream Gas Infrastructure Fund (MDGIF) has approved N671 billion in Final Investment Decisions (FIDs) for 31 gas infrastructure projects with a combined investment value of N1.6 trillion.

The Fund, established under the Petroleum Industry Act and domiciled within the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA), said its portfolio covers 205 infrastructure assets across the gas value chain.

According to its latest investment profile, the portfolio comprises 160 compressed natural gas (CNG) daughter

stations, 20 CNG/liquefied compressed natural gas (LCNG) mother stations, 13 depots and liquefied natural gas (LNG) facilities, and 12 gas processing plants.

MDGIF said 127 projects had commenced, while nine stations were in commercial operation and 10 projects had been commissioned.

The Fund estimates that the projects could add gas equivalent to 25.2 per cent of the national domestic supply baseline when operational.

MDGIF said its intervention is structured as minority catalytic equity rather than grants or conventional loans. The Fund is financed through the 0.5 per cent levy on wholesale gas and petroleum prices

collected by the NMDPRA, gas-flaring penalties released through the Federal Government's Gas Flare Commercialisation Programme, grants and investment income.

It said the fund targets projects that have commercial and strategic potential but cannot secure conventional bank financing.

MDGIF said its incubation period for projects ranges from 18 months to five years, covering project origination and appraisal.

The portfolio includes investments in the CNG segment, with nine stations in commercial operation across Lagos, Owerri, Abuja and Ilorin.

In search of hybrid financing for rural telecom growth

Nigeria's push for rural telecom expansion is driving the search for hybrid financing models that blend public and private capital. By leveraging community ownership and shared investment, the government hopes to bridge connectivity gaps, empower local networks and accelerate digital inclusion across underserved regions, ADEYEMI ADEPETUN reports.

NIGERIA's drive to extend telecommunications services to underserved communities is forcing a rethink of how rural connectivity projects are financed, as policymakers and investors explore hybrid models that combine public and private capital with community ownership.

The challenge is no longer simply putting infrastructure in place. It ensures that millions of Nigerians living in rural and remote communities can afford to use networks, access digital services, and participate meaningfully in the digital economy.

While urban centres have witnessed rapid growth in mobile connectivity and Internet penetration, large parts of rural Nigeria remain poorly served by broadband infrastructure, affordable devices and reliable electricity.

The digital divide has implications beyond communications. Limited connectivity restricts access to education, healthcare, financial services, markets, and employment, while weakening rural communities' capacity to participate in an increasingly digital economy.

The need for fresh investment in Nigeria's \$76 billion telecommunications sector was a major focus of the recently held Nigeria Digital Connectivity Investment Forum, organised by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) in partnership with Swedfund and Ookla.

The forum brought together government officials, investors, infrastructure providers and international partners under the theme, 'Unlocking Infrastructure Investment through Data, Transparency and Partnerships.'

One of the recurring issues was the urgency of extending meaningful connectivity to rural communities.

For a country where mobile broadband covers about 90 per cent of the population, but smartphone ownership is only 27 per cent, the challenge is increasingly shifting from network coverage to actual usage.

Rural Nigeria: The last frontier

NIGERIA's telecommunications industry contributed 9.72 per cent to real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the second quarter of 2026, while teledensity stood at about 90 per cent as of July.

Yet, the growth has not translated into universal access. The Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF) estimates that about 23 million Nigerians remain either unserved or underserved.

The communiqué issued after the forum and signed by NCC Director, Public Affairs, Nnenna Ukoha, noted that "usage, rather than coverage, is now the larger gap."

This reflects a growing paradox in Nigeria's digital transformation: network signals may be available in some communities, but high device costs, inadequate digital skills, affordability constraints and limited trust in online services prevent many people from using them. Two major con-

straints are particularly important for rural deployment: electricity and middle-mile connectivity.

For tower companies, the forum noted, power is no longer merely a supporting requirement but a central component of the business. Without reliable and affordable electricity, rural telecom sites become expensive to operate.

Similarly, inadequate inland fibre infrastructure limits rural communities' ability to connect to national networks and keeps high-capacity digital infrastructure concentrated around major urban centres such as Lagos and Abuja.

The forum, therefore, called for energy and connectivity investments to be planned together, with clusters of telecom towers serving as anchor off-takers for distributed renewable-energy projects.

Such an approach could turn rural telecom sites into hubs for both connectivity and clean energy while reducing operating costs and improving sustainability. **Project BRIDGE and the middle-mile gap**

ANOTHER major initiative is Project BRIDGE, Nigeria's planned 90,000-kilometre national fibre backbone.

For rural communities, the project could provide the missing link between national networks and local access points.

Participants urged the Federal Government to accelerate implementation, arguing that without a robust middle-mile network, rural broadband expansion would remain patchy, costly and unreliable.

The middle-mile challenge is particularly important because extending fibre to every individual community is unlikely to be commercially viable without a broader backbone capable of carrying traffic at affordable wholesale rates.

The emergence of shared rural networks offers another possible route to closing the gap. Under the model, multiple operators can share infrastructure, reducing duplication and lowering the cost of serving communities that may not generate sufficient revenue to support separate networks.

The approach could be complemented by solar-powered sites, satellite services and micro-cabling, creating lower-cost options for communities that have historically been difficult to serve.

The forum recommended that funding for community-owned rural networks powered by renewable energy be secured within six months, with support from the USPF and state governments.

Such arrangements could give communities a greater stake in the infrastructure serving them while improving the commercial viability of rural deployments.

But financing remains a major obstacle. Telecom infrastructure is a long-life asset, with towers and fibre capable of serving communities for 20 to 30 years. Financing them predominantly with short-term bank loans, often with five-year tenors, creates a fundamental mismatch between the asset's lifespan and the repayment period.

Participants therefore called for longer-tenor naira financing, blended-finance structures and credit enhancements to make rural telecom projects more bankable.

Development finance institutions were also urged to link funding to independently verified network performance, thereby strengthening accountability and investor confidence.

The argument is that rural connectivity may not deliver immediate commercial

returns, but its wider economic benefits — from improved agricultural markets to financial inclusion and education — can accumulate over decades.

States hold a key to fibre expansion

STATE governments also have an important role to play. Evidence from the pilot Nigeria Digital Connectivity Index covering 12 states showed that states that reformed Right of Way charges recorded fibre growth of between 22 per cent and 95 per cent.

The number of states charging zero fees has risen to 12, from seven in 2024. Lower Right-of-Way costs can make it more attractive for operators to extend fibre to smaller towns and rural communities.

The forum consequently urged more states to adopt the Federal Government's model, under which operators laying fibre are also responsible for reinstating roads and other infrastructure affected by the work.

The model is intended to reduce permitting delays, lower costs, and accelerate deployment.

Beyond coverage to actual usage

Even with expanded networks, however, rural inclusion will remain incomplete unless Nigerians can afford the devices required to use them.

With smartphone ownership at only 27 per cent, millions of Nigerians remain effectively excluded from broadband services even where network coverage exists.

The communiqué therefore recommended that coverage investments be accompanied by measures to make affordable devices available, including locally manufactured phones and SIMs.

The implication is that rural connectivity policy must move beyond towers and fibre to consider the entire digital-access chain — infrastructure, devices, electricity, affordability, skills and relevant online services.

At the forum, Bolaji Balogun of Chapel Hill Denham stressed the need for investable projects and greater capital market participation, while Bismarck Rewane of FCMB highlighted the importance of digital infrastructure for productivity and economic growth.

For rural Nigeria, the stakes are particularly high. Reliable broadband can help farmers access market information, enable traders to reach customers beyond their immediate communities, expand access to financial services and provide students with educational resources.

It could also become increasingly important to Nigeria's participation in the African Continental Free Trade Area, as digital platforms become more important to cross-border commerce.

The road ahead

THE communiqué set out a series of timelines for implementation.

Within six months, stakeholders are expected to secure funding for community co-owned rural networks powered by renewable energy.

Within six to 18 months, authorities are expected to issue open-access regulations, publish wholesale rate cards and complete broadband mapping.

Within 18 to 24 months, a financing framework for telecom power is expected to be established, alongside the development of metro and access fibre under concession arrangements.

If implemented, the measures could significantly expand rural connectivity by 2028.

But the success of the strategy will ultimately depend on coordination between government, regulators, investors, telecom operators, infrastructure companies and communities.

The NCC has committed to continued stakeholder engagement, further reforms and publication of the first national Nigeria Digital Connectivity Index report.

For rural Nigeria, the real test will not be the speed of 5G networks in Lagos or Abuja. It will be whether a farmer in Katsina, a trader in Zamfara or a student in Ebonyi can access affordable and reliable broadband.

That is the measure by which Nigeria's digital transformation will ultimately be judged.

NICE opens innovation clinics for businesses

By **Adeyemi Adepetun**

THE Nigeria Innovation Cluster Exchange (NICE) has opened applications for its Pipeline Clinics, a sector-focused programme aimed at helping Nigerian businesses and innovators overcome growth constraints and build stronger local innovation ecosystems.

The programme targets businesses operating within six priority clusters identified through NICE's research: agro-processing in Kano, manufacturing in Abia and Ogun, health in Oyo, minerals in Akwa Ibom and cybersecurity in Abuja.

Implemented by The Nest Innovation Technology Park in partnership with the UK-Nigeria Tech Hub under the UK Government's Digital Access Programme, with collaboration from the Office for Nigerian Digital Innovation (ONDI), the initiative is designed to provide practical support rather than generic entrepreneurship training.

The clinics will focus on innovation management, access to facilities and partners, prototyping, partnerships and peer learning.

According to the organisers, the programme is intended to address a persistent weakness in Nigeria's innovation ecosystem, where startups, research institutions, entrepreneurship-support organisations and innovation hubs often operate independently, limiting collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and infrastructure.

The programme will also involve Experts-in-Residence from the United Kingdom, who will provide expertise in areas such as innovation strategy, incubation models, and technology validation. Nigerian ecosystem leaders are expected to participate in reciprocal learning with UK innovation clusters.

The Co-founder of The Nest Innovation Technology Park, Oluwajoba Oloba, said the programme would strengthen Nigeria's innovation ecosystem by combining knowledge sharing with government resources and institutional partnerships.

The clinics are open to Nigerian-owned or Nigeria-based businesses and enterprises with an existing business, startup, prototype, product, service or clearly defined business model.

Applicants must operate within, support, or demonstrate strong relevance to one of the six priority clusters, and have a clearly defined business challenge, growth opportunity, or development need that can be addressed through the programme.

Priority may be given to businesses with growth potential, innovative products or services, market traction, expansion opportunities, investment readiness and job-creation potential.

Participants are also expected to commit the required time, provide relevant business information for assessment and apply the recommendations arising from the clinics.



Tijani

Maida



THE SENATE

Federal Republic of Nigeria

Ad-hoc Committee on the National Security Summit

PUBLIC NOTICE

POSTPONEMENT OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY SUMMIT

The Senate Ad-hoc Committee on the National Security Summit regrets to announce the **postponement of the two-day National Security Summit** earlier scheduled for Monday, 12th and Tuesday, 13th October, 2026 until further notice.

This postponement has become imperative following **the crash of the Nigerian Air Force ATR-42 aircraft in Igbokoda, Headquarters of Ilaje Local Government Area, Ondo State**, which claimed 25 officers and seven crew members on Monday, 5th October, 2026. The decision aligns with the declaration of three days of national mourning by the Presidency in honour of the victims.

At this difficult time, the Senate extends its heartfelt condolences to the **President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR; the Nigeria Armed Forces, particularly the Nigerian Air Force and the families of the gallant officers and crew members**, who lost their lives in active service to our fatherland.

A new date for the summit will be communicated in due course. All invited stakeholders are kindly requested to take note of this development and bear with us during this period of national mourning. The stakeholders include:

- Federal Executive Council
- Nigeria Governors' Forum
- Nigerian Armed Forces
- Nigeria Police Force
- Department of State Services
- National Intelligence Agency
- Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps
- Nigeria Immigration Service
- Conference of Speakers of State Legislatures of Nigeria
- Association of Local Governments of Nigeria
- National Council of Traditional Rulers of Nigeria
- Christian Association of Nigeria
- Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs
- Diplomatic Corps in Nigeria
- African Union
- ECOWAS Commission
- And other invited guests

Announcer / Chairman of the Committee:

Senator Michael Opeyemi Bamidele, CON
Leader of the Senate,
Federal Republic of Nigeria.

For further enquiries, please contact the Secretariat:

+234 806 886 8860

Terminal seeks action against low-carbon economy transition

Stories By Adaku Onyenucheya

APM Terminals Nigeria has called for stronger collaboration among government, industry, investors, and development partners to accelerate the development of bankable green infrastructure projects that can transform the country's maritime sector and support its transition to a low-carbon economy.

Chairman, APM Terminals Nigeria, Frederik Klinké, made that call at the second Decarbonising Infrastructure in Nigeria (DIN) Summit in Abuja with the theme: 'De-risking Green Infrastructure Investments: From Policy Architecture to Bankable Projects.'

Klinké said Nigeria had made significant progress in advancing maritime reforms and climate

action, but stressed that the next phase must focus on implementation.

He emphasised the need to translate policy ambition into scalable, investment-ready projects that delivered both economic and environmental benefits.

Klinké noted that maritime transport accounts for over 80 per cent of global trade by volume, making the sector's decarbonisa-

tion critical to achieving climate goals and strengthening long-term economic competitiveness.

He highlighted the importance of regulatory clarity, project readiness, reliable emissions data and stronger integration across ports, roads, rail and inland logistics networks.

He urged stakeholders to move beyond dialogue and focus on execution, noting that the infrastruc-

ture investments and partnerships established today will help shape Nigeria's future economy, trade competitiveness and environmental sustainability.

Also speaking at the summit, the Chief Executive Officer of APM Terminals Nigeria, Koen De Backker, mentioned the critical role of ports and terminals in the energy transition, noting that reducing emissions began with improving the efficiency of logistics systems.

He said this could be achieved by reducing equipment usage and fuel consumption, minimising truck waiting times and congestion, improving cargo flow and operational efficiency, supporting cleaner energy solutions and preparing for the adoption of lower-emission technologies.

Personal Assistant to the President on Subnational Infrastructure and representative of the DIN Summit Steering Committee, Musaddiq Adamu, said the summit was established to address

a critical challenge: moving green infrastructure projects from concept to investment.

He noted that engagements from previous editions had already produced tangible outcomes, including progress on port electrification initiatives.

According to Adamu, discussions following APM Terminals' presentation at the inaugural summit contributed to a partnership with the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) to advance the electrification of port operations and position Onne Port as a leading example of green port development in Nigeria.

As part of its long-term commitment to sustainable logistics, APM Terminals, in partnership with the NPA, planned to invest in green power infrastructure and electric equipment across its Apapa and Onne operations. The initiative is expected to strengthen Nigeria's trade competitiveness while advancing the country's climate ambitions.

Customs chief promises tougher anti-smuggling actions

THE Acting Comptroller, Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Federal Operations Unit Zone 'C', Owerri, Farouk Nadaniya, has pledged to strengthen effective anti-smuggling operations, revenue protection, facilitation of legitimate trade and national security in line with the provisions of the NCS Act 2023.

He made the pledge during a handing-over ceremony at the unit's headquarters, where he assumed leadership from the retired Comptroller, Bishir

Balogun.

Nadaniya emphasised the strategic importance of the unit in facilitating legitimate trade in the Southeast, while charging officers to renew their commitment to service, responsibility and accountability.

The Acting Comptroller urged officers to remain firm, professional and uncompromising in the discharge of their statutory responsibilities.

He also commended the unit's leadership for its achievements, sacrifices,

professionalism, teamwork, courage and commitment to duty.

Nadaniya further lauded his predecessor and other officers who had contributed to the unit's progress and development.

Nadaniya strongly urged the patrol team leaders to remain disciplined, professional, vigilant, and accountable.

He sought their maximum co-operation and support in implementing modernisation, efficiency, compliance, and

improved customs procedures.

In his address, the retired Comptroller, Balogun, commended the unit's officers for their unalloyed support throughout his tenure.

He charged the unit's officers to be diligent in their respective areas of duty, noting the numerous achievements made possible through teamwork.

Balogun also urged the officers of the unit to show their support for the new Acting Comptroller.



Managing Director, Dangote Ports Operations, Akin Omole (left) and Director General, Nigerian Ports Economic Regulatory Agency (NPERA) during a courtesy visit of the Dangote Group to NPERA Headquarters in Lagos.

Bonded terminal tasks customs on debit note processing

BLUE Diamond Logistics China has appealed to the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) to address delays in the issuance and rectification of Debit Notes (DN) process, which sometimes takes up to two to three days to complete additional payments and slow down cargo clearance and release.

The company's Chairman, Festus Mbisiogu, argued that faster processing would enable importers and logistics operators to make payments without unnecessary delays and facilitate quicker cargo clearance at the ports and terminals.

Mbisiogu, while making the call at the company's 20th anniversary held in Lagos, recently, said the debit note process should be completed within one hour once an importer has been assessed and directed to make additional payment.

He commended the NCS

leadership for recent reforms aimed at improving the efficiency and transparency of customs administration, especially the introduction of *B'odogwu*, which he said had significantly enhanced the speed of the cargo-clearing process.

Mbisiogu encouraged the NCS to sustain its reform efforts by addressing remaining bottlenecks in the system, noting that the company had focused on overcoming challenges in the logistics sector while expanding its capacity to serve customers moving cargo between China and Nigeria.

The logistics and bonded terminal executive assured that the company would also strengthen its real-time cargo tracking system, allowing customers to monitor their consignments from overseas warehouses through transit and until

arrival at the company's warehouses in Nigeria.

He said the enhanced tracking system was expected to provide customers with greater transparency and visibility over their shipments and enable them to monitor cargo from their homes or offices.

Mbisiogu emphasised the company's establishment of bonded terminal facilities in Lagos, and Owerri was another component of its strategy to improve cargo management, security and delivery.

According to him, the facilities were strategically positioned to help the company monitor customers' cargo more effectively while improving operational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Reflecting on the company's 20-year journey, Mbisiogu said Blue Diamond had consistently

invested in workforce development, innovation, and quality of service, adding that the company had earned recognition as one of the top 10 logistics companies in Asia.

Former Governor of Benue State, Samuel Ortom, commended the company for demonstrating resilience, integrity, and reliability in supporting Nigerian businesses over the years.

Also speaking, former Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Nicholas Agbo, traced Blue Diamond's growth to the chairman's decision to build a business around the difficulties Nigerians faced while trading with China.

Agbo recalled how the entrepreneur helped Nigerian traders navigate language, sourcing and logistics challenges in China.

Lawyers advocate development of maritime hub

By Silver Nwokoro

THE Admiralty Lawyers' Society of Nigeria (ALSN) has urged the Federal government to activate all necessary machinery to achieve its plans for the development of the country's maritime sector.

The society made the call to mark Nigeria's 66th Independence Anniversary and commended the Federal government for creating the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy.

According to the lawyers, the creation of the ministry represented a significant step towards deepening the development of the maritime sector and positioning Nigeria within the comity of maritime nations.

The society also commended the government's plans to develop six new deep seaports in Ibadan, Akwa Ibom State; Bakassi, Cross River State; Agbe, Bayelsa State; Gateway, Ogun State; Ondo State; and Bonny, Rivers State.

It further welcomed plans to renovate or reinvigorate existing eastern ports and decongest the Lagos ports, while creating an integrated maritime logistics network to facilitate maritime commerce and develop a globally competitive port system.

The society declared that the successful implementation of the initiatives would make Nigeria a truly international maritime hub and significantly enhance international trade.

It added that the develop-

ment could boost national income and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while creating more employment opportunities.

According to the lawyers, increased employment opportunities would have a consequential effect on social challenges, including kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery and other social vices.

The society, therefore, called on the Federal government to activate all necessary machinery to achieve the stated goals and ensure that the right personnel were appointed to the appropriate authorities to give effect to its intentions.

It also urged the government to strengthen the country's procurement and audit systems to ensure that corruption and administrative bottlenecks do not frustrate the implementation of the initiatives.

The lawyers also stressed the importance of capacity building in the admiralty sector, urging individuals and corporate organisations to invest extensively in developing professional skills.

The society added that capacity building would ultimately help prevent capital flight.

As part of its efforts to promote capacity development, the society disclosed that it would hold a blue economy course in Port Harcourt from October 27 to 29, 2026.



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI)

ENGAGEMENT OF A CONSULTANT FOR THE CONDUCT OF FIELD DOCUMENTATION OF PROJECT SUCCESS STORIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENTS FOR NEWSLETTERS, FACTSHEETS AND OTHER SAPZ PUBLICATIONS (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT SELECTION)

COUNTRY: Federal Republic of Nigeria
NAME OF PROJECT: FIELD DOCUMENTATION OF PROJECT SUCCESS STORIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENTS FOR NEWSLETTERS, FACTSHEETS AND OTHER SAPZ PUBLICATIONS

Ref No: NPCO/SAPZ/IFAD/26/1021/580

The Federal Government of Nigeria has received financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) towards the cost of the Special Agro – Processing Zones Program (SAPZ), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the recruitment of consulting services, for which this REOI is issued.

The use of any IFAD financing shall be subject to IFAD's approval, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the financing agreement, as well as IFAD's rules, policies and procedures. IFAD and its officials, agents and employees shall be held harmless from and against all suits, proceedings, claims, demands, losses and liability of any kind or nature brought by any party in connection with Special Agro – Processing Zones Program.

The consulting services ("the services") shall involve the following:

1.0 Identification of Stories and Documentation Sites

The assignment will cover selected SAPZ-supported sites, interventions and beneficiaries in Kano and Ogun States, and will specifically involve:

- Review relevant SAPZ reports and background documents.
- Identify potential stories and beneficiaries in consultation with the NCO/KMC Unit.
- Prepare a simple field documentation plan and interview guides.
- Visit selected project sites and conduct beneficiary and key-informant interviews.
- Observe relevant project activities and collect supporting evidence.
- Document results such as changes in production, income, employment, market access, services and livelihoods, where applicable.
- Capture photographs and short audiovisual materials where required.
- Draft and submit agreed communication products for review and validation.
- Revise and finalise the products based on comments from the NCO/KMC Unit.

2.0 Key Areas for Documentation

- Smallholder farmer support and agricultural productivity;
- Agro-processing and agro-industrial hubs;
- Market linkages and farmer organisations;
- Digital agricultural and extension services;
- Input support and financial inclusion;
- Matching grants and agribusiness development;
- Women and youth empowerment;
- Nutrition-sensitive and climate-smart agriculture;
- Infrastructure and community-level interventions;
- Capacity building and value-chain development; and
- Other SAPZ-supported activities with demonstrable results.

More details on this consulting services are contained in the Terms of Reference (TOR) which can be obtained from the address below between 10am – 4pm on working days or obtained from the website: sapz.gov.ng.

It is expected that this consultancy service shall be for a period of 2 months within which the consultant shall accomplish all the tasks including submission of final report to the Client.

This request for expressions of interest (REOI) follows the General Procurement Notice that appeared on the IFAD website on 17th April, 2023, on UNDB on 17th April, 2023.

The attention of interested consultants is drawn to IFAD's Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Policy and the Revised IFAD Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption its Activities and Operations. The latter sets forth IFAD's provisions on prohibited practices. IFAD further strives to ensure a safe working environment free of harassment, including sexual harassment, and free of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in its activities and operations as detailed in its IFAD Policy to Preventing and Responding to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

Interested consultants shall not have any actual, potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest. Consultants with an actual, potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest shall be disqualified unless otherwise explicitly approved by the Fund. Consultants are considered to have a conflict of interest if they a) have a relationship that provides them with undue or undisclosed information about or influence over the selection process and the execution of the contract, or b) have a business or family relationship with a member of the client's board of directors or its personnel, the Fund or its personnel, or any other individual that was, has been or might reasonably be directly or indirectly involved in any part of (i) the preparation of the REOI, (ii) the selection process for this procurement, or (iii) execution of the contract. Consultants have an ongoing obligation to disclose any situation of actual, potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest during preparation of the EOI, the selection process or the contract execution. Failure to properly disclose any of said situations may lead to appropriate actions, including the disqualification of the consultant, the termination of the contract and any other as appropriate under the IFAD Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption in its Projects and Operations.

The National Program Coordination Office now invites eligible Individual consultants ("consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services in the form of a curriculum vitae (CV). A consultant will be selected in accordance with the individual consultant selection (ICS) method set out in IFAD's Project Procurement Handbook that can be accessed via the IFAD website at www.ifad.org/project-procurement. Interviews will not be conducted as part of the selection process.

The shortlisting criteria are: The criteria for shortlisting consultants will be based 1. General Qualification 2. General Working Experience 3. Adequacy for the assignment 4. Experience in Similar assignment in Donor Funded project.

Any request for clarification on this REOI should be sent via e-mail to the address below no later than 4.00 pm local time on 12th October, 2026. The client will provide responses to all clarification requests by 4.00 pm local time 14th October, 2026.

Expressions of interest in the form of curriculum vitae (CV) must be delivered in a written form to the address below later than 12.00 Noon local time on 21st October, 2026. **Late Submissions will NOT be accepted.**

SIGNED:
 DR. KABIR YUSUF
 National Program Coordinator, SAPZ
 National Program Co-ordination Office (NPCO)
 Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security,
 No. 3, Aguleri Street, off Gimbiya Street, Area 11, Abuja,
 admin@sapz.gov.ng; +234 8168088308, +2348035949354



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The Vice-Chancellor

Professor Shadrach Olufemi Akindele, FFAN, FFFPS

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Governing Council, Senate, Congregation, and Students of the University

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CONVOCAATION

Christ Ambassadors Set 2026

Sequence of Events for the 18th

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| THURSDAY,
1st October,
2026 | MEETING BETWEEN GRADUATING STUDENTS AND THE VISITOR, PASTOR E. A. ADEBOYE
Time: After the Holy Communion
Venue: RCCG, New Arena, Redemption City | | |
| FRIDAY,
2nd October,
2026 | ANointing SERVICE
Time: During the Holy Ghost Service
Venue: RCCG, New Arena, Redemption City | | |
| SUNDAY,
4th October,
2026 | THANKSGIVING SERVICE
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Venue: University Auditorium, Ede | | |
| MONDAY,
5th October,
2026 | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>PRESS CONFERENCE
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Venue: Senate Chamber</td> <td>SPORTS ACTIVITIES
Time: 03:00 p.m.
Venue: Redeemer's University Sports Arena, Ede</td> </tr> </table> | PRESS CONFERENCE
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Venue: Senate Chamber | SPORTS ACTIVITIES
Time: 03:00 p.m.
Venue: Redeemer's University Sports Arena, Ede |
| PRESS CONFERENCE
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Venue: Senate Chamber | SPORTS ACTIVITIES
Time: 03:00 p.m.
Venue: Redeemer's University Sports Arena, Ede | | |
| TUESDAY,
6th October,
2026 | AWARDS & RECOGNITION CEREMONY
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Venue: University Auditorium, Ede | | |
| WEDNESDAY,
7th October,
2026 | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>CONVOCAATION LECTURE
Time: 11:00 a.m.
Venue: University Auditorium, Ede</td> <td>CONVOCAATION PLAY
Time: 07:30 p.m.
Venue: BOJA Hall, Redeemer's University, Ede</td> </tr> </table> | CONVOCAATION LECTURE
Time: 11:00 a.m.
Venue: University Auditorium, Ede | CONVOCAATION PLAY
Time: 07:30 p.m.
Venue: BOJA Hall, Redeemer's University, Ede |
| CONVOCAATION LECTURE
Time: 11:00 a.m.
Venue: University Auditorium, Ede | CONVOCAATION PLAY
Time: 07:30 p.m.
Venue: BOJA Hall, Redeemer's University, Ede | | |
| THURSDAY,
8th October,
2026 | DAY 1 - CONVOCAATION CEREMONY
Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences, Faculty of Built Environment Studies, Faculty of Computing and Digital Technologies, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Faculty of Management Sciences & Faculty of Natural Sciences
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Venue: University Auditorium, Ede | | |
| FRIDAY,
9th October,
2026 | DAY 2 - CONVOCAATION CEREMONY
Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Social Sciences, Affiliate Institutions, College of Postgraduate Studies
Commencement Lecture
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Venue: University Auditorium, Ede | | |

RSVP

Adetunji Adeleye
 0802 894 4433 // adeleyea@run.edu.ng
 Temitope Adeola
 08031840184 // adeolalaw@run.edu.ng

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Politics

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Obi: Still in search of endorsement at 'home'

The presidential candidate of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), Peter Obi, has a herd following that rarely extends to the South-East – his home turf. At least, five of the six governors in the region have aligned with President Bola Tinubu ahead of the 2027 general election. However, some regional stakeholders are upbeat of Obi's chances outside of South-East governors' votes, SEYE OLUMIDE and LAWRENCE NJOKU report.

FOR Peter Obi, the 2027 presidential election presents both an opportunity and a formidable challenge in the South-East.

But as the 2027 contest gathers momentum, much of the region's political establishment is moving in the opposite direction.

Four of the five serving governors have publicly aligned with President Bola Tinubu, while Abia Governor Alex Otti has maintained a more cautious position. Former governors and senior political figures have also increasingly joined the Tinubu camp.

Anambra Governor Chukwuma Soludo has openly backed Tinubu and repeatedly argued against what he considers the futile deployment of South-East votes behind Obi. Minister of Works David Umahi has gone further, urging Ebonyi people not to vote for Obi and arguing that the South-East cannot produce a president through its votes alone.

Enugu Governor Peter Mbah and Ebonyi Governor Francis Nwifuru have also aligned with the All Progressives Congress (APC), while Imo Governor Hope Uzodimma has led mobilisation for Tinubu. In July, Uzodimma said all five South-East governors had resolved to support Tinubu.

Otti rejected the claim, insisting that Uzodimma could speak only for himself and that no governor could determine how the region would vote. He also said the Labour Party would field its own presidential candidate, whom he intended to support.

That distinction is important. Otti should not be placed in the same category as Soludo, Umahi, Mbah, Nwifuru and Uzodimma. His cordial relationship with the Federal Government and cooperation with Tinubu do not, on the evidence available, amount to an endorsement of the President's re-election. Still, the wider political movement around Tinubu is unmistakable.

In January, South-East APC governors and leaders endorsed Tinubu as their "sole candidate" for 2027, arguing that the region's interests would be better served through engagement with the centre. In April, former South-East governors formed a forum and endorsed his re-election. Those present included Sullivan Chime, Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, Chris Ngige, Okezie Ikpeazu and Martin Elechi.

Obi's challenge, therefore, is no longer merely a contest against Tinubu's party structure. It is increasingly a contest between a grassroots movement associated with Obi and an established political class that

sees proximity to the Federal Government as the more practical route to regional development and influence.

Umahi has made the most direct case against Obi. The Works Minister said the South-East should recognise that its votes alone could not make Obi president. He urged the region to support Tinubu, citing infrastructure projects and Federal Government engagement. He later told Ebonyi people not to vote for Obi and challenged the assumption that it was automatically the South-East's turn to produce the president.

Mbah has similarly advocated "strategic politics", while the pro-Tinubu camp points to Federal Government projects, appointments and infrastructure as evidence that cooperation with Abuja can produce tangible benefits. But does the political establishment speak for the electorate? This is where the 2027 calculation becomes complicated.

The South-East political class may be moving towards Tinubu, but voters demonstrated in 2023 that they could move in a different direction. Obi's campaign generated grassroots mobilisation that was not entirely dependent on governors, traditional structures or established party hierarchies. His supporters built a political movement around his candidacy.

That experience means the governors' alignment with Tinubu does not automatically determine how the electorate will vote. Retired Catholic Archbishop of Abuja, John Onaiyekan, recently captured the tension by arguing that South-East voters should be free to choose their preferred candidate rather than have governors make the decision for them.

The divide was also reflected by former National Chairman of All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), Maxi Okwu, who said political interests had always shaped the positions taken by leaders. While acknowledging that the South-East could not secure the presidency through its votes alone, he argued that this made alliances beyond the region necessary, not a reason to abandon Obi's bid.

"You do not expect the South-East to speak in unison in matters of this nature, especially when there are interests to protect. Anybody who is already benefiting from the current arrangement would not see the need for change," Okwu, who coordinates the OK Village Boys Movement, said.

He maintained that the Obi-Rabiu Kwankwaso ticket remained a strong alternative, citing their antecedents and what he described as widespread dissatisfaction with the current administration.

Obi's candidacy has revived the question of an Igbo presidential project, while Tinubu's courtship of the region has created a competing argument based on political access and federal partnership. The governors and established politicians are making one calculation; Obi's supporters are making another. The electorate will eventually make its own.

Chekwas Okorie, a founding National Chairman of APGA, the bigger question is whether Obi's personal influence and the NDC can translate into electoral victory. He answered in the affirmative, describing Obi as the most successful opposition politician in the country so far.

"His support base is organic. If you watch the barrage of attacks against him, it is because he has something to offer. He remains the greatest headache of the ruling party and its candidate in the 2027 general elections," Okorie said. Okorie described the Obi-Kwankwaso ticket as "the most formidable combination in any presidential election in Nigeria after the Shagari-Ekwueme ticket" of the Second Republic.

The former APGA chairman said the NDC's growing followership was not accidental, but the result of sustained engagement with youths and the masses.

"The mass followership of the NDC today did not fall from the sky. It is the outcome of genuine, sincere and consistent engagement of the youths and the masses by Obi and Kwankwaso over the years," he said.

The argument for an Obi presidency is also framed in terms of regional justice. National Chairman of the Igbo socio-political group, Njiko Igbo Forum (NIF), Okechukwu Obioha, said fairness demanded that the South-East produce the president, arguing that the region had not controlled executive power at the federal level since independence.

Obioha attributed dissent against Obi within the region to competing political interests and said the region was seeking only a four-year presidential tenure to restore balance to the country's informal power-sharing arrangement.

"Give us four years. We don't want to stop the cycle—the North and the South sharing the power formula," he said.

He also identified Obi's "organic" support among youths and older voters as his strongest political asset, arguing that the attacks against him reflected the perception that he posed a serious challenge to the ruling party.

Yet the APC's growing institutional presence cannot be ignored. Imo and Ebonyi are APC-controlled, while Mbah has moved Enugu into the ruling party. The party's South-East leadership now has governors, lawmakers and structures that were considerably weaker in the region during the 2023 presidential election.

The South-East should also not be treated as a single political constituency. Its five states have different interests, party structures

and relationships with Abuja.

Otti's position adds another layer to the equation. As the only South-East governor to reject the claim of a collective endorsement of Tinubu, he occupies an unusual position. His working relationship with Tinubu suggests that cooperation with Abuja and partisan opposition are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

His eventual conduct will therefore be watched closely, particularly because Abia is one of the states where the political establishment and the *Obidient* Movement have intersected strongly since 2023.

The deeper issue confronting the South-East may not be Obi or Tinubu, but the absence of agreement on how the region should pursue national power.

One camp favours supporting the incumbent President, consolidating ties with the Federal Government and using them to secure infrastructure, appointments and economic opportunities. Another believes the region will not become a serious presidential contender unless it demonstrates the capacity to mobilise its electorate behind an aspirant from the zone while building alliances across Nigeria.

Both positions have political logic. The first emphasises access to power; the second emphasises bargaining power. But they can produce conflicting electoral choices.

Meanwhile, supporters of Obi and Kwankwaso under the aegis of the South-East Village Boys, at a strategic meeting in Enugu, urged residents to reject attempts to undermine Obi's candidacy. They described him as a candidate whose political record remained credible and pledged to mobilise support for him and protect their votes.

"We are not moved by these sponsored attacks by those who have failed the country. Our desire is to restore democracy and give Nigeria a fresh breath. There is no campaign of calumny or threat that will dim the effort. We are ready and united in this course," they said.

The real contest, therefore, is between elite alignment and voter autonomy. If the political establishment succeeds in moving the electorate towards Tinubu, it would suggest that access to the centre and federal engagement have become more influential than the regional presidential argument. But if a substantial section of voters again separates itself from governors and traditional leaders, it would demonstrate the continuing strength of the grassroots movement associated with Obi.

Either outcome will have implications beyond one election. It will reveal how the South-East intends to negotiate power in Nigeria.

Ultimately, the debate should not be reduced to whether the region supports Obi or Tinubu. The more consequential issue is whether it has developed a coherent strategy capable of surviving individual elections and politicians.

Obi's candidacy has revived the question of an Igbo presidential project, while Tinubu's courtship of the region has created a competing argument based on political access and federal partnership. The governors and established politicians are making one calculation; Obi's supporters are making another. The electorate will eventually make its own.

The critical test is whether the South-East can reconcile presidential ambition, political pragmatism, regional unity and voter choice into a strategy that gives it sustained influence in

Nigeria's national power equation. That is the question the region's political stakeholders cannot avoid as 2027 approaches.



Obi

Soludo

Otti

Uzodimma



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ADAJI: I, formerly known as Miss Adewale Esther olajumoke now wish to be addressed as Mrs Esther Abraham Adaji all former documents remain valid. General public take note

ADDITION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Abiru Mayowa Mubashir now wish to be addressed as Abiru Mayowa Akanbi Mubashir. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ADDITION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Adewale Ishola now wish to be addressed as Adewale Ishola Mustapha. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ADDITION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Obande Gowon now wish to be known as Ikwebe Gowon Obande. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ADEBARE: I, formerly known as Miss Adebare Olajumoke Adebimpe now Mrs. Fadele Olajumoke Adebimpe. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ADEJONWO: I, formerly known as Adejonwo Oluwakemi Yemisi now wish to be addressed as Adejajo Oluwakemi Yemisi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ADEREMI: I, formerly known as Aderemi Adedoyin Odunayo now wish to be addressed as Aderemi Barakat Odunayomi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

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AJAYI: I, formerly known as Lare Rebecca Bosede now wish to be addressed as Ajayi Abosede Rebecca. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

AKINDURO: I, formerly known as Adu Folasade Olayinka now wish to be addressed as Akinduro Folasade Olayinka. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

AKODE-PETERS: I formerly known as Akode-Peters Oluwatosin Iyanuoluwa, now wish to be addressed as Osadola Oluwatosin Iyanu. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

BADRU: I, formerly known as Ayomide Damilola Omoniyi now wish to be addressed as Ayomide Damilola Badru. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

BEN-AROH: I, formerly known as Morayo Oluwatosin Ipede now wish to be addressed as Morayo Oluwatosin Ben-Aroh. All former documents remain valid. RTSL and general public take note

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Bukky Olubukola Alaba Okunade now wish to be addressed as Bukky Olubukola Alaba Okunade. All former documents remain valid. Public take note

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: That I, Babatunde Abubakar Bakare, Bakare Abubakar Babatunde, Bakare Abubakar, Babatunde Bakare is one person. Now wish to be known as Babatunde Abubakar Bakare. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Esievo Joy now wish to be addressed as Godwin Joy Nkem. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Daniel Iro now wish to be addressed as Iro Daniel Okechukwu. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Adejare Remilekun Dorcas and now wish to be addressed as Adejare Oluwaremilekun Dorcas. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Sunday Taiwo now wish to be addressed as Oluwagbemi Taiwo Sunday. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: Formerly known as Ikechukwu Praise Odili now wish to be addressed as Odili Praise Ekenechukwu, All former documents remain valid, General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: My name was wrongly written on my BVN as Feyisetan Emmanuel Excellent instead of Feyisetan Emmanuel Mayowa. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Francis Adebayo now wish to be addressed as Kehinde Francis Adebayo. First Bank of Nigeria, Guaranty Trust Bank, NIMC, public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Kehinde Temitope Busola now known as Bakare Temitope Busola. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: My name was wrongly captured as Damilare Caleb Adio instead of Oluwadamilare Caleb Adio. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Ijagbemi Deborah Olawunmi O now wish to be addressed as Ijagbemi Deborah Olawunmi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Chidi Samuel Chukwubikem now wish to be addressed as Chidi Prince Samuel. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: My name was wrongly captured as George Stella Imaobong instead of George Stella Udoh as contain in my NIN. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: My name was wrongly captured as Nnaji Chigozie instead of Adiola Chigozie Christopher as contain in my BVN. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

CORRECTION OF NAME: My correct name is Uzodinma Angela not Uzodima Angela. All former documents remain valid. All authority concerned, First bank and general public take note

EKUNDAYO: I, formerly known as Ekundayo Oreoluwa Joy now wish to be known as Akinlolu Oreoluwa Joy. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

EMEKA: I, formerly known as Josephine Ehimwenma Ekwunwe now wish to be addressed as Josephine Ehimwenma Emeka. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ESIEVO: I, formerly known as Esievo Joy now wish to be addressed as Godwin Joy Nkem. All former documents remain valid, public note

ENIFOME: I, formerly known as Samson Enifome now wish to be known as Enifome Efeh. All former documents remain valid. Public notice

FATOYINBO: I, formerly known as Habib Fatoyinbo now wish to be addressed as Oluwatosin Habib Fatoyinbo. All former documents remain valid. NIMC, banks, public should take note

GABRIEL: I, formerly known as Gabriel Victor Chidozie now known as Ugwuanyisreal Victor Chidozie All former documents remain valid. General public take

GODWIN: I formerly known as Miss Godwin Rosemary Onome, now to be addressed as Mrs Joshua Rosemary Onome. Former documents remain valid. Public note

IBEH: I formerly known as Mrs, Ibeh Assumpta Ugonna now wish to be addressed as Mrs Uwa Assumpta Ugonna. All former documents remain valid. General public note

IBOR: I, formerly known as Ibor Jennifer Friday now wish to be known as Raimi Jennifer Isah. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note

IGE: I, formerly known as Miss Abimbola Foluso Ige now wish to be known as Mrs Abimbola Foluso Adesina. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ISIWELE: I, formerly known as Isiwele Samuel Marvelous Oso-Ose... now wish to be addressed as Ehi-Osemare Samuel Oso-Ose. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ISIWELE: I, formerly known as Isiwele Glorious Efeosemene now wish to be addressed as Ehi-Osemare Glorious Efeosemene. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

JIBRIN: I, formerly known as Isah Jibrin Jr, now wish to be addressed as Isah Jibrin. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

JOLA-ADE: I, formerly known as Bakare Mariam Jola-ade now wish to be addressed as Oparaiheoma Mariam Jola-Ade. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

JUMBO: I, formerly known as Jumbo Tessa Nnedi now wish to be addressed as Ogoke Tessa. All former documents remain valid. Banks, general public take note

MICAH: I, formerly known as Emeza Kingsley Omovo now wish to be known as Jeremiah Oghenekaro Micah. All former documents remain valid. Public note

NTUKPEK: I, formerly known as Miss Linda Valentine Ntukpek now wish to be known as Mrs. Bisong, Linda Ebarim. All former documents remain valid. Public take note

NWOKEDI: I, formerly known as Miss Nwokedi Vivian Ukamaka now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Odaman Vivian Ukamaka. All former documents remain valid, General public take note

OBELE: I, formerly known as Blessing Chinyere Obele now wish to be addressed as Blessing Chinyere Okwuolisa. Former Documents Remain valid. General Public take note

ODEBODE: I, formerly known as Miss Oguntuase Peace Oluwakemi now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Odebode Peace Oluwakemi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

ODION: I, formerly known as Princess Paul Odion, now wish to be addressed as Asana Glory Esther. All former documents remain valid. General public, NIN take note

OGBOLU: I, formerly known as Ogbolu Petra Onyeka now wish to be addressed as Petra Onyeka Augustine-Otu. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OGUNTOKE: I formerly known as Miss Oguntoke Abosede Christianah now to be addressed as Mrs Oyekan Abosede Christianah. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OJEDIRAN: I, formerly known as Uwadiare Osefunaimhen Anthonette now wish to be addressed as Ojediran Osefunaimhen Anthonette. All former documents remain valid. General public take

OKEKE: I, formerly known as Benjamin-Eze Deborah Chidinma now wish to be addressed as Okeke Deborah Chidinma. Documents bearing my former names remain valid. Public note

OKEWOLE: I, formerly known as Shekoni Jemima Oluwagbemisola now wish to be addressed as Okewole Jemima Oluwagbemisola. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OKOLO: I formerly known as Miss. Okolo Christiana Ifeyinwa now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Abanum Christiana Ifeyinwa. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OMOREGBE: I, formerly known as Omoregbe Success now wish to be addressed as Success Nomwenriemomwan Omoregbe. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OMOTOSO: I, formerly known as Mrs. Olabisi Omotoso now wish to be addressed as Ms. Olabisi Subaidat Jagun. All former documents remain valid. General public to take note

OMOWUNMI: I, formerly known as Salami Adejoke Omowunmi now wish to be addressed as Bamgbopa Adejoke Salami. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OSAYENDE: I, formerly known as Esogban Osayende now wish to be addressed as Esogban Osayende Godsent. All former documents remain valid, General public take note

OTEMDIRI: I, formerly known as Blessing Otemdiri Nelson now wish to be addressed as Okpah Blessing Nelson. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OTI: I, formerly known as Ololola Rebecca Oti now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Pepple Ololola Rebecca Oti. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

OTOGBOLU: I, formerly known as Thankgod Otogbolu now wish to be addressed as Ifeanyi Thankgod Okwuolisa. Former Documents Remain valid. General Public take note

OZOR: I, formerly known as Miss Ozor Iseri Gift now wish to be known as Mrs Nwanze Iseri Gift. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

PIUS: I, formerly known as Pius Beauty Ibhade now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Eromosele Beauty Ibhade. All former documents remain valid, General public take note

RECONCILIATION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Pamote Blessing now wish to be addressed as Pamote Blessing Edesieme. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

SANYA: I, formerly known as Miss Oluwaseun Olutayo Sanya, wish to be addressed as Mrs. Oluwaseun Daniella Falola. All documents remain valid, and the general public take note

TAMUNOSA: I, formerly known as Kingsley Godwin Umanah now wish to be addressed as Kingsley Ndiana-abasi Tamunosa Godwin. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

USIGBE: I formerly known as Miss Usigbe Anthonia, now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Elimian Anthonia. All former documents remain valid, General public take note

UWABOR: I, formerly known as Uwabor Princess Peter, now wish to be addressed as Asana Glory Esther. All former documents remain valid. Banks, public take note

UWATI: I formerly known as Miss Osara Uwati now wish to be known as Mrs. Godwin Uwati Osara. All former documents remain valid, General public take note

UZOMA: I, formerly known as Uzoma Precious Nmaezi now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Emmanuel Precious Nmaezi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

VICTOR: I, formerly known as James Victor Kelvin now wish to be addressed as Ituen Victor. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

YUSUF: I, formerly known as Mohammed Rabiutu Yusuf now wish to be addressed as Asimah Rabiutu Yusuf. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

World Report

Police fire tear gas at crowds in France school protests

TENS of thousands of people are demonstrating across France, in protest at what they say is under-investment in high schools.

One union says 2,000 high schools have closed, France's interior ministry estimated earlier there were 86,000 protesters across the country, not including Paris.

Police have fired tear gas in Paris and in Marseille.

In Lyon, a barricade was set on fire; while in Rennes, police used water cannons. In Paris, one 17-year-old says she studies in overcrowded classes of 35.

But, as Mark Lowen reports from Marseille, it's hard to see how the demands will be met by a government that urgently needs to rein in public spending.

In parliament, French Prime Minister Sebastian Lecornu says: "Burning down a high school does not improve the state of high school buildings."

French Prime Minister, Sebastian Lecornu, said hundreds of

police officers and students have been injured during the recent protests across France.

Speaking in the French parliament this afternoon, Lecornu says 215 students have been hurt since the protests began, as have 85

school workers and 715 gendarmes and police officers.

He says it is the highest figure to affect workers in the education system in decades, condemning the trivialisation of violence that is unacceptable.

Cameroon commits to stronger bilateral ties with Nigeria

By Ngozi Egenuka

THE Consul General of Cameroon in Lagos, Bibi Lobe, has reaffirmed the country's commitment to national unity, peaceful coexistence and stronger bilateral ties with Nigeria as Cameroon celebrated 54 years of "unity in diversity" in Lagos.

Speaking during the commemoration of Cameroon's National Unity Day, Lobe traced the historical evolution of Cameroon and explained that the country celebrates unity rather than independence because of its unique colonial and political history.

According to her, Cameroon's borders were first established in

July 1884 when German explorer Busta Mattega signed agreements with local leaders in the coastal region, creating the German protectorate of Cameroon.

She explained that after World War I, Germany lost control of the territory, leading the League of Nations to partition Cameroon between Britain and

France in 1919.

Lobe noted that French Cameroon later gained independence as the Republic of Cameroon on January 1, 1960, while British Cameroons, following a United Nations-supervised plebiscite in 1961, voted to join the newly independent Republic of Cameroon.

Nigeria's private jet fleet increases to 240

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

ficer (CEO) of Jet Afrique Services, Theodore Chikelu, said that customers willing to book the services do so in advance, at least a week before the due date.

He explained that this was necessary in order to ensure the availability of the equipment, while the charter company also seek necessary approvals from the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) and the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA).

Besides, Chikelu dismissed the notion that the increasing use of private jets by politicians and other high-net-worth individuals was contributing to the recent flight delays and disruptions experienced by passengers across Nigeria.

He attributed this to inadequate fleet capacity and weaknesses in operational management, rather than the recent increase in political activities.

Chikelu argued that politicians who own or charter private aircraft had the right to use them for campaigns and other personal or political engagements, stressing that private aviation operates independently of the scheduled commercial airline system.

He added that most political figures who require charter service do not rely on commercial aircraft. He reckoned that individuals should be free to use their resources to achieve their objectives, including political campaigns, provided such activities complied with relevant laws and regulations.

Chikelu disclosed that the cost of chartering a private jet or helicopter in Nigeria currently averages between \$12,000 and \$20,000 (N15.9 million and N26.5 million), depending on the type of aircraft and the distance to be covered. But this cost was not calculated on an hourly basis.

Also, the Senior Advisor, African Region, Aircraft Acquisition, Sales & Management at Superba Consulting, Nuhu Adam, said business aviation remained a legitimate campaign logistics tool, but its use could create negative public perception when juxtaposed with the hardship confronting millions of citizens.

Adam, a business aviation expert, declared that the industry should distinguish between business or corporate aviation and helicopter charter, rather than lumping the operations as private-jet owners or operators.

According to him, business jet services enable political candidates to cover several cities in a single day while avoiding road congestion and security risks.

Adam also cited insecurity and the unpredictability of commercial airline schedules as major factors behind the preference for charter aircraft. He said: "Road insecurity and kidnapping make air travel the only viable option for high-profile candidates. Commercial schedules are unpredictable. You can't tell a 50,000 crowd, 'my flight was delayed'. "When your default is a chartered flight to beat traffic and insecurity, it's difficult to fully feel the pain of someone spending four hours on a N1,500 bus or being told 'no bed space' at a public hospital. "This is not to indict every politician. But the system in-

ulates them. And that insulation is what citizens react to. Leadership is measured not just by what you do, but by what you are seen to understand."

A business consultant, Pius Isiekwe, expressed that the country's operating airlines currently lacked sufficient capacity to meet growing passenger demand.

He said the situation could worsen as politicians begin to charter aircraft to move themselves and their supporters across the country.

According to him, airlines are already stretching their available fleets to improve operating margins, with some aircraft deployed on multiple domestic, regional and international routes.

He noted that charter operations could further compound the capacity problem

because of the potentially attractive returns available to airlines from such engagements.

Isiekwe, who is a frequent air traveller, emphasised that the poor condition of major interstate roads had also increased pressure on domestic air transport, as more travellers were turning to air travel due to concerns about safety and security on the highways.

He warned that unless urgent measures were taken to expand airline capacity, passengers could face more disruptions during the campaign season.

Also, he advocated improved access to affordable financing for airlines, stressing that aviation was highly capital-intensive and operators needed financial support to expand their fleets.

Army, Navy condole with Air Force over loss of personnel

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

was on a routine mission from Benin to Lagos.

NAF Director of Public Relations and Information, Air Commodore Ehimen Ejodame, in a statement yesterday said the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Marshal Sunday Kelvin Aneke, expressed condolences to the families, loved ones and colleagues of the victims.

He said: "NAF 931 had 25 persons on board, comprising five crew members and 20 passengers. Search-and-rescue procedures were immediately activated, with response efforts conducted in coordination with relevant authorities to locate and account for all persons on board. No survivors have been found."

The five crew members were Squadron Leader MI Aburime, the flight captain; Squadron Leader AP Man-Ugwueje, co-pilot; Flight Lieutenant I.S. Bako, co-pilot; Warrant Officer Abubakar A, aircraft technician; and Corporal Uguru H.C., aircraft technician.

The passengers were Flight Lieutenant T.L. Lazarus, Flight Lieutenant M. Akinloye, Flying Officer I.M. Adeshina, Master Warrant Officer Onwuka F., Master Warrant Officer Matini B.A., Warrant Officer Nuhu F.S., Flight Sergeant James R.B., Flight Sergeant Mohammed A.I., Sergeant Ani A.E. and Sergeant Izibenikien S.I.

Others were Sergeant Alafuka C., Sergeant Mbadugha A.N., Lance Corporal Ugwuba F.C., Lance Corporal Eledan G.E., Mrs Ezech Nneka, Godstmine Tarabina, Joy Micheal, Sunday Micheal, Ukeme David and Gideon Omotola.

Aneke described the accident as a deeply painful moment for the Nigerian Air Force and the nation, assuring the bereaved families of the Service's full support.

The Chief of the Air Staff has also directed a comprehensive investigation to establish the circumstances surrounding the accident.

The NAF said it would provide timely and verified updates as the investigation progresses, while urging the public to refrain from speculation and the circulation of unverified information.

It also appealed to members of the public to respect the privacy and dignity of the affected families.

A condolence register has been opened at the Headquarters of the Nigerian Air Force in Abuja for senior government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, heads of security agencies and other well-wishers wishing to pay their respects and convey messages of sympathy to the families of the deceased and the Nigerian Air Force.

Senate postpones national security summit

THE Senate has postponed its planned National Security Summit indefinitely.

The two-day summit, scheduled for October 12 and 13, 2026, was suspended in honour of the

fallen military personnel.

The Leader of the Senate and Chairman of the Senate Ad-hoc Committee on the National Security Summit, Opeyemi Bamidele, announced the postponement in a statement yesterday.

The summit was designed to examine Nigeria's worsening security challenges and develop practical measures to protect lives and property across the country.

Preparations for the summit had been concluded following the completion of zonal public hearings ahead of the national gathering.

However, the fatal crash and the subsequent declaration of national mourning prompted the Senate to suspend the event until further notice.

The Senate expressed condolences to Tinubu, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, the Nigerian Armed Forces, particularly the Nigerian Air Force, and the families of the deceased personnel.

Bamidele described the fallen officers and crew members as gallant personnel who paid the supreme price in active service to the nation.

The Senate said a new date for the summit would be announced in due course and appealed to stakeholders to bear with the legislature during the period of national mourning. **Swamp buggies deployed to recover crashed NAF aircraft**

TWO amphibious excavators, commonly known as swamp buggies, have been deployed to the crash site of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) ATR-42 aircraft that went down in the creeks of Igbokoda, headquarters of Ilaje Local Council Area of Ondo State.

The heavy-duty equipment arrived at the site alongside a team of technical personnel equipped with specialised detection devices to locate the submerged wreckage and support the recovery operation.

The deployment came more than 24 hours after the aircraft crashed into the creeks, with the remains of the victims yet to be recovered as of 5:00 p.m. yesterday.

Sources at the scene said the wreckage was located in a largely inaccessible area, with murky waters and thick vegetation compounding the challenges facing emergency responders.

When *The Guardian* visited the Forward Operating Base (FOB), journalists were barred from accessing the crash site, located about 500 metres east of the Naval Base and cordoned off by security personnel.

Some journalists were also arrested by FOB operatives for allegedly accessing the crash site without approval.

The deployment of the swamp buggies raised hopes among residents of the coastal community that the operation would be strengthened to recover the victims' remains

and retrieve the aircraft from the difficult terrain.

The swampy nature of the crash site, about 500 metres from the FOB, had made access and recovery particularly difficult, with initial attempts using small boats proving inadequate. **CAN, ADC demand transparent probe, audit of NAF aircraft maintenance**

THE Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the African Democratic Congress (ADC) have called for a thorough and transparent investigation into the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) ATR-42 aircraft crash in Igbokoda, Ondo State, with the opposition party demanding scrutiny of defence budget implementation and aircraft maintenance.

CAN President, Archbishop Daniel Okoh, in a statement yesterday in Abuja, condoled with the families of the personnel killed in the crash and urged the government to ensure that

the findings of the investigation and its safety recommendations receive the necessary attention.

Okoh described the incident as a painful reminder of the sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces and the burden borne by their families.

He called for stronger aviation safety measures, including improved aircraft maintenance, operational procedures and emergency response systems.

"Every life lost is precious. We must therefore continue to strengthen aviation safety, aircraft maintenance, operational procedures and emergency response systems, particularly in the interest of personnel who undertake difficult assignments on behalf of the nation," he said.

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

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Probe panel seeks two-week extension on miners' deaths inquiry

THE federal government's independent investigative panel on the deaths of the 37 miners in the custody of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has requested an additional two weeks to complete its assignment.

This comes as it also disclosed that preliminary findings pointed to "elements of institutional

lapses" and "elements of over-zealousness" in the NSCDC personnel's handling of the arrest and detention of the miners.

In an update on the probe, the chairman of the 10-member panel, Jonathan Kure, told newsmen that the investigation also identified areas for additional training and professionalism to enable NSCDC personnel to

handle cases of this magnitude effectively.

According to him, the panel sought an extension of the initial October 7 deadline to October 21, 2026, because the volume of evidence and testimony still required detailed review.

Kure said the committee had made appreciable progress, including inspecting the custody facility, con-

ducting autopsies, taking statements from NSCDC personnel, survivors, families and other witnesses, and collecting documentary and forensic evidence.

However, he said the panel had yet to conclude its assignment due to the large volume of testimony and documentary evidence that required meticulous review and collation.

Moreover, he said the panel was also awaiting forensic and pathology reports, which he added are essential to establishing the victims' cause of death. According to him, the committee also needed to give all persons implicated in the incident, including officers who had been suspended, an opportunity to respond to the allegations against them.

Kure said the extension would enable the panel to conclude the investigation and submit what he described as a thorough and credible final report, even as he acknowledged the cooperation from the Federal Ministry of Interior, the NSCDC, the Niger State Government, the Minna Emirate, affected communities and survivors.

Egbetokun, dons charge FG to defeat insecurity via job creation

From Rotimi Agboluaje, Ibadan

THE former Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Dr Kayode Egbetokun, has called on the federal and state governments to tackle poverty, unemployment and other governance challenges as a sure way to address insecurity in Nigeria.

He also called for a strategic redefinition of Nigeria's security strategy around the everyday security needs of citizens, including food, employment, healthcare and education.

Egbetokun, in a keynote address yesterday at the 20th International Conference and General Assembly of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice (SPSP), held at Lead City

University, Ibadan, Oyo State, said that solving the problem required more than military force, as there is no military solution to the governance problem.

Speaking on the theme, 'Security Governance and Global Dynamics', he stressed that hungry and unemployed youth could become vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups.

Egbetokun stated that security should not be viewed solely in terms of protecting territorial borders, stressing that it also encompasses access to justice, economic opportunities, healthcare, protection from violence, and citizens' confidence that institutions will treat them fairly.

Nataro rallies for reform of anti-corruption agencies

From Leo Sobechi, Abuja

A FORMER gubernatorial candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Kebbi State, Salihu Nataro, has warned the federal government against further foreign loans to avoid plunging Nigeria into a debt trap.

Nataro said the spiralling population growth makes it imperative for the government to aggressively pursue social safety nets, stressing that the call by the presidential candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Atiku Abubakar, for reform of the anti-graft agencies deserves consideration.

According to him, the in-

creasing national debt and high cost of living have created the impression that President Bola Tinubu's various reforms have not yielded the desired results. He added that many projects that have gulped trillions of naira without a visible impact on the people have compounded the situation.

Nataro, who is a public sector reform advocate, urged President Tinubu to use the remaining months of his first term to address citizens' declining purchasing power, focus on convincing Nigeria's domestic billionaires and foreign investors, and use tax proceeds to industrialise the country.

APC cautions members against sabotage

• Atiku's aide tasks police on equality

From Murtala Adewale, Kano

THE ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in Kano State has vowed to achieve electoral victory for all of the party's candidates in the state, from President Bola Tinubu and Governor Abba Yusuf to other flag bearers at the 2027 poll.

To that end, the state chairman, Umar Doguwa, warned members against sabotaging the party's chances of victory at next year's general election.

Meanwhile, a media aide to the ADC presidential candidate, Paul Ibe, has called on Nigerian security agencies to enforce the law equally across party lines, after the police invited a Kano State opposition politician for questioning

over an alleged firearm display.

Ibe spoke amid claims that members of the ruling APC, who were accused of making similar threats of violence, have not been investigated. Ibe condemned the reported conduct of NDC politician, Aminu Warkal, who was caught in a video displaying a firearm at a political gathering in Kano, saying the incident warranted investigation.

Speaking yesterday during an engagement with party leaders in Kano North Senatorial District, Doguwa, represented by the Zonal Chairman, Abdullahi Bichi, emphasised that the zonal leaders' commitment must be absolute.

PDP loses bid to stop KWASIEC's conduct of council elections

From Mansur Aramide, Ilorin

THE Federal High Court in Abuja has dismissed a People's Democratic Party (PDP) suit seeking to stop the Kwara State Independent Electoral Commission (KWASIEC) from conducting the last local council elections in Kwara State, saying the case was statute-barred.

In the judgment delivered yesterday, the presiding Justice Peter Lifu also ruled that the suit was an abuse of court process.

The PDP was the plaintiff in the suit with No. FHC/ABJ/CS/1061/2024, while the defendants were the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and KWASIEC.

The plaintiff had sought an order restraining KWASIEC from conducting the last LG elections in Kwara State, and also restraining INEC from furnishing KWASIEC with the Voters' Register for that purpose.

However, the council elections were conducted while the substantive suit was pending, as the court had earlier ordered that the status quo be maintained. Consequently, the plaintiff fully participated in the electoral process.

It thereafter filed about 24 election petitions, all of which were dismissed, but it did not appeal any of the decisions, instead applying to amend its originating summons to seek an order nullifying the said elections.

However, the court held that the amendment fundamentally altered the character of the action. It noted that

the suit, which was originally a pre-election matter, was, by virtue of the amendment, transformed into a post-election claim, saying the court lacked jurisdiction to start as an election tribunal.

Among others, the court added that having been so reconstituted, the suit was caught by the statutory limitation period, and that it had

no power as an electoral tribunal, and was equally statute-barred.

The court further upheld the defendants' preliminary objection that the suit constituted an abuse of court process, as the plaintiff had voluntarily participated in the said elections, presented election petitions, and failed in all of them.



Director, Relief and Rehabilitation, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Abbani Garki (left); Director, Search and Rescue, Air Commodore Bature Usman, and Deputy Governor of Rivers State, Prof. Ngozi Odu, during the federal government's presentation in Port Harcourt of relief materials to the affected flood victims in the state yesterday.

NHRC urges rework of social systems against ageing population abuse, neglect

From Ameh Ochojila, Abuja

TO help Nigerians live longer lives, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has called for a fundamental rethink of the country's social, healthcare and protection systems, warning that many older persons continue to face poverty, neglect, abuse, discrimination and exclusion.

The NHRC Executive Secretary, Dr Tony Ojukwu, SAN, made the call yesterday in

Abuja at a media briefing to commemorate the 2026 International Day of Older Persons, with the theme, "The Age of Longevity: Rethinking Systems for Longer Lives."

He said Nigeria should not treat longevity as a burden but rather as an opportunity requiring governments and society to redesign institutions and policies to support people throughout their lives.

He further expressed con-

cern that many older Nigerians still struggle with inadequate income, poverty, age discrimination, abandonment, limited access to healthcare, social isolation, weak social protection and delayed or inadequate pension benefits, among other ills.

Similarly, the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) said that older persons among Nigeria's displaced

population face unique protection challenges that require age-sensitive humanitarian responses.

Moreover, the Dave Omokaro Foundation called for a renewed commitment to rights-based ageing, urging the government and relevant stakeholders to strengthen laws, institutions, and social protection systems to safeguard the dignity, independence, and participation of older persons in Nigeria.

CSOs ask FG to probe prolonged TikTok disruption in North

From Sodiql Omolayo, Abuja

A COALITION of 12 civil society organisations (CSOs) has requested that the federal government urgently investigate the prolonged disruption of access to TikTok in parts of Northern Nigeria, particularly Kaduna, Kebbi, Kano and Sokoto states.

In a joint statement, they lamented that the disruption, which reportedly began

around mid-September 2026, had continued for over two weeks, leaving users unable to load the platform or use or upload content via ordinary mobile data connections.

Consequently, the CSOs called on the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), the af-

ected state governments, telecommunications operators, and TikTok to urgently investigate the matter and publish their findings.

The 12 organisations, including the Accountability Lab Nigeria, Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID), and Digital Africa Research and Safety Lab (DigiAfricaLab), said the disruption, which remains unclear, was affect-

ing citizens who use TikTok for communication, business and other activities.

According to the statement, the absence of an explanation from relevant authorities and service providers has heightened concerns over the disruption, particularly given the growing importance of digital platforms to economic and civic activities.

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Failed U.S., Canada, Mexico 2026 World Cup bid

FIFA files reveal DR Congo should have been disqualified, game awarded to Eagles

• Nigeria may seek compensation for denied final playoff chance, revenue

By Christian Okpara

WAS the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS) decision to dismiss Nigeria's petition against DR Congo for fielding ineligible players during their 2026 World Cup African playoff final an honest mistake or a deliberate action to favour the DR Congo? That is what Nigerian sports officials are seeking answers to following the revelation that FIFA knew that DR Congo goalkeeper in that match, Lionel Mpasi, was not qualified to play that game. The paper works granting Mpasi permission to switch allegiance from France to DR Congo, according to the reports, had not been finalised before the game against Nigeria. The *New York Times* and *Le Monde*, yesterday, reported that lawyers for world football's global governing body became aware in March that Mpasi was alleged-

ly ineligible, and advised a variety of sanctions which could be imposed, including disqualifying DR Congo from the intercontinental play-off against Jamaica later that month and banning Mpasi. Instead, according to reports, no action was taken, and Mpasi went on to play for DR Congo at the final playoff against Jamaica and the World Cup finals in North America. Following the revelations, officials of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) are considering demanding for compensation from FIFA for the losses incurred by Nigeria due to FIFA's actions in the case. Already, Jamaica has taken FIFA up on the case, with a view to getting compensation for the injustice in their loss to DR Congo.

Joshua plans to dig deep, make Fury clash exciting while it lasts

ANTHONY Joshua and Tyson Fury are promising KO wins ahead of their fight on December 11 at Principality Stadium in Cardiff, Wales, according to *ring-magazine.com*. Joshua (30-4, 26 KOs) said he'll bring aggression from the first round against Fury (36-2-1, 25 KOs) and is ready to throw caution to the wind. Fury countered that he will do whatever he wants en route to a stoppage win for the vacant WBA "super" heavyweight title. "It's about a battle of will," Joshua said in an interview with *The Ring's* Mike Copinger. "He does great things, he does bad things. There are things I'm going to work on in the gym, like I did with Kristian Prenga. But sometimes the night just unveils things that are unexpected, and I just have to dig deep to make it an exciting fight while it lasts."



Super Falcons' Captain, Rasheedat Ajibade

South Africa bids to become Africa's first country to host Olympic Games

By Christian Okpara

SOUTH Africa has joined India and Qatar, as well as four other countries in the race to host the 2036 Olympic Games, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has confirmed. Other countries interested in hosting the event in 2035 are Germany, South Korea, Hungary and Turkey. The IOC has given interested parties up to the end of this month to lodge a formal bid and enter a dialogue process which will culminate in a final vote by IOC members in 2029. In 2010, South Africa became the first and only African country to host the World Cup, an event that showed the world that the country has the infrastructure needed to host global sports competition. It faces stiff challenge from India, which has long been seen

a front-runner, with Ahmedabad, the capital of Gujarat, the home state of Indian prime minister Narendra Modi, already announced as hosts of the 2030 Commonwealth Games. Qatar launched unsuccessful bids to host both the 2016 and 2020 Games, losing out to Rio and Tokyo respectively. It intends to rely heavily on infrastructure created for its successful 2022 hosting of the football World Cup. Munich won the right to bid on behalf of Germany following a vote by the country's sports authority, the DOSB, late last month. Other formal bidders include South Africa, South Korea, Hungary and Turkey.



Lionel Mpasi saved two penalties when Nigeria lost the 2026 World Cup African playoff to DR Congo in November last year.

FIFA Council set to sit on NFF's leadership crisis tomorrow

By Christian Okpara

THE FIFA Council, which is the world football ruling body's decision making body, will deliberate on the crisis that led to the mass resignation of Nigeria Football Federation's (NFF) board members, including its president, Ibrahim Gusau and secretary general, Mohammed Sanusi, on Thursday. A FIFA and the Confederation of African Football (CAF) delegation was in Nigeria last month on a fact-finding mission following the leadership crisis in the country's football, which also led to the suspension of the federation's elective congress. The delegation held a series of meetings with key stakeholders in Nigerian football during its visit to Abuja, gathering views on the governance crisis and possible pathways towards restoring an elected leadership structure. The mission was widely seen as a crucial step in determining how FIFA and CAF would respond to the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the administration of Nigerian football.

Fencing federation to host third Women in Coaching Session

By Eniola Daniel

AS part of its ongoing efforts to empower women coaches and strengthen coaching development, the Nigeria Fencing Federation will host the third edition of its Women in Coaching Online Session on 30 October 2026. The virtual programme will bring together women fencing coaches, administrators and leading figures from the international fencing community for discussions centred on leadership, career development, technical growth and practical

coaching skills. The session will be hosted by Nigeria's Bola Suru, with Laura Simon of Malaysia serving as co-host. A major highlight of the programme will be an intensive practical épée coaching session led by Dr Genady Tyshler, Fencing Master, Coach Educator and President of the FIE Coaches Council. Participants will have the opportunity to learn directly from one of the world's most respected coaching experts and gain insights into modern coaching methods and athlete development.

NBBF Elections

Oyededeji: 'I am coming to build, not take from basketball'

AFTER months of stakeholder engagements across the basketball community, former D'Tigers captain Olumide Oyededeji has formally declared his intention to contest for the presidency of the Nigeria Basketball Federation (NBBF). Speaking at a world press conference in Lagos on Monday, Oyededeji said his decision was not driven by personal ambition, but by a commitment to serve, rebuild, reunite and reposition

Nigerian basketball for sustainable success. With more than 30 years of experience across different facets of the game as a player, club owner, administrator and philanthropist, Oyededeji, who was a member of the Federation of International Basketball Associations (FIBA) Players Commission from 2014 to 2019, noted that Nigerian basketball has the talent and human resources needed to thrive if backed by the right structure and leadership.

Los Angeles 2028 Olympics Qualifier

Ajibade, six others swell Super Falcons' camp to 21 players

Comoros hold first training session

Akekoromowei, with five more expected by yesterday evening. Friday's match, which is actually the first leg that should have been played in Comoros, will kick off at 6.00 pm at the Remo Stars Stadium, Ikenne-Remo. CAF has selected Rwandese official Henriette Byukusenge as the referee, with her compatriots Sandrine Murangwa, Regine Mukayiranga and Aline Umutohi as first assistant, second assistant and fourth official respectively.

Fransiska Katjaimo from Namibia will serve as referee assessor while Oumou Sy from Burkina Faso will be in the role of commissioner. Meanwhile, the Comoros senior women national team, who arrived in Ijebu-Ode on Monday night, had their first training session in Ikenne-Remo yesterday evening. The players in camp are goalkeeper Christiana Uzoma; defenders Farida Abdulwahab, Sandra John, Tumininu Adeshina, Valentina Uroko, Glory Edet, Shukurat Oladipo, and Glory Ogbonna. Others are midfielders Christy Ucheibe, Toni Payne, Favour Omenazu, Joy Igbokwe, Jennifer Echegini, Fatimoh Solaty, and Suliat Abideen.

Yesterday's Football Result			
International Friendly			
Russia	3	Nigeria	3
Today's Match			
EuroMatch NPFL			
Shooting Stars	v	Kano Pillars	

Solution

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

Oluwafemi Adekoya



FIFA files reveal DR Congo should have been disqualified, game awarded to Eagles

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Zamfara beyond Sharia and insurgency

STEPPING out of one's comfort zone and looking at the world through another lens can sometimes be challenging, especially when the popular narrative remains dominant in public discourse. It takes grit and the ability to disabuse oneself of preconceived notions and to allow instinct and data to guide one through the journey.

Journalists have mostly become numb to news of insecurity, hopelessness, and politicians' antics aimed at swaying public perception. Gathering raw data remains the gold standard for independent journalism and will trump subsidised information, such as press releases or statements.

Visiting Zamfara was not without anxiety, given the kind of reports emanating from the State and many parts of the northern region. My closest encounter with Zamfara was when a family member was posted to the state for the mandatory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) programme in 2011. That shouldn't be a problem, naturally, considering how he had been forewarned about the Sharia practice.

For the first time, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) heavily integrated corps members to serve as polling clerks and ad hoc staff to ensure a credible voting process. This changed whatever briefing he had received to prepare him for his stay in Zamfara. Indeed, the April 2011 presidential election sparked severe ethno-religious violence across 12 northern states, including Zamfara. Following the perception that the 2011 election between President Goodluck Jonathan and late President Muhammadu Buhari had been rigged, opposition supporters launched mass protests. Because they managed the polling units where the ruling party won, rioters falsely viewed the corps members not as neutral participants, but as agents of the federal government who helped "rig" the election against Buhari.

Many corps members deployed to Zamfara were from southern Christian backgrounds. In the heat of the riots, local grievances blended with religious biases, making local NYSC lodges and fellowships (such as the Nigeria Christian Corps Fellowship, or NCCF) immediate targets for angry mobs. My brother was lucky to live to tell the story, thanks to the intervention of the Lagos State government under Governor Babatunde Fashola, which returned corps members from the troubled region to Lagos to continue their service. Since then, Zamfara has been a no-travel zone for me or any family member.

When the invitation to attend the media chat with Governor Dauda Lawal arrived, it was met with some scepticism and hesitation. It took some convincing and assurances to get a yes after being told we wouldn't be travelling via the Zaria-Zamfara high-



Lawal

way, which some senior colleagues had travelled in 2025. This meant that the newly commissioned airport in Gusau would be our first point of contact with Zamfara. I felt the trip into the capital city should be tolerable.

Land of Farming and Solid Minerals (plus solar farms)

From 'Farming is our Pride' to its updated official insignia and expanded motto, 'Land of Farming and Solid Minerals', to highlight both its agricultural hub and its rich gold mining resources, one thing that was not difficult to miss was the array of solar farms at the airport and across many government structures. Rather than struggle with whatever is shared by Kaduna DisCo with its neighbours, the Dauda-led administration chose to toe a different path with solar energy by harnessing the vast landscape and sunlight available to the region. After all, if the Villa in Aso Rock can shift to solar energy, why can't subnational governments do the same?

Governor Lawal has framed energy not as a standalone project but as the backbone of service delivery, security and economic activity. According to him, Zamfara is "one of Nigeria's most promising locations for solar power investment," citing year-round high-intensity sunlight and untapped renewable potential. Zamfara's airport, specialist hospitals, schools and govern-

ment buildings are totally off-grid.

The administration's narrative is explicit: many local government areas went for over a decade without reliable power due to decaying infrastructure, vandalism, and disconnection from the national grid. After paying N1 billion to reconnect to the grid, it was time to think about renewable and sustainable power governance structures. Lawal has also highlighted hybrid possibilities: combining solar with the largely untapped hydropower potential of the Bakolori Dam to create resilient micro-systems for rural clusters.

The governance logic is compelling. Reliable power enables functional primary healthcare centres with vaccine cold chains and night-time emergency care; extended learning hours and digital tools in schools; agro-processing, cold storage and value addition for a state that ranks among Nigeria's top producers of millet, sorghum, soybeans and groundnuts; and street lighting and CCTV-ready infrastructure that support community policing and deterrence. **Security, Sharia and the limits of symbolism**

On Monday, Lawal reiterated his stance on security, insisting he would "never pay a dime to a criminal." He recounted how bandits abducted two of his brothers in 2025, and how he refused ransom even when demands fell to a N150,000 recharge card, arguing that payments only empower kidnappers and perpetuate abductions.

This hard line is morally defensible and strategically necessary, especially at a time when 'repentant bandits' are being reintegrated and rehabilitated into society at the expense of the victims. Although accounts of

events still highlight attacks in LGAs such as Tsafe, Anka, Bungudu, Bukkuyum, Maradun and Kaura Namoda, with soldiers, police and civilians killed and villagers still being abducted, the governor's argument—that security cannot be the only lens through which Zamfara is viewed—is valid. He argued that it's a work in progress and hopes the State Police plan will further address security issues.

Similarly, while Sharia remains part of the state's legal architecture, the administration's public messaging on Monday has focused less on moral policing and more on fiscal discipline, revenue mobilisation and energy as development levers. That shift does not deny Zamfara's identity; it insists that identity is not exhaustive.

From rescue mission to roadmap for consolidation

Under Governor Dauda Lawal, Zamfara has posted one of the most notable fiscal turnarounds in northern Nigeria and is betting heavily on solar energy to underpin governance and development.

In BudgIT's 2025 State of States ranking, Zamfara moved from 36th in 2023 to 26th in 2024 and then to 17th in 2025—a 19-place climb in two years. Recurrent revenue jumped 182.34 per cent from N87.44 billion in 2023 to N246.88 billion in 2024, while total revenue grew 117.68 per cent from N144.95 billion to N315.53 billion. FAAC allocations alone surged 239.18 per cent, from N65.28 billion to N221.42 billion, reflecting both improved federal transfers and more effective capture of entitlements. Internally generated revenue (IGR) also rose, though more modestly: up 14.86% from N22.16 billion in 2023 to N25.46 billion in 2024, placing Zamfara 25th among the 36 states, with IGR per capita at N4,364.

While the state has climbed from last place, it remains in the middle of the pack, with significant room to move higher if revenue systems are deepened and leakages plugged.

Zamfara's improved fiscal ranking and its solar push do not erase the state's security and governance challenges. But they do provide a new vocabulary: one in which budgets, kilowatts and service metrics sit alongside, and sometimes ahead of the familiar tropes of Sharia and banditry.

Zamfara's second act is underway. The fiscal numbers show a state moving from last place toward the middle. The solar agenda shows a government thinking strategically about governance infrastructure. What comes next in 2027 will determine whether this is remembered as a genuine turnaround for continuity or otherwise decided by the people's choice. The tools, the data and the mandate are all within reach. Hopefully, the willpower will remain firm and unshaken.

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