

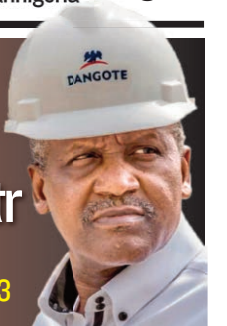


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N'Delta deserves more than 13% derivation, says Obasanjo

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Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Mr Taiwo Oyedele (left); World Bank President, Mr Ajay Banga; and Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Mr Olayemi Cardoso, following the Nigerian delegation's strategic engagements with the World Bank Chief, yesterday on the sidelines of the Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, being held in Bangkok, Thailand.



Alleged fake agency: FG files fresh charges against Adeyemi PAGE 4

2027: Shettima woos North for Tinubu as consensus talks reopen without Atiku NEWS PAGE 6



MD/CEO, NLNG, Engr. Adeleye Falade (left); Director Mara Mania, co-winner, The Nigeria Prize for Creative Arts 2026, Feranmi Abiola; Nobel Laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka; Co-Producer/Asst. Director Beyond Tarkwa Bay, directed by Peter Oke, co-winner, The Nigeria Prize for Creative Arts 2026, Rume Onosode; Chairperson, Advisory Board of NPL and NPCA, Prof. Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo and Documentary Filmmaker and Emmy Award winner, Kachi Benson, at the NLNG Grand Award Night 2026 held on Friday, October 9, 2026, at the Eko Convention Centre, Lagos.

2027: Obidient Movement accuses APC of violence, warns against anarchy

NEWS PAGE 7



**Happy
Birthday**
Mr. Oluwaseyi
Tinubu

41 Cheers to Our Chairman, Philanthropist, and Icon.

The Management and Staff of Loatsad Promomedia heartily congratulate our illustrious Chairman, **Mr. Oluwaseyi Tinubu** on the occasion of his 41st birthday.

As a trailblazing entrepreneur, your innovative spirit has transformed the advertising landscape. Beyond the boardroom, your profound philanthropic impact continues to uplift communities, while your strategic guidance as a political patron steers our nation towards progress.

On this special day, we honor your dedication to excellence and your unwavering commitment to human capital development.

We wish you robust health, divine wisdom, and many more years of impactful leadership.

Happy 41st Birthday, Sir!

Signed: Staff and Management of Loatsad Promomedia.



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Mbah, Kalu task SEDC on gas pipeline, railways, grassroots development

From Lawrence Njoku (Enugu) and John Akubo (Abuja)

ENUGU State Governor, Peter Mbah, has urged the South East Development Commission (SEDC) to prioritise the development of a regional gas pipeline, railway network and initiatives to accelerate industrialisation in the region.

Also, Senator Orji Uzor Kalu challenged the commission to move beyond establishing offices in Enugu and demonstrate its impact in communities across the region. Mbah said the proposed infrastructure would boost economic activities, improve connectivity among the five South-East states and strengthen regional integration.

He also urged the National Assembly to ensure adequate funding for the commission, describing it as a strategic platform for addressing the region's development needs.

The governor made the call yesterday when he received the Senate Committee on the SEDC led by the Chairman, Kalu.

The delegation, which visited the governor on the sidelines of its oversight visit to conduct a first-hand assessment of the SEDC's projects and programmes, was also accompanied by the Commission's management, led by its Managing Director, Mark Okoye.

Dangote Refinery targets 1.4mbpd by 2029, extends N2.15tr IPO to Oct. 27

From Helen Oji (Lagos) and Ann Godwin (Port Harcourt)

PRESIDENT of Dangote Industries Limited, Aliko Dangote, has announced plans to expand the Dangote Petroleum Refinery's capacity to 1.4 million barrels per day (mbpd) by early 2029, up from its current 500,000 barrels per day, amid persistent challenges in the petroleum industry.

Also, Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals FZE (DPRP) extended its N2.15 trillion initial public offering (IPO) by two weeks to October 27, following approval by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Dangote assured small investors that they would be accommodated in the refinery's ongoing IPO, signalling plans to widen public participation in the facility's ownership.

He gave the assurances yesterday during a virtual session at the final IPO roadshow, with the theme, 'Back to Where It All Began', organised by Financial Derivatives Company on behalf of Dangote Refinery in Rivers State.

Tinubu, Sanwo-Olu, Adesina urge youth engagement at colloquium

By Shakirah Adunola

POLITICAL leaders, policy strategists and youth advocates converged on Victoria Island, Lagos, yesterday to call for a structural shift in national governance, urging young Nigerians to transition from passive commentators to active architects of policy and institutional reform.

However, the presidential candidate of African Action Congress (AAC), Omoyele Sowore, criticised the President's son over a colloquium organised in his honour, questioning his contributions to Nigeria.

The leaders made the call at the inaugural edition of the Seyi Tinubu Colloquium, held at the Eko Hotel and Suites under the theme, 'Shaping the Future Together'.

Conceived as a yearly national platform for policy alignment and inter-generational dialogue, the convocation brought together state governors, federal cabinet ministers, traditional rulers and youths to debate the trajectory of Nigeria's economic reforms and the imperative of youth inclusion in public administration.

Addressing the assembly, Seyi Tinubu framed the colloquium as a bridge between historical struggles for democratic governance and the contemporary imperative to modernise the national economy.

Defending the macroeconomic reforms of the Federal Government, including the removal of the petrol subsidy, exchange rate unification and comprehensive tax restructuring, he acknowledged the im-

• Sowore questions Seyi Tinubu's contributions to deserve colloquium

mediate financial strain on households, while arguing that such measures were vital to unlocking long-term economic stability.

He urged young professionals to deepen their engagement with technical policy and governance mechanisms, noting that political responsibility must precede any formal transfer of elective office.

Delivering the inaugural keynote address, entitled 'Africa Next: Building the Demographic Asset Class', former president of African Development Bank (AfDB), Dr Akinwumi Adesina, urged African nations to pivot from viewing

expanding populations merely as demographic metrics to developing them into high-value economic assets.

The international development economist said Africa was projected to account for about a quarter of the world's population by 2050, adding that population growth alone would not guarantee prosperity without investments in education, healthcare, skills and productive opportunities.

Adesina urged African countries to move beyond dependence on natural resources and recognise their people as the continent's greatest economic asset.

He described education as an investment in national wealth creation, emphasising the importance of what is called "grey matter infrastructure"—the human mind and its capacity to learn, innovate and solve problems.

SOWORE, in a post on X, described the event as a reflection of the growing culture of sycophancy and power worship in Nigerian society.

Reacting to the programme, which was broadcast on major television stations, Sowore questioned the achievements that justified the gathering and the attendance of several prominent personalities.



Group Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC), Bashir Bayo Ojulari (left); President Bola Tinubu and Chief Financial Officer, NNPC, Adedapo Segun, during an audience at the Presidential Villa Abuja, yesterday.

Anxiety as crude hits \$106, raises PMS price despite FG's discount

By Waliat Musa

FRESH concerns over a possible increase in petrol prices have emerged following a two per cent rise in global crude oil prices to \$106.80 per barrel, as renewed attacks in the Middle East heighten fears of supply disruptions, threatening to undermine the relief offered by the Federal Government's 30-day petrol discount.

This was as the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) cut its forecast for global oil demand growth in 2026 by 71.4 per cent to 400,000 barrels per day (bpd), from 1.4 million bpd projected at the beginning of the year, citing slower-than-anticipated demand growth and changing market conditions.

Meanwhile, the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil), Sen. Heineken Lokpobiri, called on governments to establish pre-

• OPEC cuts 2026 oil demand forecast by 71%, projects 1.7m bpd growth in 2027
• FG seeks investment protection, policy stability

dictable policies and protect investment agreements to sustain capital flows into the energy sector amid changing global market conditions.

The development comes amid persistent pressure on domestic fuel prices, with the sustainability of the current pump-price relief uncertain as international oil prices climb and security risks threaten crude shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

Although the Federal Government has extended the N66-per-litre discount on petrol sold by the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC) until October 31, 2026, the initiative is limited to customers who pay digitally through its mobile application.

Under the arrangement, NNPC Retail's pump price of

N1,405 per litre is reduced to N1,339 per litre for eligible customers using the application.

However, the renewed rally in global crude prices has raised concerns about the potential impact on domestic petrol prices, should the increase persist, particularly in a market where the cost of imported petroleum products and locally refined fuel remains sensitive to prevailing market conditions.

Yesterday, Brent crude futures rose by \$2.09 (two per cent) to \$106.80 per barrel, while United States West Texas Intermediate (WTI) gained \$1.93 (2.10 per cent) to \$93.78 per barrel, according to Oilprice.com data.

OPEC Secretary-General, Haitham Al Ghais, disclosed the revised outlook yesterday during a ministerial session

entitled Perspectives on Global Oil and Gas Markets at the 25th World Energy Congress in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Despite the sharp downward revision, Al Ghais projected that global oil demand growth would rebound to 1.7 million bpd in 2027, as some consumption deferred from this year is expected to materialise next year.

Agbakoba urges INEC to guarantee public access to 2027 election results

Stopping cross-border arms flows key to secure 2027 polls, says IGP

From Silver Nwokoro (Lagos) and Andrew Oota (Abuja)

SENIOR Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Olisa Agbakoba, has urged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to guarantee citizens and the media access to polling unit (PU) result sheets during the 2027 general elections.

He argued that the public had a constitutional right to scrutinise and lawfully publish electoral information.

To safeguard the 2027 general elections process and results, the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Olatunji Disu, yesterday, declared open the Small Arms and Light Weapons Identification and Tracing (SALW-IT) simulation programme in Abuja, describing the disruption of illicit arms supply across borders as central to election security.

In a letter addressed to INEC Chairman, Prof. Joash Amupitan, SAN, Agbakoba said transparent access to electoral records would strengthen public confidence in the electoral process and help address concerns over the recording, transmission, collation and declaration of votes.

He urged the commission to ensure timely publication of verified polling-unit results on its INEC Result Viewing Portal (IREV), clarify the distinction between reporting election results and formally declaring them, and provide clear guidance on responsible electoral reporting.

Agbakoba, who cited Section 39(1) of the 1999 Constitution, as amended, said freedom of expression includes the right to receive and impart information without interference.

He argued that INEC's statutory authority to declare election results should not be interpreted as a prohibition against citizens, journalists, political parties and election observers reporting figures contained in authentic electoral records.

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S'Court delivers 411 judgments in one year as caseload hits 2,456

From Ameh Ochojila, Abuja

SUPREME Court handled 2,456 matters and delivered 411 judgments during the 2025/2026 Legal Year, up from 2,280 matters and 369 judgments and rulings in the preceding year, underscoring the growing workload confronting Nigeria's highest court.

World Bank targets \$5.79b private investment in Nigeria

By Abigail Ikaghughu

WORLD Bank Group is targeting up to \$5.79 billion in private financing for Nigeria in fiscal year 2026 to support small businesses, expand broadband access and strengthen agricultural production.

This was contained in a feature titled "Unlocking \$5.79 Billion in Private Financing," which detailed the group's strategy of combining policy reforms, investment programmes and private-sector funding to attract capital into sectors facing infrastructure and financing constraints.

A major component is the Fostering Inclusive Finance for MSMEs in Nigeria programme (FINCLUDE), which is expected to attract nearly \$1.89 billion in private financing and support about 850,000 direct and indirect jobs.

The programme aims to expand access to finance for more than 250,000 micro, small and medium enterprises, with women-led businesses expected to receive 30 per cent of the financing.

CSOs advocate representation of African NGOs at UN negotiations

From Tina Abeku, Abuja

NIGERIAN Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have called for the immediate removal of accreditation barriers and the reversal of badge suspensions imposed by the United Nations to ensure adequate representation of African non-governmental organisations on global decision-making platforms.

The Executive Director of the Development Research and Projects Centre (dRPC), Dr Judith-Ann Walker, stated that systemic obstacles hindered NGOs' active participation.

She expressed concern over the severe underrepresentation of African civic groups at the recently concluded 81st session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

Walker, a member of the Presidential High-Level Council on Women and Girls, highlighted a recent public statement by the World Alliance for Citizen Participation (CIVICUS) opposing these barriers.

Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Justice Kudirat Kekere-Ekun, disclosed this yesterday at the special session of the Supreme Court marking the commencement of the 2026/2027 Legal Year, while outlining measures to accelerate the disposal of pending cases and improve judicial efficiency.

The court's caseload increased by 176 matters, representing about 7.7 per cent, while the number of judgments delivered rose by 42, or approximately 11.4 per cent, compared with the preceding legal year.

The figures, according to the

- Says political cases threaten other litigants
- 733 old cases listed for hearing
- Fagbemi warns SANs against commercialising rank

CJN, reflect the court's efforts to improve performance through deliberate case management, although the scale of pending litigation remains a major institutional concern.

Of the 2,456 matters handled during the period, 1,179 were general civil motions, 573 criminal motions and 13 Sharia-related motions, while appeals accounted for 676 matters.

The appeals comprised 433 general civil cases, 212 crimi-

nal cases, 19 political appeals, 12 Sharia appeals and 10 originating summons.

Beyond the headline figures, Kekere-Ekun said the court had intensified efforts to identify ageing cases, dispose of dormant matters and remove concluded cases from its active docket.

She disclosed that the E-Diary Office scheduled 1,385 matters for regular sittings between March 23 and December 17, 2026. These comprised 1,021 motions and

364 appeals.

Significantly, 733 of the scheduled matters were old cases deliberately brought forward for hearing as part of efforts to tackle the backlog.

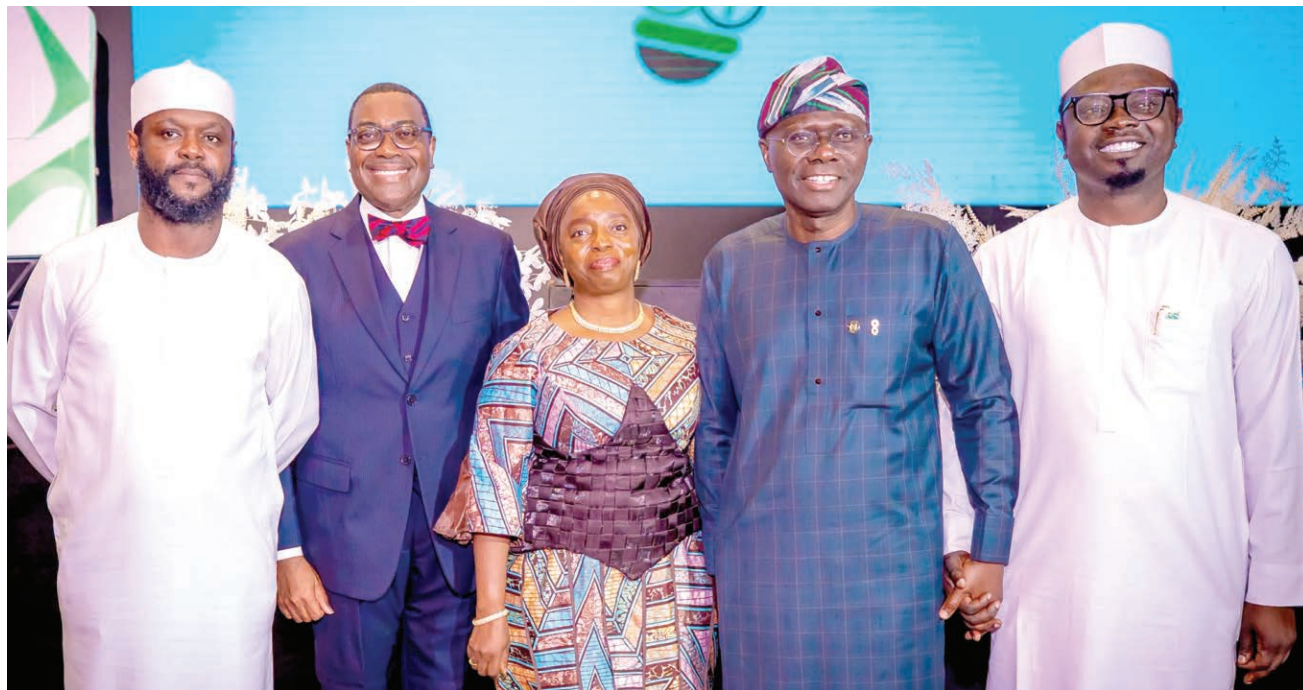
The court also disposed of 178 moribund matters in chambers, while 125 cases that had already been concluded were identified and removed from the active pool.

CJN also warned that the growing pressure of political and electoral litigation could overwhelm Nigeria's courts and delay justice for ordinary litigants, urging

lawyers to stop forum shopping and filing multiple cases seeking substantially similar reliefs.

She warned that the practice could produce conflicting court orders, undermine judicial processes and create the impression that litigants were seeking favourable outcomes from particular courts rather than justice according to law.

Kekere-Ekun said the danger required urgent attention as the country approaches another electoral season, when political disputes are likely to place additional demands on the judiciary.



Colloquium Convener, Seyi Tinubu (left); former President of the African Development Bank Group, Dr Akinwumi Adesina; wife of Lagos State Governor, Dr Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu; Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu; and Minister of Youth Development, Olawande Ayodele, during the Seyi Tinubu Colloquium themed: "Shaping The Future Together" in Lagos, yesterday.

Nigeria, others seek better control of rising debt servicing costs

By Gloria Nwafor

DEVELOPING countries are seeking stronger influence over international debt discussions as rising debt-servicing costs intensify pressure on public finances and threaten spending on infrastructure, healthcare and education.

The move gained momentum yesterday as finance ministers, central bank governors and senior officials from developing countries

met in Bangkok, Thailand, for the first Governing Council meeting of the Borrowers' Platform, a United Nations-backed initiative designed to strengthen cooperation among countries grappling with mounting debt burdens.

The platform, coordinated by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), seeks to address what developing countries consider a longstanding

imbalance in the international financial system, where debt coordination and negotiation mechanisms have largely been driven by creditors, without a permanent borrower-led forum for sharing expertise and shaping discussions.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said developing countries were facing mounting pressures from geopolitical tensions, conflicts, trade disruptions, climate challenges, inadequate financing

and high debt-servicing obligations.

He described the platform as an opportunity for borrowing countries to navigate these challenges through shared knowledge, practical tools and stronger cooperation.

"Today, you are taking a seat at the table," Guterres said, highlighting the importance of giving developing countries a more prominent role in discussions affecting their financing conditions.

CBN data policy raises questions over local tech capacity

By Seye Olumide

THE Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) directive requiring financial institutions and payment service providers to store and manage payment transaction data generated in Nigeria within the country has renewed attention on local technology capacity, cybersecurity, and the financial industry's readiness ahead of the January 1, 2027, compliance deadline.

The Foundation for Peace Professionals (PeacePro) has welcomed the policy, describing it as a step towards strengthening

Nigeria's digital sovereignty and economic security. However, its implementation also raises questions about domestic technology capacity, data security and the ability of financial institutions to meet the requirements without disrupting services.

In a statement, PeacePro Executive Director, Abdulrazaq Hamzat, urged the Federal Government and relevant regulators to ensure that Nigerian technology companies benefit from the transition rather than allowing it to become an exclusive commercial opportunity for established foreign

providers.

The CBN issued the circular on June 15, 2026, and reaffirmed on October 9 that the January 1, 2027, deadline remained unchanged.

Hamzat said Nigeria needed to move beyond consuming foreign digital services and invest in the infrastructure, technical expertise and domestic industries required to retain more value from its expanding digital economy.

He argued that keeping financial data within Nigeria would have limited benefits if the infrastructure, software, intellectual property and technical expertise

required to manage it remained largely dependent on foreign providers.

According to him, the policy could stimulate investment in Nigerian data centres, cloud infrastructure, cybersecurity, software development and specialised technical services if supported by deliberate measures to build local capacity.

He maintained that data localisation should form part of a broader strategy to strengthen domestic enterprises, develop the technology workforce and ensure that Nigerians benefit economically from the country's digital expansion.

'Nigeria records highest cyber-attacks with 16,700 events in 2025'

By Isaac Chibuike

NIGERIA has recorded the highest number of cyber-attacks in Africa in 2025, with about 16,700 incidents, accounting for 24.4 per cent of the continent's total, according to a Mastercard white paper.

The report, Africa's Digital Defence Race, said Mastercard's Cyber Insights platform recorded 69,236 events across Africa during the year, averaging one every eight minutes. Nigeria, South Africa, Morocco and Kenya accounted for 54.7 per cent of the total.

Nigeria recorded an average of 1,410 events monthly, with attacks peaking at 4,195 in September. The month also saw the highest number of attacks across Africa, at about 10,600.

Interpol data cited in the report put ransomware detections in Nigeria at 5,822 in 2025.

Alleged fake agency: FG files fresh charges against Adeyemi

From Ameh Ochojila, Abuja

THE Federal Government yesterday filed fresh charges against Adeniyi Adeyemi, the Director-General (DG) of the alleged non-existent Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council (PFIPC).

Rotimi Oyedepo, SAN, counsel for the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF), told Justice Mohammed Umar of the Federal High Court in Abuja that the development followed a new case filed at the FCT High Court.

Oyedepo, who is the Director of Public Prosecutions of the Federation, therefore applied that the instant charge be struck out. After the defence lawyer, Ibrahim Angulu, SAN, did not oppose the request, Justice Umar struck out the case.

Earlier, when the case was called, Oyedepo moved the application for the discontinuation of the case.

FG defends Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway realignment amid pushback

By Joseph Onyekwere and
Bertram Nwannekanma

THE Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway realignment has sparked controversy, with

Oyeibanji dissolves State Executive Council, retains CPS, SSG, Chief of Staff

From Ayodele Afolabi, Ado-Ekiti

EKITI State Governor, Biodun Oyeibanji, has dissolved the State Executive Council comprising commissioners and other political appointees who served in his first term, ahead of his inauguration for a second term on October 16, 2026.

In a statement yesterday, the dissolution, which affects members of the 2022-2026 Executive Council, exempts the Chief Press Secretary, Yinka Oyeode; Chief of Staff, Oyeniyi Adebayo; and Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Prof. Habitat Adubiario, who will retain their positions.

The governor announced the dissolution during the valedictory meeting of the Council yesterday in Ado-Ekiti, the state capital.

Oyeibanji expressed appreciation to the outgoing council members for their support, dedication and commitment to the service of the state, noting that their contributions were critical to the achievements recorded by his administration in the last four years.

AUATON extends Bolt, inDrive services shutdown as firms defend fare, commission policies

By Benjamin Alade

THE Amalgamated Union of App-Based Transporters of Nigeria (AUATON), Lagos State Council, has extended its shutdown of Bolt and inDrive services to today, insisting that the industrial action will continue until the ride-hailing companies address drivers' concerns over fares, commissions and welfare.

The extension came as both companies responded to the dispute, with Bolt expressing readiness to engage drivers on their concerns, while inDrive maintained that its existing product features had addressed key demands raised by operators.

AUATON had declared a shutdown yesterday, following what it described as a successful first day of industrial action across Lagos State.

In a statement, the union's Public Relations Officer, Steven Iwindoye, said reports from its mobilisation and compliance teams indicated widespread participation across several communities and commercial centres in the state.

AUATON claimed that passengers in several locations experienced difficulties securing rides on the two platforms as drivers withdrew their services in compliance with the action.

- SAN says communities risk losing economic benefits of project
- Atiku alleges pressure on NASS to approve fresh \$20b loan

Ebun-Olu Adegboruwa, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), urging President Bola Tinubu to protect coastal communities from exclusion, while the Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) queried the project's original plan, demanding accountability.

The concerns followed Umahi's explanation that the realignment was necessary to address flooding and climate-related risks.

The minister reportedly said that Tinubu had approved the use of the existing East-West Road for the stretch from the Ondo State boundary into Edo State, instead of continuing with a new coastal alignment.

Umahi put the affected corridor at approximately 104 kilometres, including a proposed 45-kilometre bypass, and said sections of the existing road would need to be raised by about two metres to address

flooding.

Adegboruwa, in a statement dated October 12, 2026, called on the President to direct the Federal Ministry of Works to explain the approved route and disclose the coastal communities that would be served or bypassed by the highway.

He said that moving sections of the highway inland could undermine its original objective of connecting communities and economic centres along Nigeria's Atlantic coastline.

The lawyer said the project, officially flagged off in May 2024, was presented by the Federal Government as a 700-kilometre corridor intended to unlock economic opportunities across coastal states.

He maintained that the reported deviation raised questions about the extent to which communities in Ondo and Delta states would benefit from the infrastructure.

According to him, the people of Ilaje and other coastal settlements in Ondo, as well as communities in Delta, depend on coastal resources and waterways for fishing, transportation and others.

He said excluding such communities from direct access to the highway could limit opportunities for local businesses.

HOWEVER, Umahi has said that the Federal Government has no regret over its decisions on the Ondo section of the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway.

Umahi stated this in Abuja while giving an update on the Federal Government's legacy road projects, particularly the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway.

He said the decisions concerning the Ondo section were based on sound engineering considerations and aimed at ensuring the suc-

cessful delivery of the project.

Meanwhile, former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, has alleged that pressure is being mounted on the National Assembly to approve a loan of up to \$20 billion linked to coastal highway payments.

The ADC presidential candidate added that President Bola Tinubu's decision to reroute parts of the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway has raised questions over the original approval, contract award and payments made for the project.

Atiku, in a statement by Director of Strategic Communication of the ADC Presidential Campaign Council, Phrank Shaibu, demanded that the Federal Government should publish the full details of the project and address the alleged borrowing plan.

Adegboruwa described the reported realignment as a potential setback to the development aspirations of

the affected communities, insisting that the project should be assessed not only by the kilometres constructed but also by its contribution to coastal connectivity and regional development.

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

Makinde appoints Akinwale new Chief of Staff as Adedayo becomes DPO DG

From Rotimi Agboluaje, Ibadan

CHIEF of Staff (CoS) to Oyo State Governor, Segun Ogunwuyi, has resigned.

Ogunwuyi announced his resignation in a letter dated October 12, 2026, stating that his decision took effect from the same day.

In the letter addressed to Makinde, he expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve the state government and people of Oyo State, describing his tenure as a fulfilling experience.

Meanwhile, Governor Seyi Makinde has appointed Akinwale Akinwale, popularly called 'Wolekanle,' as his new Chief of Staff.

Makinde also approved the appointment of Mrs Aderonke Adedayo as Director-General of the Due Process Office.

The appointments were announced in a statement signed by the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Prof. Musibau Babatunde.

According to the statement, the appointments take immediate effect.

HOWEVER, the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Oyo State has described last weekend's two-hour media chat of Makinde as a waste of time of the audience as he (Makinde) allegedly failed to address key issues that were of direct concerns to residents of the state.

Yoruba leaders laud Olusi on 90th birthday

By Seye Olumide

YORUBA Leaders of Thought (YLT) has celebrated its National Chairman, Tajudeen Olusi, on his 90th birthday, describing him as a pillar of the progressive political movement in Nigeria and a moral compass for the Yoruba nation.

In a congratulatory statement signed by its National Secretary, Bayo Aina, YLT praised Olusi's commitment to good governance and the welfare of the masses, noting that these ideals have defined his political engagement since the pre-Independence era.

The group said that Olusi, who also chairs the Lagos State Governance Advisory Council (GAC), had played a significant role in shaping leadership succession in the state, contributing to what it described as a governance model other states could emulate.

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



Executive Chairman, Ekiti State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), Prof. Femi Akinwunmi (left); Managing Director and CEO, Premium Trust Bank, Emmanuel Emefienim; Governor Biodun Oyeibanji, and Senate Leader, Opeyemi Bamidele, during the official commissioning and handover of newly upgraded Baptist Primary School, Ikogosi- Ekiti, by the bank, yesterday.

Abiodun urges political leaders, public servants to be strategic in governance

OGUN State Governor, Dapo Abiodun, has urged political leaders and senior public servants to embrace strategic foresight in policymaking and governance to promote sustainable development and prepare the state for future challenges.

Abiodun, represented by the Head of Service, Olanrewaju Iskeel Saka, spoke at the opening of a three-day capacity development programme

Ogun begins three-day leadership training at NIPSS, Ago-Iwoye

on foresighting for strategic leaders in Ogun State held at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Oba (Dr.) Sikiru Kayode Adetona School of Governance Studies (OSKA-SOGS), Ago-Iwoye.

He said effective leadership required anticipating emerging trends, identifying opportunities and assessing potential risks rather than focusing

solely on immediate challenges.

According to him, strategic foresight would help government officials explore future scenarios and integrate long-term considerations into policy formulation, budgeting, planning and programme implementation.

He said the initiative aligned with his administration's building our future together

vision and its commitment to strengthening the public service for effective service delivery.

The governor noted that the state's expanding industrial base, strategic location along the Lagos-Ogun economic corridor and growing investment opportunities made long-term planning essential to ensuring that infrastructure, education, healthcare, housing and employment kept pace with the state's

Why Africa must build reliable cancer data systems, by expert

By Innocent Anoruo

AFRICA'S ability to harness Artificial Intelligence (AI), precision medicine and other advances in cancer treatment will depend on building reliable health data systems and developing the expertise to manage them, a health informatics expert has said.

Clinical Informaticist at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre (MSK), New York, Dr Chamberlain Nwanne, asserted during a plenary presentation at the 2026 African Research Group

for Oncology (ARGO) Symposium, held at Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Osun State.

In his presentation, "From Data to Discovery: Health Informatics as the Foundation of AI and Precision Oncology in Africa," Nwanne, who holds a PhD in Biomedical Informatics from Rutgers University, U.S., emphasised that advanced cancer care requires more than sophisticated technologies.

He stressed accurate patient records, diagnostic informa-

tion, laboratory results and treatment outcomes as essential for precision cancer treatment and effective research.

Nwanne, while using an ongoing colorectal cancer immunotherapy clinical trial initiative in Nigeria as an example, explained that identifying eligible patients, confirming diagnoses, documenting biomarker results and monitoring treatment outcomes all depend on reliable, connected information.

He noted that cancer care had evolved from traditional

treatment approaches to evidence-based medicine, precision oncology and AI-supported care, with advancement requiring more comprehensive and integrated data.

The expert said that despite challenges, such as fragmented information systems, inadequate infrastructure and limited resources, Africa has an opportunity to develop digital health systems suited to its unique healthcare needs.

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

Tinubu, Atiku, others campaign-shy as proxies mobilise support

From **Leo Sobechi (Abuja)** and
Seye Olumide (Lagos)

A NUMBER of factors, ranging from age and health concerns to prohibitive campaign costs and other constraints, have been identified as possible reasons why political parties that fielded presidential candidates, including the ruling party, have yet to commence nationwide electioneering, barely three months before the end of the campaign window.

Recall that on February 26, 2026, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) announced August 19, 2026, as the commencement date for open campaigns ahead of the January 16, 2027, presidential and National Assembly elections.

However, with barely 93 days left before the close of electioneering, none of the parties or presidential candidates have demonstrated a serious commitment to holding open campaign rallies, unlike what was seen in the run-up to the 2023 presidential election.

An investigation by *The Guardian* showed that the ages and health conditions of some of the major contenders, the cost of organising rallies, insecurity and speculation about possible electoral manipulation have combined to diminish the prominence of nationwide campaigns that should define the build-up to a general election.

A total of 47 of the 150 days allocated for campaigns have elapsed, yet political parties continue to dither, lacking any discernible strategy or campaign messaging to anchor their quest for votes. This has heightened public apprehension about the fate

- **Age, health, cost, insecurity blamed for campaign lull**
- **Bulama, Okorie decry declining democratic culture, shrinking political space**
- **'APC following campaign timetable, denies lack of preparedness'**
- **Rising costs force smaller parties to rethink mobilisation strategies**
- **Governors, political allies take centre stage in voter mobilisation**
- **Digital campaigns offer cheaper reach but can't guarantee votes**

of the election.

Campaign activities appear less vigorous than the nationwide mobilisation, extensive tours and huge financial commitments that characterised the 2023 contest.

Although parties have continued to hold meetings, secure endorsements, and conduct behind-the-scenes consultations, incumbent President Bola Tinubu of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and one of his challengers, former Vice President Atiku Abubakar of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), have yet to match the energy of previous election cycles.

In a defensive response, the APC has rejected suggestions

that the inertia reflects a lack of preparedness, insisting that its presidential campaign has not formally commenced.

According to the party's National Chairman, Nentawe Goshwe Yilwatda, the APC is following its campaign timetable and will begin with the inauguration of its presidential campaign team.

"The President's National Campaign Team will start tomorrow (Wednesday), while the Presidential Campaign Committee will be inaugurated on Saturday," he said through his aide, Abimbola Tooki.

However, stakeholders who spoke to *The Guardian*, including a former presidential candidate of the

defunct United Progressives Party (UPP), Dr Chekwes Okorie, and a former National Secretary of the ruling APC, Waziri Bulama, expressed dismay over what they described as a decline in the country's democratic culture.

Bulama said the journey towards the present precarious state of Nigerian politics began when academics, technocrats and civil society groups rallied behind the late President Muhammadu Buhari to assume civilian leadership in 2015.

He recalled that before 2015, ideologues mobilised grassroots support and advanced campaigns against the ruling Peoples Democratic

Party (PDP), which was perceived as averse to good governance.

"The PDP was seen as oppressive and self-serving. So, advocating against the PDP was seen as a national duty. There was voluntarism. People from radical backgrounds, particularly those from the Northern Elements Progressives Union (NEPU) tendency and the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP), rallied with passion and patriotism behind Buhari, whom they saw as a champion of national rescue.

"They believed that Buhari would redeem the country from stagnation, corruption and decline. They were inspired and donated their ideas, time and financial resources. People like me, with double postgraduate degrees in Architecture, who ordinarily had no business in politics, became interested.

"But as soon as Buhari became President, he abandoned everybody. Those

from the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), who were notable in the fight for democracy, including journalists, academics and technocrats, were involved. People's enthusiasm waned because of Buhari's attitude.

"From 2019 to 2023, those who were sidelined and dissatisfied moved to other political groups. There was no longer a binding strategy to keep people in the party. In the 2019 presidential election, Buhari scored 15 million votes against Atiku Abubakar's 11 million to secure victory.

"In 2023, President Tinubu's winning tally was put at 8.9 million votes. Most of those who worked for that electoral triumph were displaced. State governors took control of the party and dismantled various structures to install their loyalists. So, people are not warming up to the campaigns in the APC because very few people sat together to design the campaign structure, thereby ensuring the exclusion of key stakeholders," he said.

Bulama further argued that the ruling party was counting on its control of federal power to its advantage, rather than preparing a popular message with which to engage the electorate.

He said: "Hubris has taken over. The ruling party has succeeded in crippling the opposition parties by investing in legal battles. The Electoral Act 2026 was actually targeted at the opposition. And with the recent Supreme Court judgment, nobody is sure whether Atiku and Peter Obi will stand for the election.

"So, heading into the election, even the APC and other parties are operating on a low-key and lacking in purpose. There is no coherent commitment

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29



Board member, Azikel Petroleum, Dr Daru Owei (left); President, Azikel Group, Dr Azibapu Eruani; former President, Olusegun Obasanjo; Bayelsa State Governor, Douye Diri, and Otunba Oyewole Fasawe, during the inauguration of the Crude Distillation Unit at the Azikel Refinery in Obunagha, Bayelsa State, yesterday.

2027: Shettima woos North for Tinubu as consensus talks reopen without Atiku

From **Terhemba Daka, Adamu Abuh, Sodiq Omolayo and Ernest Nzor (Abuja)**

AFTER several failed efforts at galvanising the opposition towards adopting a consensus candidate to challenge President Bola Tinubu's second-term bid, a group, the Christian Social Movement of Nigeria (CSMN), is reactivating the prospect after inviting 13 Christian presidential candidates, including Peter Obi, Seyi Makinde and Donald Duke, to participate in a consensus-building process ahead of the 2027 general election.

Exploiting the gap, another group, the Grassroots Mobilisation Initiative (GMI), yesterday projected that divisions among opposition parties and regional vote splits could give President Tinubu an advantage in the 2027 presidential election. The group, which supports the President's re-election bid, said the opposition's inability to build

- **GMI: Opposition division, regional vote split guarantee Tinubu's victory**
- **North won't fall for Atiku's ethnic politics, says Kwankwaso**
- **APC slams Atiku over 'Bola' remark, pledges issue-based campaign**
- **Obi goes live on TikTok, pledges to visit all 36 states every year**

a united national coalition could affect its chances of mounting an effective challenge to the incumbent.

This is as Vice President Kashim Shettima, yesterday, held a closed-door meeting with former Kogi State Governor, Yahaya Bello; former Jigawa State Governor, Abubakar Badaru; and several other ex-governors, ministers and political figures at the Presidential Villa, Abuja. The delegation, identified as leaders of the National Directorate of Arewa for Asiwaju Movement, arrived at the State House at about 4:00 p.m. and proceeded to the Vice-President's wing.

However, Shettima was still attending a separate meeting at the President's wing, which began around 2:00 p.m., when the delegation ar-

rived. The earlier meeting had the Minister of Livestock Development, Idi Maiha, and the Special Adviser to the President and Coordinator of the Presidential Livestock Reform, Prof. Attahiru Jega, in attendance, among others.

Jega is a former chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Although the purpose of the delegation's visit was not immediately known, it was gathered that the meeting was a courtesy visit.

Also present at the Villa were former Plateau State Governor, Simon Lalong; Director-General of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, Brig. Gen. Buba Marwa (retd.); and Special Adviser to the President on Policy Coordination, Hadiza Bala-Usman, among others.

The meeting comes two days before the planned inauguration of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Campaign Council on Wednesday, October 14, at the State House Conference Centre, Abuja. It also precedes the party's planned campaign flag-off in Kaduna State on October 24, ahead of the 2027 presidential election.

At the meeting, Shettima urged Northern leaders and stakeholders to rally behind President Tinubu's re-election bid, insisting that the region has nothing to fear from another four years of the administration. Shettima said the North stood to benefit further from the policies, appointments and development projects of the Tinubu administration, urging political leaders and citizens to

close ranks in pursuit of the region's economic development and the welfare of its people.

He cited the reported disbursement of N450 billion by the Bank of Agriculture to 700,000 smallholder farmers nationwide, noting that about 70 per cent of the beneficiaries were from the North. According to him, the figures underscore the administration's commitment to improving livelihoods and expanding economic opportunities across the country, particularly in the northern region. "I can assure you that the President loves the North and the President will work for the North," he said.

Earlier, the Director-General of Arewa for Asiwaju and former Jigawa State Governor, Abubakar Badaru, pledged that the organisation would sustain its mobilisation efforts until Tinubu secured another term in office. Badaru said the group planned to engage religious leaders, in-

cluding Muslim and Christian clerics, as well as other prominent Nigerians, to canvass support for the Tinubu-Shettima ticket ahead of the 2027 presidential election.

Against the backdrop of the same faith ticket of the ruling party, CSMN said the consensus initiative, known as the Christian Political Consensus Project, was designed to encourage dialogue among the candidates, identify areas of agreement and explore ways of harmonising their political interests in the interest of Nigeria.

Addressing a press conference virtually on Monday, Chairman, CSMN Governing Council, Elder Sunday Oibe, urged the candidates to prioritise national interest over personal ambition. He said the 2027 presidential election presented an opportunity for Christians to contribute to the emergence of ethical leadership capable of addressing the country's security and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

2027: Obidient Movement accuses APC of violence, warns against anarchy

From John Akubo (Abuja) and Lawrence Njoku (Enugu)

THE Obidient Movement has accused the All Progressives Congress (APC) of allegedly unleashing violence against opposition supporters across Nigeria. The movement, however, warned that the failure of security agencies to hold suspected perpetrators accountable could push the country towards anarchy ahead of the 2027 general elections. The

Wike claims coordinator of Tinubu's re-election campaign in FCT, Rivers

From Azimazi Momoh Jimoh, Abuja

MINISTER of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, has declared that he will coordinate President Bola Tinubu's re-election campaign in the FCT and Rivers State, signalling a cross-party mobilisation strategy involving stakeholders of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) ahead of the 2027 general election.

Wike declared yesterday at a stakeholders' meeting of the Rainbow Coalition in Abuja, where he urged members of both parties to set aside their political differences and work towards Tinubu's re-election.

The minister, who described himself as the coordinator of the president's re-election campaign in the two areas, said the coalition had agreed to support Tinubu as well as APC candidates for the Senate and House of Representatives in the FCT.

He said: "For the presidency, all of us have agreed that it is Tinubu. I am going to coordinate the FCT and Rivers State. So, you can imagine how important it is."

NSA unveils new strategy to tackle oil theft, pipeline vandalism

From Sodiq Omolayo, Abuja

THE National Security Adviser (NSA), Nuhu Ribadu, has unveiled a new security framework for Nigeria's oil and gas industry to strengthen the fight against crude oil theft, pipeline vandalism, illegal refining and other criminal activities threatening the country's petroleum assets. The framework, known as the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry-Wide Security Architecture, is designed to harmonise security operations, establish clear responsibilities and improve collaboration among government security agencies, private surveillance contractors and other stakeholders.

Speaking at the official unveiling of the SOP, Ribadu said Nigeria's hydrocarbon assets remained central to the country's economic stability, national development and strategic resilience.

• Enugu opposition parties allege hostilities against them • State govt denies link to airport attacks on NDC campaign

movement cited reported attacks in Enugu, Edo, Delta and Benue states, accusing security agencies of turning a blind eye to alleged political intimidation.

In a statement yesterday by Onyeka Dike for the Media and Communications Directorate, the movement accused the police and the Department of State Services (DSS) of failing to act decisively against suspected political thugs.

The APC and the security agencies had not responded to the allegations at the time of filing this report. The group's warn-

ing followed reported violence in Enugu State at the weekend, when suspected armed political thugs allegedly disrupted activities of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) with gunshots.

The statement said several supporters were injured, while one fatality was reportedly recorded. It alleged that the attackers followed NDC supporters from the airport to the party's campaign office.

The movement also cited footage published by *Premium Times*, which, it said, showed a uniformed security operative

standing by as a supporter was being assaulted.

It described the alleged failure to intervene as troubling, warning that inaction could embolden political actors to attack opposition supporters with impunity.

MEANWHILE, opposition political parties and their candidates, yesterday, detailed a disturbing pattern of hostility across Enugu State allegedly against them ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Addressing a joint press briefing in Enugu, leaders of the African Democratic Congress

(ADC), Nigeria NDC and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Labour Party (LP), and All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) condemned brutal assaults, harassment, targeted office raids, and intimidation directed against them by state officials.

"We have not convened this joint press briefing to promote the PDP, the NDC, or any individual candidate. We stand together because political violence in Enugu has moved beyond an isolated party grievance. It is now an escalating threat to peaceful demo-

cratic competition, public safety and the constitutional rights of Ndi Enugu," they said.

They highlighted last week-end's alleged attack at Akanu Ibiam International Airport and the campaign office of the NDC's governorship candidate, Chinyeaka Ohaa, ward meetings of the PDP in Nkanu West and reception of the Deputy Governorship candidate of the PDP in Nsukka, among others, as part of the ploy.

Egg sellers launch app to tackle glut, improve affordability

By Moyosore Salami

THE Egg Sellers and Distributors Association of Nigeria (ESDAN) has launched a digital platform, EggHome App, to improve access to fresh eggs, address recurring egg glut and make the product more affordable to consumers.

The association's National President, Olaide Graham, who disclosed this yesterday, said the platform was designed to connect egg producers, distributors, sellers and consumers, reduce inefficiencies in the distribution chain and improve access to markets.

Graham said the initiative would also address challenges such as unfair pricing practices and exploitation within the egg value chain.

According to her, egg glut remains a recurring challenge in Nigeria's poultry industry, leaving producers struggling to sell their products while unsold eggs lose freshness.

"ESDAN recognises that inefficiencies in marketing, distribution and access to consumers can contribute to this challenge," she said.

Firm unveils new brand identity, ushers in new era of growth, excellence

By Friday Odiase

PEAK Performer Business Network (PPBN), a growing real estate business network in Nigeria, has officially unveiled its new brand identity, marking a significant milestone in its journey towards greater growth, innovation, and industry impact.

Speaking at the unveiling in Lagos, PPBN President, Dr Kazeem Yekinni, described the rebranding as a renewed expression of the organisation's vision to build a stronger, more connected, opportunity-driven community of real estate professionals.

He said the rebranding, which represents more than a new logo, communicates PPBN's renewed vision, strengthened identity, and commitment to empowering real estate professionals through networking, training, mentorship, and collaborative business opportunities.



Delta State Governor, Sheriff Oborewori (left); Catholic Bishop of Issele-Uku Diocese, Most Rev. Michael Odogwu Elue and Chief Judge of the State, Justice Tessa Dai, during the thanksgiving Mass to open the 2026/2027 Legal year in Delta State at Emmanuel the Saviour Catholic Church, Asaba, yesterday.

NIBSS, Transactility partnership delivers National Payment Stack

TRANSACTILITY, Inc. announced that the Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System (NIBSS), Nigeria's central payment infrastructure operator, leveraged Transactility's jPOS open-source technology for the roll-out of the National Payment Stack (NPS), a next-generation ISO-20022 instant payments platform designed and developed by NIBSS for Nigeria's payments ecosystem.

NIBSS designed NPS using a modular architecture that combines NIBSS-developed capabilities with selected open and enterprise technologies. NIBSS selected Transactility's

open-source stack, including the extreme-performance jPTS switch, built on jPOS, the gold standard for ISO-8583 payment processing, used in billions of transactions worldwide daily, as the foundation for the NPS.

NIBSS has used jPOS within its payment infrastructure for many years, particularly for ISO 8583 transaction processing. For the National Payment Stack, NIBSS leveraged jPTS and its newly introduced ISO-20022 support to architect a switch purpose-built for the demands of Africa's largest economy.

With full access to the source

code and the full customisability of the Transactility stack, NIBSS retains control of the NPS architecture, product roadmap, and operational development, as well as the intellectual property developed by NIBSS for the platform. The use of open, source-accessible technologies also enables NIBSS to extend the platform and respond to market and regulatory requirements without relying on a proprietary vendor's release cycle.

Commenting, the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System (NIBSS), Premier Oiwoh, said:

N'Delta deserves more than 13% derivation, says Obasanjo

FORMER President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, yesterday, advocated an increase in the 13 per cent derivation to oil-producing states in the country.

Obasanjo said the current benchmark was a starting point that can be negotiated upwards. The former President spoke at a ceremony marking the inauguration of the Crude Distillation Unit (CDU) of the Azikel Refinery at Obunagha in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

The \$1 billion refinery project, which is owned by Azikel Petroleum under the Azikel Group, is expected to produce 2.5 million litres of fuel and two million litres of diesel daily, among other petroleum products.

Inaugurates \$1b refinery in Bayelsa

Obasanjo lauded the Azikel Group President, Dr Azibapu Eruani, for initiating the refinery project and urged him to ensure its completion within the next 12 months.

He expressed appreciation to the refinery's technical and engineering team as well as the African Finance Corporation (AFC) and the Afreximbank for their support to the project, advocating more support to ensure its completion.

Obasanjo also lauded the Bayelsa State Governor, Douye Diri, for supporting the project, saying whenever Eruani spoke to him about it, he always mentioned the governor's contribution.

He further stated that the gov-

ernor has put into proper use funds accruable to Bayelsa, as evident in the numerous projects all over the state.

He said: "I have told Dr Eruani that I will be officially 90 years by next March. It means I will take the boarding pass soon. So, he has to make sure the project is completed before I exit."

"Governor, I want to thank you most sincerely. Every time Dr Eruani has spoken to me about this project, he has mentioned the critical role you have been playing, and that is the way to go."

"You are right that the states and oil-producing communities have not got a fair deal so far. Thirteen per cent is the beginning. You can continue to

talk. The most important thing is that even the little you have received, you have used it well.

"I want to express appreciation to those who have given the technical and engineering support for this project. When I came here eight years ago, there was nothing like this, but now it has become a different thing."

Also speaking, President, Azikel Group, Dr Azibapu Eruani, stated that the refinery will kickstart Bayelsa's and the Niger Delta region's industrialisation, recalling how Obasanjo laid the foundation for the refinery eight years ago, and expressed delight over his presence for the installation of the CDU, which he described as the beginning of the completion of the refinery.

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Rivers flood victims allege exclusion from N200,000 relief, demand lasting solution

From Ann Godwin, Port Harcourt

FLOOD victims in parts of Port Harcourt and Obio/Akpor Local Council of Rivers State have accused the state government of excluding some of the worst-affected households from its N200,000 cash assistance and relief materials, while others insist that lasting solutions to flooding should take priority over temporary relief.

In Rumuekini community, Obio/Akpor, where stagnant floodwater has submerged more than 200 buildings and displaced hundreds of families, a resident and landlord, Innocent Wali, said relief materials could not compensate for the losses suffered by residents.

He urged the government to take urgent steps to tackle the recurring flooding and prevent further displacement. Residents of Edmark Estate, Mercy Land, Nkpolu Extension and Rumuigbo also said they were yet to benefit from the intervention, despite suffering losses from persistent flooding.

They called on the government to clear blocked drainage channels and waterways to allow the free flow of water and enable displaced residents to return to their homes.

The complaints followed the announcement by the Deputy Governor, Prof Ngozi Odu, that Governor Siminalayi Fubara had approved N200,000 in cash assistance for 35 households

affected by flooding.

Some residents, however, alleged that the distribution process failed to capture the most affected households, claiming that some people who were not directly affected received the money while genuine victims were left out.

They said they learnt about the disbursement through news reports, alleging that those who attended a meeting with Odu at Government House were the beneficiaries.

One of the residents, Marshal Ohorji, also criticised the

distribution of relief materials, alleging that the exercise was poorly coordinated, with some households receiving multiple items while others got nothing.

He said many victims had left the estate to seek alternative accommodation and were not

adequately informed about the distribution exercise.

An American humanitarian, Cliff Jarell, who participated in the delegation and serves as the estate secretary, explained that the cash assistance was distributed to residents who attended the meeting with the deputy governor.

Jarell appealed for additional support for affected households, urging individuals and well-meaning Nigerians to complement the government's intervention.

Odu, who chairs the State Flood Prevention and Management Committee, had reaffirmed the government's commitment to providing immediate relief while pursuing long-term measures to address recurring flooding.



Flooded Rumuakpara community secondary school Mkpolu in Obio/Akpor Local Council of Rivers State.

Family demands probe into killing of police officer in Plateau

From Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi, Jos

THE family of a Mobile Police Officer, Abdulrahman Auwal, who was reportedly killed along Kwi-Beco Road between Barkin Ladi and Riyom Local Councils of Plateau State, has called on the Inspector-General of Police to investigate the circumstances surrounding his death.

The family said several questions remained unanswered about the incident, including how the officer was attacked and why the motorcycle rider who was reportedly conveying him survived.

Auwal was reportedly killed while returning from a community service after going to buy food. He was buried at Zaria Cemetery in Jos on Saturday.

His

mother, Larai Musa, said she had accepted her son's death as the will of Allah but wanted the police to establish what happened.

"There are still unanswered questions surrounding the death of my son. He was reported to have been macheted with a sharp object while on a motorcycle with an okada rider. My son was killed, and the okada rider is alive," she said.

Musa questioned who reported the killing and urged the police to identify and question the motorcycle rider who was reportedly with her son.

"The okada rider who reported the death should be able to explain where he took him to, who stopped them and who attacked only the passenger," she said.

The family said it wanted the police to provide a clear account of the circumstances surrounding the officer's death.



IGP Tunji Disu

DSS arraigns man over alleged N340m cyberattack on MTN's MoMo Bank

By Bertram Nwannekanma

THE Department of State Services (DSS) has arraigned a 32-year-old man, Ogunwobi Philip Ayodeji, before the Federal High Court in Lagos over an alleged cyberattack on MoMo Payment Service Bank Limited, a subsidiary of MTN Nigeria Communications Plc, which reportedly resulted in the diversion of money.

Ayodeji was arraigned before Justice Ambrose Lewis-Allagoo on a five-count charge bordering on conspiracy,

unlawful access to the bank's financial infrastructure, cybercrime and money laundering.

The prosecution alleged that the defendant compromised the bank's systems between May and August 2026, gaining unauthorised access to critical financial infrastructure.

The prosecutor, Michael Bajela, assisted by J.A. Babalola, told the court that Ayodeji allegedly conspired with an Indian national, Abhicheck Modane, who is currently at

large, to access the bank's systems unlawfully and divert funds into unauthorised digital wallets and other accounts.

The prosecution further alleged that the defendant disrupted the bank's operations and diverted approximately N340 million belonging to the financial institution.

Ayodeji was also accused of transferring and concealing funds allegedly traced to the cyberattack, as well as knowingly collecting and

retaining proceeds of the alleged crime.

The prosecution said the alleged offences contravened provisions of the Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc.) Act, 2024, and the Money Laundering (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022.

The defendant pleaded not guilty to all five counts.

Following the plea, Bajela asked the court to fix a date for trial and remand the defendant pending the determination of the case.

Varsity expels student over viral video alleging lecturer wrote project for N150,000

From Ann Godwin and Godfrey Gabriel, Port Harcourt

THE Senate of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE), Port Harcourt, Rivers State, has expelled a final-year student, Onyewuenyi Chiamaka Nora, over a viral social media video in which she allegedly claimed that a lecturer was handling her final-year research project for N150,000.

The university said the decision followed its Senate meeting held on Wednesday at the Postgraduate Hall,

where members considered the content of the video and the student's claims.

In a statement issued yesterday, the institution's Public Relations Officer, Dr Ngozi Okiridu, said the Senate found aspects of the student's account unacceptable, particularly her description of her project topic as "Citizenship" and her allegation that her supervisor was writing the project for her.

The university maintained that there was no project topic titled "Citizenship" in

the Department of English Language and Literary Studies.

The video, which circulated

widely on social media last week, showed the student discussing her research project.



Rivers varsity

Journalist petitions Lagos CP over alleged assault by Omoonile in Akowonjo

By Ayonote Clement

A journalist with The Guardian, Eniola Daniel, has petitioned the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Tijani Fatai, over an alleged assault by suspected Omoonile (land grabbers) in Akowonjo, Alimosho Local Council of Lagos State.

In the petition, Daniel alleged that he was attacked while covering a land dispute that sparked tension in the community following the enforcement of a court judgment in July.

Residents and business

owners in Akowonjo were thrown into panic on July 30 and 31, 2026, when individuals claiming to be enforcing a 2003 court judgment reportedly shut shops, schools, banks and homes, restricting access to businesses and residential estates.

Residents alleged that suspected Omoonile harassed property owners, damaged fences and removed gates from some compounds. Notices bearing the inscription, "ID/1537/90. Possession Taken Today

30/7/26 By Court Order," were also pasted on several buildings, while armed police officers were stationed at strategic locations.

The exercise reportedly involved individuals claiming to represent the judgment creditors, accompanied by armed officers attached to the Lagos State Task Force.

They said

they were taking possession of about 56.570 hectares of land under a judgment delivered by the Lagos State High Court, Ikeja Judicial Division, on November 26, 2003.

The notices identified Alhaji Ashafa Ogundare Oshunroye, Lamidi Ogundare and Chief Olufunmi Yisa as the judgment creditors, acting for themselves and on behalf of the Yaku Family of Agege.



CP Tijani Fatai

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Ogun monarch urges Tinubu to rebuild 70km Abeokuta-Imeko road

By Bertram Nwannekanma

THE traditional ruler of Imeko in Ogun State, Oba Benjamin Gbadeg in Alabi Oyeditan-Olanite, has appealed to President Bola Tinubu to urgently rehabilitate the 70-kilometre Abeokuta-Imeko Federal Highway, saying that its deteriorating condition is hurting agricultural trade, raising transport costs and undermining border security.

In an open letter to the President, the monarch described the road, which connects communities in Ogun State

to the Nigeria-Benin Republic border, as a vital economic corridor that has become a source of hardship for residents, farmers and commercial transport operators.

He said the deplorable condition of the Abeokuta Roundabout-Olorunda-Imeko section had made the movement of people and goods increasingly difficult, with serious implications for livelihoods and economic activities in the border communities.

According to the monarch, farmers in the agrarian communities along the route face difficulties transporting har-

vested produce to major markets, while transport operators spend more on vehicle re-

pairs because of the damaged road. The additional costs, he said, are eventually transferred

to passengers and consumers through higher fares and commodity prices.

Oba Oyeditan-Olanite also expressed concern that the road's condition could delay access to medical care during emergencies and impede the movement of security personnel responsible for protecting the country's western border.

To underscore the Federal Government's responsibility for the highway, the monarch cited the Federal Highways (Declaration) Order 1977, published as Legal Notice No. 60 in the Federal Republic of Nige-

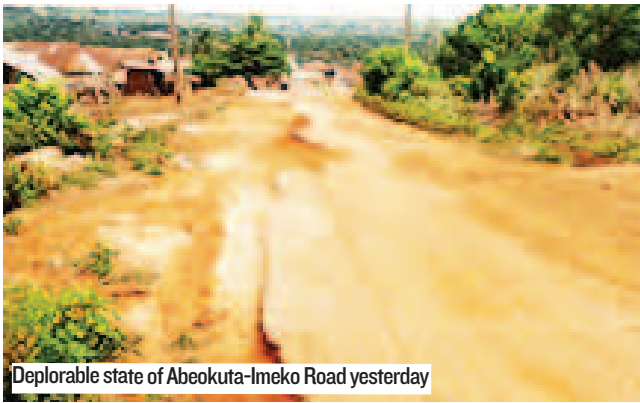
ria Gazette No. 58, Volume 64.

He said the legal instrument designated Highway F.102, running from Sagamu through Abeokuta to Imeko and the Benin Republic boundary, as a federal trunk road, with its commencement date stated as October 1, 1974.

The monarch acknowledged the recent palliative repairs facilitated by the senator representing Ogun West, Adeola Solomon Olamilekan, popularly known as Yayi, saying the intervention had provided relief to road users.

However, he stressed that the repairs could not address the extensive damage along the entire stretch, adding that temporary patching was insufficient to restore the highway to a safe and serviceable condition.

He, therefore, called for a comprehensive reconstruction project, supported by adequate funding and proper drainage infrastructure, to prevent further deterioration and provide a lasting solu-



Sanwo-Olu, IGP Disu, security chiefs celebrate LSSTF boss Ogunsan at 50

By Bertram Nwannekanma

LAGOS State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Inspector-General of Police Olatunji Rilwan Disu and senior security chiefs were among prominent personalities who gathered in Lagos on Sunday to celebrate the 50th birthday of the Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Lagos State Security Trust Fund (LSSTF), Dr Ayodele Ogunsan.

The event brought together government officials, military and police officers, heads of security agencies, business leaders, traditional rulers and Christian ministers for the fifth edition of Ogunsan's annual Gospel Hymns and Worship Concert, held five days after his birthday on October 6.

The evening centred on thanksgiving and Christian

worship. Ogunsan opened the programme with 'I Love You, Lord, for Your Mercy Never Fails Me', setting the tone for the celebration.

His wife, gospel singer Dr Ajoke Ogunsan, popularly known as Ajokesings, ministered through songs including 'Holy Forever', 'Great Is Thy Faithfulness' and 'Great Is Your Mercy Towards Me'. She also performed her original composition, 'Iba Re'.

The couple's three daughters, Mercy, Joy and Oluwaseun, also performed, singing 'Good God, You Are So Mindful of Me', 'Nagode' and 'You Are My God'.

Ogunsan and his wife later presented a duet, 'I Wonder If I Have Done My Best for Christ', while the Young Executive Forum, a mentoring community led by Ogunsan, performed 'Oh, Ask the Man'.

Christian ministers at the event included Pastor Yemi Akinwande of Deeper Life Bible Church in the United Kingdom, who delivered the exhortation, as well as Pastor Sehindemi Johnson, Prof Albert Oikelome, Pastor Tope Ojemen, Pastor Olaomo and Pastor Olanipekun.

A personal highlight came when Ogunsan's former schoolmates from St Joseph's Secondary School, Agege, paid tribute to him.

Describing the gathering, Ogunsan told the audience: "This isn't just another event. It is a sanctuary of praise."

Sanwo-Olu led the delegation from the Lagos State Government. The Deputy Governor, Kadri Obafemi Hamzat, was represented by the Commissioner for Housing, Moruf Akinderu-Fatai.



IGP Olatunji Rilwan Disu (left); APC Lagos State Deputy Governorship Candidate, Princess Damilola Sonayon James; Wife of the Celebrant/Managing Director, Executive Hotel and Suites, Dr Ajoke Ogunsan; LSSTF boss, Dr Ayodele Ogunsan and CEO/MD, JB Farms Ltd, Mr Ajibola Bankole Adebute, during Ogunsan's 50th Birthday Celebration and the launch of the new book; Dr Ayodele Ogunsan: 'The Civilian General' and at the Civic Centre, V/I, Lagos

FNSB laments thousands of visually impaired Nigerians lack access to rehabilitation

• Seeks greater efforts to promote inclusion

By Eniola Daniel

THE Federal Nigeria Society for the Blind (FNSB) has lamented that thousands of blind Nigerians still lack access to rehabilitation, education, assistive technology and employment opportunities, calling for greater efforts to promote their independence and inclusion in the society.

Chairman of the Society's Executive Council, Arit Tunde-Imoyo, made the call during the organisation's 71st anniversary and Independence dinner held at the MUSON Centre, Onikan, Lagos State.

She said the anniversary was not merely a celebration of the organisation's longevity but a reaffirmation of the vision of its founders, who be-

lieved that blindness should not condemn anyone to dependence, exclusion or hopelessness.

Tunde-Imoyo recalled that in 1955, five years before Nigeria gained independence, a group of compassionate Nigerians and expatriates established the Society with the conviction that blind persons could be trained, empowered and given opportunities to live productive and independent lives.

She said that the Society had transformed lives through its vocational training centre, rehabilitation programmes, advocacy and partnerships, helping people who once depended heavily on others acquire practical skills, build confidence and take greater control of their lives.

Lagos DSVa releases directory of GBV coordinators across Nigeria

By Bertram Nwannekanma

LAGOS State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA) has released a directory of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) state coordinators across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) to improve survivors' access to support services.

The agency said the directory provides contact details for state coordinators to facilitate reporting, referrals and access to appropriate services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

According to a statement yesterday by the Head of the DSVa

Public Affairs Unit, Onadipe Opebere, the initiative is part of efforts to strengthen national coordination among stakeholders involved in preventing and responding to GBV.

The directory follows a two-day national convening of GBV state coordinators hosted by the Lagos State Government, with support from the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC II) Programme.

The programme is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).

Lagos court clears way for inquest into Adichie's son's death

By Oludare Richards

LAGOS State High Court sitting in Ikoyi yesterday struck out a suit filed by Eurapharma Care Services Nigeria Limited, operators of Euracare Multi-Specialist Hospital, seeking to stop a coroner's inquest into the death of Nkanu Adichie-Esege, the 21-month-old son of Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

In her ruling, Justice Aishat Opesanwo rejected the hospital's arguments that the cremation of the child's body deprived the coroner of jurisdiction to proceed with the inquest and that the proposed order for receiving evidence from medical personnel breached its right to fair hearing.

The judge held that the coroner's authority to conduct the

inquiry depended on the circumstances surrounding the death and the provisions of the Lagos State Coroners System Law, not on whether the deceased's body remained physically available.

She said the hospital had failed to establish that the conditions for conducting the inquest under Section 15 of the law had not been met. The law, she added, did not require the deceased's body to remain within the coroner's district when the inquiry was held.

Eurapharma had also argued that pro-

ceeding without a post-mortem examination could lead to speculative conclusions. It challenged the coroner's decision to invite medical personnel involved in Nkanu's treatment to give evidence before the family formally presented its case.

However, Justice Opesanwo described the hospital's concerns about the eventual out-

come of the inquest as premature, noting that the proceedings had yet to commence formally.

"I am not persuaded by the submission made by the applicant's counsel that the cremation of the body means the inquest and its conclusion will be predicated on speculation and conjecture," she said.

The judge explained that a coroner's inquest was an inquisitorial, fact-finding process intended to establish the circumstances surrounding a death, rather than a trial to determine criminal guilt or civil liability.

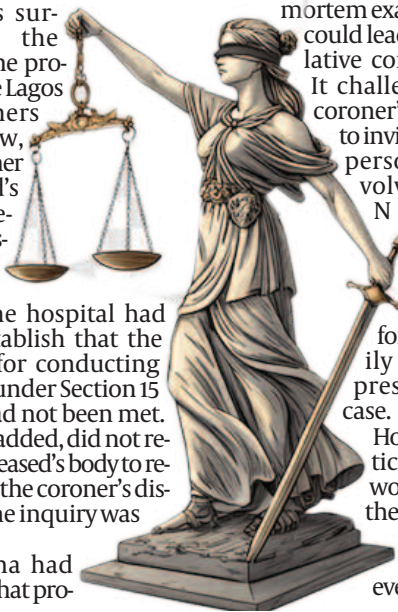
"It is not a trial; no one is on trial in a coroner's court," she said.

She also rejected the hospital's argument that the proposed sequence for receiving evidence

violated Section 36 of the 1999 Constitution, as amended. According to her, the coroner had discretion to determine the order in which witnesses would testify, and disagreement with that decision did not automatically amount to a breach of fair hearing.

The Navy said no arrests were made because the suspected operators had fled before the arrival of the naval team, adding that the sites and products were subsequently handled in accordance with established procedures.

According to the statement, the discovery highlights the scale of suspected illicit petroleum storage in the area and the risk of the products entering unlawful distribution channels.



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PSYCHIATRISTS IN NIGERIA DECRY HAVING A STATUTE BOOK AS AN ACT: THREE YEARS AFTER ENACTMENT, WHERE IS THE IMPLEMENTATION?

Three years after the enactment of Nigeria's Mental Health Act, psychiatrists are asking a simple but urgent question: Why are we still waiting for implementation? We have an Act. We have a legal framework. We have a policy direction.

But where is the implementation?

Three years is a long time in the life of a person living with mental illness. It is a long time for a family carrying the emotional, financial, and social burden of care. It is a long time for psychiatrists and other mental health professionals working within a system that remains fragmented, insufficiently harmonized, and without the unified structure needed to provide consistent and coordinated care. For patients, this delay can mean missed opportunities for better care and protection. For families, it means carrying burdens that a stronger and better-organized mental health system could help reduce. For mental health professionals, it means continuing to work under uncertainty while attempting to provide care within a system that is yet to fully translate the promises of the Act into practice. And for Nigeria, it raises a fundamental question:

What is the value of having a law in the statute book if the mechanisms required to make that law work remain absent or incomplete?

We Passed the Law. Why Are We Still Stuck?

If the Mental Health Act had not been passed, we would understand why implementation was not taking place. But it was passed. That is precisely why the current situation is difficult to understand. Non-implementation of an enacted law is fundamentally different from failure to pass legislation. Once legislation has been enacted, the question should move from "Should we have this law?" to "How do we operationalize it, resource it, enforce it, and make it work for the people it was designed to serve?" Three years on, that transition remains incomplete. The very purpose of the Act—to establish a stronger legal and institutional foundation for mental health care, protect people receiving mental health services, improve standards, clarify responsibilities, and strengthen the system—risks being undermined when implementation does not follow enactment.

A statute book is the official collection or record of all written laws passed by a government and active within a specific country or state. A law cannot transform a health system while it remains largely confined to the statute book. The non-implementation of the law is a paradox as all laws in the statute book are meant to be active!

The Cost of Fragmentation

Mental health service provision remains insufficiently harmonized and unified. Different institutions and levels of care can operate without the degree of coordination necessary to create a genuinely integrated mental health system.

The result is a system in which patients may encounter disconnected services, families may struggle to navigate care, professionals may face unclear institutional pathways, and accountability can become difficult to locate. We cannot build a coherent mental health system from disconnected pieces. We need clear structures, defined responsibilities, coordinated services, appropriate financing, accountable institutions, effective regulation, and continuity of care. Most importantly, we need the political and administrative will to move from legislation to implementation.

Three Years Later, What Has Changed?

This is the uncomfortable question that must be asked. What new structures have been established? (The Mental Health Department to start with)

What responsibilities have been operationalized?

What mechanisms for accountability are functioning?

What institutional arrangements have been put in place?

What resources have been committed?

What improvements in coordination and continuity of mental health care can be directly attributed to implementation of the Act?

And perhaps most importantly:

What has changed for the person living with mental illness and the family caring for them?

If the answer is that significant parts of the system remain essentially where they were five years ago, then we must be willing to address the implementation gap honestly.

We Cannot Keep Rewriting What We Have Not Implemented

There is also a growing concern about the discussion of amending the Mental Health Act when the fundamental challenge appears to be implementation of the existing Act. Before we amend, replace, or reopen the law, should we not first understand why an enacted law has remained inadequately implemented?

The Federal Ministry of Health played a pivotal role in the enactment of the mental health act, why the repackaging of the law for amendment without implementation?

We do not necessarily need another law. We need the law we already have to work.

The priority should be to identify the barriers to implementation and remove them.

Are there unresolved statutory obligations?

Are there administrative barriers?

Are there institutional responsibilities that have not been assigned or operationalized?

Are there funding constraints?

Are there regulatory gaps?

Are there intergovernmental coordination problems?

Are there institutional accountability issues?

Are there judicial or legal challenges?

Or is the problem simply a lack of sustained political and administrative action?

These questions deserve clear answers.

Where Is the Mental Health System?

One of the most troubling consequences of prolonged uncertainty is that professionals, private mental health providers, institutions, patients, and families are left trying to understand what the operational reality of the Act actually is.

The Act may be referred to. Its principles may be discussed. Its provisions may inform conversations and decisions. Yet the institutions, structures, departments, regulations, financing mechanisms, and implementation pathways required to make the system function coherently may still be missing or insufficient.

We cannot have a modern mental health system without a functioning institutional architecture behind it.

And we cannot expect psychiatrists, other professionals, families, private mental health care providers, and public institutions to carry the consequences of systemic uncertainty indefinitely.

Mental Health Is Nigeria's Social Capital

Mental health is not a peripheral issue, it is beyond health. Mental health is part of Nigeria's social capital. It affects families, communities, workplaces, schools, productivity, social stability, human dignity, and the ability of people to participate fully in society. When people with mental health conditions are able to access timely, appropriate, rights-based, continuous care, families are strengthened, communities are stronger, and society benefits. When the system is fragmented, under-coordinated, and difficult to navigate, the cost is ultimately carried by everyone.

Three Years Is Long Enough to Ask the Hard Questions

Five years after enactment, the conversation should no longer be about whether Nigeria needs a Mental Health Act. We have one. The conversation should be about why it has not been fully translated into functioning systems, institutions, services, protections, and accountability. We should not be comfortable with having a Mental Health Act that exists principally as a document in a statute book. A statute book is not a mental health service. A law is meaningful when people experience its protections, when institutions perform the responsibilities it establishes, when professionals can work within the structures it provides, and when patients and families see tangible improvements in the care they receive. So, five years later, the question is not: "Do we need another law?" The question is: "Why are we still not implementing the law we already have?" And perhaps the most important question of all:

If we are serious about building a better society, how much longer can we afford to leave mental health reform waiting on the statute book?

The **implementation gap** is the central issue and avoids suggesting a new law by amending what has not been tested is necessarily the solution. It also gives you a strong platform for asking government and relevant institutions to identify the specific administrative, statutory, funding, regulatory, or accountability barriers preventing implementation.

Dr. Veronica Oluwemisi NYAMALI
President, Association of Psychiatrists in Nigeria.

Prof. Kingsley Mayowa OKONODA
Secretary, Association of Psychiatrists in Nigeria.

VACANCY

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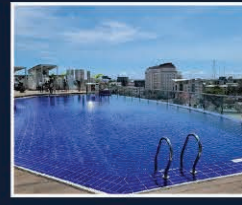
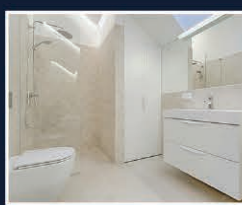
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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE SPEAKER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, ABUJA: THE IMMINENT THREAT OF THE CETA BILL 2025 TO NIGERIAN WORKERS AND THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR.

15th September 2026

Rt. Hon. Tajudeen Abbas, GCON
Speaker, House of Representatives
National Assembly Complex
Three Arms Zone
Abuja, FCT

Dear Rt. Honourable,

On behalf of the National Union of Food, Beverage and Tobacco Employees (NUFBTE) and the wider community of factory operatives, farmers, distributors, and small retailers whose daily livelihoods depend on the non-alcoholic beverage industry, we bring you patriotic greetings.

We write to commend the House of Representatives, under your leadership, for its support of the foundational macroeconomic reforms currently under way. However, the economic realities for everyday businesses and workers remain very challenging.

It is within this fragile transition period that we raise an urgent alarm regarding the Customs, Excise Tariffs, Etc. (Consolidation) Amendment Bill, 2025 (the "CETA Bill"), which recently passed the Senate and has been transmitted to the House of Representatives for concurrence. The bill proposes to replace the predictable ₦10 per litre specific tax on soft drinks with a percentage levy on retail price. If passed, this legislation will transform a difficult operating environment into a catastrophic one for the sector and for the hundreds of thousands of Nigerian families whose livelihoods depend on it.

1. The Weight of the Transition on Nigerian Workers

The Non-Alcoholic Drinks (NAD) sector is one of Nigeria's largest employers of factory-floor labour, agricultural suppliers, distribution workers, and small-scale retailers. In 2024, the food, beverages, and tobacco subsector accounted for 50.9% of total manufacturing output, with NADs contributing 39% of that output. Behind these figures are real Nigerian families: men and women who wake early to work the production lines, drive the haulage vehicles, farm the sugarcane, and stock the neighbourhood kiosks that carry these products across the country.

Since 2023, the workers we represent have borne the full impact of the fuel subsidy removal and foreign exchange reforms with resilience and understanding. However, incomes have not kept pace with the sharp rise in the cost of transportation, food, housing, and other basic essentials. With a national minimum wage of ₦70,000, the reality for many workers earning today is that their pay is far too low to meet their daily needs. Across the country, workers are making difficult daily sacrifices, including longer commutes, reduced household spending, and forgoing basic necessities, simply to make ends meet. The widening gap between income levels and the actual cost of living has left many families under severe financial strain.

According to the MAN/PwC 2026 report, fuel subsidy removal and FX unification added an estimated ₦1.3 trillion to the sector's cost of sales between 2023 and 2024, compressed Gross Value Added by ₦7.9 trillion, and forced capital investments down by ₦829 billion. These are not abstract figures; they are the direct reason many production lines have been scaled back, overtime opportunities have shrunk, and factory expansion projects that would have created new jobs have been shelved.

The sector urgently needs a period of stabilisation before workers can begin to see the benefits of these reforms in their pay packets and household budgets. Introducing an aggressive percentage-based tax at this moment will break the back of the industry and, with it, the livelihoods of the hundreds of thousands of Nigerians who depend on it.

2. The Human Cost of the Existing Excise Tax

Since the introduction of the ₦10 per litre tax on soft drinks in 2022, the impact on workers and their families has been severe:

Over a million livelihoods affected. By 2024, the tax was linked to an estimated loss of 989,409 direct, indirect, and induced jobs across the value chain: factory workers, drivers, sugarcane farmers, cleaners, security personnel, distributors, and retailers. Behind that number are families who have lost their primary breadwinner, children whose school fees can no longer be paid, and communities where the local economy has weakened.

Government revenue has fallen, not risen. The tax has actually shrunk the sector's overall tax contribution by ₦97.4 billion, because it weakened the broader tax base; VAT, Company Income Tax, and PAYE all declined as production dropped and workers were laid off. The people who would have paid these taxes are, in many cases, the

very ones who lost their jobs.

Economic value destroyed. Sectoral Gross Value Added was ₦2.77 trillion lower than it would have been without the tax: value that would otherwise have flowed to workers as wages, to farmers as crop payments, to small distributors as margins, and to communities as spending power.

Escalating to a percentage-based tax in the current economic environment, where production costs remain highly exposed to external volatility from global commodity price swings and geopolitical uncertainty, will cause this tax burden to keep rising automatically as costs rise. This will trigger further price increases, weaker demand, and more factory closures at the exact moment when Nigerian workers and their families need stability heading into a critical period of national development.

3. The Public Health Argument is Misdirected

We fully support a healthier Nigeria. But policy must be guided by Nigerian realities, not imported assumptions:

Low consumption: Nigeria's per capita sugar consumption is only 7.1 kg per year, exceptionally low compared to global benchmarks.

Global Comparison: While average yearly consumption in Europe ranges from 30 to over 50 kg per person, and the United States climbs past 68 kg, Nigeria's intake is exceptionally minimal.

Regional Standing: Neighbouring or peer African nations consume far more; South Africa averages 25 to 36 kg per capita, and Egypt reaches roughly 33 kg.

The true source of sugar: Over 90% of the sugar Nigerians consume comes from household and raw sugar use in daily cooking, drinks prepared at home, and staple food preparation. Soft drinks account for only 5% of total sugar intake.

The real gap in policy: If the objective is to reduce sugar-related health risks, the policy focus should be on developing regulatory and fiscal mechanisms to address the household and raw sugar segment, which constitutes the overwhelming majority of national sugar intake. Targeting soft drinks, which contribute only 5% of consumption, while leaving the dominant sources of sugar intake outside the fiscal framework represents a misalignment between the stated health objective and the tool chosen to achieve it.

International best practice: The World Health Organization's 2025 Global Report explicitly finds percentage-based taxes ineffective for targeting sugar content, and instead endorses specific, sugar-content-based excises.

Taxing a product category that contributes only 5% of national sugar intake will not yield real public health benefits. It will simply push consumers toward cheaper, unregulated alternatives, while destroying the livelihoods of over a million Nigerians who have already borne the brunt of recent economic reforms.

4. Our Prayer

Rt. Honourable Speaker, the workers of Nigeria are carrying the heavy transition costs of the ongoing economic reforms on their shoulders. We cannot survive an additional, poorly designed tax burden. On behalf of the men and women whose daily bread depends on this industry, we respectfully appeal to you to:

Halt the CETA Bill: Lead the House of Representatives to withhold concurrence on the CETA Bill 2025. The manufacturing sector, and the food, beverage, and tobacco segment in particular, is in a state of acute distress. Capacity utilisation across manufacturing has declined sharply as producers contend with prohibitively high borrowing costs, rising energy and logistics expenses, persistent constraints in foreign exchange access, and weakened consumer purchasing power. Several production lines have been scaled back or shut down entirely. The NAD sector, which anchors hundreds of thousands of jobs across farming, haulage, distribution, and retail, cannot absorb an additional tax escalation without triggering a wave of further closures, retrenchments, and value chain collapse. Passing the CETA Bill in this environment would inflict irreversible damage on an already fragile industrial base and on the workers who depend on it for their daily survival.

We trust in your commitment to protecting the Nigerian worker, and to ensuring that our manufacturing sector can transition through these difficult times without leaving behind the families who have carried the greatest weight of the reforms.

Yours faithfully,

On behalf of the National Union of Food, Beverage and Tobacco Employees (NUFBTE)

COMRADE GARBA IBRAHIM DANKAMA,
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

COMRADE (PRINCE) MIKE OLANREWaju
GENERAL SECRETARY

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

Editorial

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Confronting kidnapping beyond the death penalty

THE sentencing of four kidnappers to death by hanging or lethal injection by the Edo State Special Criminal Court is both a significant judicial development and an opportunity for Nigeria to confront the deeper roots of the kidnapping crisis. Given that kidnapping, in its ugliest forms, has become a booming industry afflicting society and the psyche of the average Nigerian, few will question the drastic measures Edo State and some others are taking to overcome the menace. Nonetheless, it is important to address the problem at its roots, rather than merely giving the impression that the government has gone tough on kidnappers.

Notably, while the country retains the death penalty in its statutes for certain crimes, implementing the sentences has been delayed largely due to the absence of political will on the part of governors who must sign the death warrant. Presided over by Justice Aigbona Momodu, the court convicted Marvellous Isaac, Wisdom Michael, Rufus Emete Michael and Gift Raphael on an 11-count charge bordering on kidnapping, conspiracy, armed robbery, cultism and unlawful possession of firearms. The case arose from the daylight abduction of a woman at the Vegetable Market, along Airport Road, Benin City, on June 14, 2026.

The Edo State Special Criminal Court was established on July 1, 2026, to handle kidnapping, cultism and related violent-crime cases and to expedite their prosecution. Its maiden kidnapping judgment is therefore significant. It demonstrates that specialised judicial intervention can produce relatively swift resolution of serious criminal cases. Yet the death sentence inevitably raises a wider and more difficult question: Will the severity of punishment, by itself, deter kidnapping in Nigeria?

There is a compelling argument for deterrence. Kidnapping has become an organised and lucrative criminal enterprise in many parts of the country. Its victims are no longer confined to the wealthy or prominent. Traders, farmers, travellers, students, schoolchildren, professionals and ordinary families are increasingly exposed to the menace.

The recent abduction of prospective National Youth Service Corps members illustrates the frightening transformation of the crime. On October 1, gunmen reportedly attacked two buses carrying prospective corps members travelling from Ibadan to their orientation camps in Abia and Akwa Ibom states along the Owerri-Onitsha Road in Imo State.

Reports from the victims' families said that 20 young graduates were abducted and that the kidnappers initially demanded N50 million for each victim—a total of N1 billion. Subsequent reports said the demand was reduced to N5 million per victim.

Even as reports confirm the rescue of the corps members by security offi-

cials, the reported ransom demand exposes the economics of kidnapping. The families of the corps members have revealed they paid ransom to secure the release of their children, contrary to the Police's position. Human beings have been turned into commodities. The higher the ransom, the greater the incentive for criminal gangs to continue the trade. This is why the Edo judgment deserves attention beyond the courtroom.

The punishment imposed on the four convicts may appear severe, even draconian, to some. But the court itself indicated that the prescribed law left it without discretion on the applicable punishment. Justice Momodu reportedly stated that his "hands are tied" because the law prescribed the sentence. The convicts, of course, retain their constitutional right of appeal. The judgment is therefore not necessarily the final stage of the judicial process.

There is also a legitimate and continuing debate about capital punishment. Amnesty International remains opposed to the death penalty and describes Nigeria as a retentionist country because the punishment remains available in law. It has also reported legislative initiatives in Nigeria aimed at abolition.

That debate should not be suppressed. A civilised criminal justice system must be concerned not only with protecting society from dangerous criminals but also with due process, fair trial and the possibility of judicial error. A death sentence is irreversible, making the integrity of the judicial process particularly important.

But the debate over abolition must not obscure another reality: Nigeria has a duty to protect its citizens from those who abduct, terrorise and hold them for ransom. A country cannot allow kidnapping to become a normal means of livelihood.

The more fundamental problem is not simply that the prescribed punishment may be inappropriate; it is that the probability of detection and conviction is often insufficient to make the punishment an effective deterrent.

A kidnapper should have every reason to believe that if he commits the crime, he will be identified, arrested, prosecuted and punished. That is the point at which Nigeria's anti-kidnapping strategy must change. Nigeria does not merely need harsher sentences. It needs to destroy the business model of kidnapping.

The first requirement is intelligence-led policing. Security agencies at federal, state and local levels must know who the kidnappers are, where they operate, who provides information to them, where they keep their victims, who negotiates their ransoms and who finances their operations. Intelligence cannot remain an afterthought, activated only after abduction has occurred. It must be the foundation of prevention.

Second, Nigeria must strengthen policing at the grassroots. The renewed debate about state police deserves serious consideration, provided that any such system is professionally recruited, adequately trained and subject to effective

constitutional and institutional safeguards. Security personnel who understand local communities and terrain are potentially better placed to detect unusual movements and obtain timely intelligence.

Third, the country's forests and other difficult-to-access areas must no longer be treated as security blind spots. Kidnappers require places in which to hide their victims and evade law enforcement. Sustained surveillance and co-ordinated security operations are necessary to deny criminal gangs these sanctuaries. The reactivation of forest guards by the federal government should be total and result-oriented.

Fourth, the government must follow the money. Kidnapping for ransom is an economic crime. The people who collect, transfer, conceal or launder ransom proceeds are part of the criminal ecosystem. Financial intelligence should therefore be directed not merely at the gunmen who abduct victims but also at the financiers, intermediaries and facilitators who make the enterprise profitable. The ultimate objective should be to make kidnapping a high-risk, low-reward enterprise.

Fifth, prosecution must be swift and certain. The establishment of specialised courts, as demonstrated by the Edo initiative, could help reduce the delays that have historically bedevilled criminal trials. But specialised courts must be supported by competent investigation, professional prosecution, adequate judges, modern forensic capacity and proper case management. Justice delayed is not merely justice denied to victims. In serious criminal cases, it can also weaken the deterrent value of the law.

Sixth, the State must deal with the networks that facilitate kidnapping. Kid-

nappingsyndicates do not operate in isolation. They require information about potential victims, movements and communities. Those who knowingly plan, finance or facilitate kidnapping must be pursued with the same determination as those who physically carry out the abductions.

Seventh, Nigeria must urgently improve security along major transport corridors. The reported abduction of prospective corps members travelling between states is particularly disturbing because it demonstrates that ordinary movement across the country can expose citizens to grave danger.

Road security cannot depend solely on occasional patrols after an attack. There must be effective intelligence, early warning, rapid response and close co-operation among security agencies, transport operators and host communities.

The situation in parts of the North-West and North-East is even more alarming, where kidnapping and the abduction of schoolchildren have become regular features of the security crisis. The continued vulnerability of children and other civilians should be unacceptable in a country that claims the capacity to protect its citizens.

The Edo judgment should therefore not be reduced to a debate about whether four kidnappers deserve the death penalty. The larger question is whether Nigeria is prepared to create a criminal justice and security system capable of making kidnapping unprofitable.

Nigeria must make kidnapping difficult to organise, difficult to finance and almost certain to end in arrest and lawful punishment. Until that happens, the death penalty—or any other severe sanction—will remain only one part of an unfinished response to a national menace.



Opinion

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Still on way to naira recovery

By Chris Enyinnaya

*All seems infected that the infected spy,
As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye —
Alexander Pope.*

LET me begin this write up with a statement on the regulatory problems created by the Federal Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). Their problem can be explained by the BOB PRINCIPLE. When Bob has a problem with everyone, Bob is usually the problem.

Every Nigerian has issues with both institutions because both are not in harmony with their function of making workable fiscal policy and monetary policy because the economy is not working. With regard to the CBN, the banker and adviser to the Federal Government, they are not giving sound financial advice.

For instance in 1986, the naira was devalued in line with deregulation of the economy leading to a regime of a move away from fixed exchange rate to a market determined exchange rate. The aim of the devaluation was to boost exports by making it cheaper and earning more foreign exchange. The devaluation is in order, following economic theory. What is not in order is that Nigeria is an import dependent economy not an export oriented economy that will reap the benefit of devaluation by making exports cheaper. Exports can only be cheaper if you invoice exports in naira, the home currency. When you invoice exports in USA dollar or other foreign currencies, how will the exports be cheaper?

Naira and USA dollar are parallel lines, mathematically speaking, which can only meet at infinity if at all they will meet, that is have same purchasing power. It is only when they have the same purchasing power that invoicing in dollar will be beneficial to Nigeria.

From initial devaluation rate of N4.64/\$ in August 1986, naira is exchanging for USA dollar in recent times at any rate close to N1400/\$.

In managing exchange rate, the CBN is behaving like a carpenter whose only tool is the hammer. The only thing they see is the head of a nail. To them every problem is the nail and they use the hammer to drive the nail right into the wood.

That nail is IMF and World Bank template which has perpetually led to continuous devaluation of the naira. Naira recovery is not in sight. Why has naira not recovered?

We can all conclude that the problem with Nigerian monetary authority is that they have not sat down, put on their thinking cap and find out the real cause of the problem and then work out a sustainable solution. Rather than think over it, we prefer to copy and paste the IMF and World Bank recovery model which applies to formal economies where there is no break in circular flow of income. In Nigeria, there is a break in the circular flow of income. Debtors hardly pay creditors as and when due. Even government at all levels default in paying contractors, and government workers. They pay foreign creditors as and when due to maintain their credit rating and avoid sanctions.

There is a need for the Nigerian financial system to be restructured to align with the informal structure of the Nigerian economy as a first step. Nigerian economy is a trading economy and a well conceived trade policy will put Naira on recovery path in the short run. The naira for crude oil policy in favour of Dangote Refinery is key to naira recovery. That is why those who look at the Refinery as a monopoly need to rethink their position in national interest. Nigeria can also extend the policy to international buyers.

However, this policy will be like walking away from the USA dollar which is the international reserve currency but it is not so.

In the course of further research on the naira for crude oil policy not just to Dangote Refinery but to other international buyers of Nigerian crude oil, this writer framed a question and got answers. The question is: "Can a country like Nigeria decide to invoice exports in naira and does that violate the terms of Bretton Woods agreement?" The answer from Google is: "Yes, Nigeria can legally choose to invoice exports in naira and doing so does not violate Bretton Woods agreement."

The Bretton Woods system which pegged global currencies to the USA dollar and the USA dollar to hold (the Nixon shock). Today, the global financial system operates on a floating exchange rate model. No international law or treaty forces a sov-

ereign nation to price its commodities in USA dollar.

The following are some of the reasons a country can choose to invoice exports in their home currency.

Sovereign autonomy. As a sovereign nation, Nigeria has the legal right to demand payment for its goods (including crude oil) in any currency it chooses provided it finds a willing buyer. Willing buyers of Nigerian crude oil, especially Bonny Light are there. They are there because it is cheaper to refine than heavy crude oil. There is a sustainable market for that trade window.

Modern precedents. Several countries have bypassed the USA dollar for trade. For example, Russia has demanded Rubles for gas exports and China and Saudi Arabia have engaged in negotiations to settle oil trade in Yuan. However, it is very difficult to implement.

While legally possible, implementing a "naira only" exports policy for major commodities like crude oil faces several economic hurdles which is why the naira for crude policy with Dangote Refinery is a blessing to Nigeria in disguise because there is no hurdle to surmount.

With many countries lining up to buy refined oil from Dangote Refinery, the policy launches Nigeria into international oil and gas trade market even though it was designed to favour Nigerian consumers.

Thus the ability of NNPC to supply just 30 per cent of crude oil demand of Dangote Refinery is a big blow and a set back in reaping the economic benefits of naira to crude policy. Sourcing 70 per cent of crude oil demand from across the world especially the USA where payment will be made in dollar throws Nigeria and Dangote Refinery back to square one.

Foreign Reserve needs. Nigeria itself needs USA dollar to pay for its massive import Bill for industrial raw materials, finished products and food as well as servicing of foreign debts. If Nigeria stops receiving USA dollar for its crude oil, it will struggle to fund these critical dollar obligations. This is economic theory but in banking practice invoicing exports in naira will not stop Nigeria from earning USA dollar. How?

When this writer was working at Indo-Nigerian

Merchant Bank, now a legacy group of Sterling Bank in the 1980s, we had an Indian that imports hand tools from India. The invoice for the hand tools was denominated in Indian Rupees. I thought it was a mistake but my boss, an Indian told me it came in Rupees because of their government policy that gave generous incentive to exporters that invoiced in Indian Rupees rather than USA dollar or any other foreign currencies.

What we did in settlement of the Bills for collection is to first convert the Rupees to naira. At that time, the exchange rate was R14/N1. We debited their naira account and then instructed our correspondent bank, State Bank of India London to debit our USA dollar account with them and transfer the Rupees to the exporter in India. That way, the government of India received USA dollar even though the export was invoiced in Indian Rupees. This is the financial aspect of the policy.

There is also the sovereignty implication. The sovereign implication is that there is a political element in exchange rate determination. Every country allows the exchange rate to float within the band of what is in the best interest of the country given its minimum wage and income levels and earnings capacity.

Nigeria robbed itself of this sovereignty by wholesale floating of the naira when it is not an export oriented country which effectively placed exchange rate determination in the hands of currency speculators. This ought not to be so.

If we go back to the General Sanni Abacha era as Head of State and Commander In Chief of the Nigerian Armed forces. After devaluation of the naira, he fixed the exchange rate at N87/\$ throughout his tenure. He had the political will to do so. Heaven did not fall. IMF and World Bank and other creditors did nothing. That is because Nigeria is a sovereign country and had the power to do so.

Invoicing in naira will put the CBN in a pole position to manage the exchange rate of the naira to the USA dollar and other foreign currencies better than what it is now.

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

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Relief without reversal: Press release is not policy (2)

By Chiwuike Uba

Continued from yesterday

SUBSIDISED credit serves a different purpose. It may help viable businesses finance working capital or investment, but it creates repayment obligations. A household struggling with transport and food costs cannot solve its immediate problem by taking on a loan. Cash support, business credit and fuel-price relief are not interchangeable benefits.

The proposed excess-profit tax raises another distinction. Scarcity can generate windfall gains, and government has a legitimate interest in preventing extraordinary conditions from rewarding abuse. But high profits, legally defined excess profits and unlawful conduct such as collusion or price-fixing are not the same thing.

High profits do not prove misconduct, just as a windfall tax is not automatically harmful to investment.

A tax with a clear legal basis, defensible benchmark, defined tax base and transparent administration could capture genuine windfall gains while protecting ordinary commercial returns. A poorly designed or unpredictable tax could encourage avoidance and weaken investment in refining and storage, where Nigeria needs substantial capital.

Taxation is no substitute for competition enforcement. The announcement does not establish the tax's precise design or expected revenue. Nor does a promise to ring-fence proceeds for transport support guarantee that beneficiaries will receive them. Published collections, disbursements and independent verification are essential.

Road levies present a similar challenge. Overlapping and unofficial charges increase transport and logistics costs, so addressing them is welcome. But Nigeria is a federation. Not every road charge is unlawful, and the Federal Government cannot abolish every levy imposed under state or local authority simply by announcement.

Invoking the 2025 tax reform laws without identifying the relevant charges, provisions and enforcement institutions risks inconsistent implementation and jurisdictional disputes. Government should identify offending charges, clarify which are lawful, name responsible agencies and publish compliance results. Otherwise, operators remain caught between official announcements and unofficial collections.

Tomorrow's energy security cannot pay today's bills

Compressed natural gas (CNG) and a National Strategic Fuel Reserve are worthwhile long-term ambitions, not immediate answers to this month's petrol bill.

The government's claim that CNG is 60 to 70 per cent cheaper than petrol is not a universal guarantee of savings. Actual benefits depend on conversion costs, vehicle compatibility, refuelling infrastructure, financing, safety and location. Where stations are scarce or conversions unaffordable, larger fleets may benefit first while households and smaller operators remain exposed to petrol-price volatility.

CNG could reduce exposure to petrol shocks over time, but infrastructure that has not been built cannot reduce today's transport fares. Government should publish measurable milestones for stations, vehicle conversions, safety standards and access to finance.

The same principle applies to a strategic fuel reserve. Announcing a reserve is not establishing one. Its value depends on stock levels, replenishment arrangements, release triggers, storage costs, oversight and public reporting. Without evidence, there is no basis for guessing the appropriate volume.

A reserve that is too small may offer little protection during prolonged disruption. One that is too large or poorly managed could tie up public resources, expose stocks to deterioration and invite procurement abuse or politically motivated releases. Moreover, releasing fuel does not eliminate the cost of replacing it when crude prices or exchange rates rise.

Traffic management and NIPOST addresses may reduce some logistics costs. They are useful supporting measures, but not a complete response to a fuel-price shock.

Reform by principle, or relief by political convenience?

Fiscal reform is not complete when expenditure disappears from the budget. It must also be judged by its consequences for citizens. The old subsidy regime was costly, poorly targeted and encouraged smuggling. The Presidency is right to acknowledge these problems. But the failure of one arrangement does not make every alternative sound, just as the risks of intervention do not make all intervention misguided.

Temporary relief can complement reform when it is transparent, targeted, time-limited and fiscally sustainable. It can undermine reform when it is opaque, leaves exposures unexamined or is repeatedly renewed at government's discretion. Repeated interventions may encourage markets to expect further intervention and cause investors to price that uncertainty into their decisions.

The timing of the announcement will attract political commentary, but speculation about motives is not evidence. The more useful test is what the measures deliver. Citizens will judge reform by transport fares, food, electricity, healthcare and the survival of small businesses, not by economic indicators they cannot feel in their

daily lives.

The distinction between what is proposed, approved, operational and still under negotiation matters. Households may form expectations around benefits that do not yet exist. Suppliers cannot price risks under rules they have not seen, while investors may delay decisions when commercial arrangements remain uncertain. Without named institutions, implementation dates, funding arrangements and measurable indicators, the public cannot determine whether the intervention works or whom to hold accountable when it fails.

A policy announcement is not an implementation framework.

The same discipline must apply to the promise of single-digit inflation "in the near term". Petrol is only one input. Inflation also depends on monetary conditions, exchange rates, food supply, fiscal policy, productivity, competition and expectations. A temporary intervention of unspecified scale and duration cannot guarantee a sustained decline.

Nor does a falling inflation rate necessarily mean falling prices. If inflation declines from 20 per cent to 9 per cent, prices are still rising, only more slowly. Households that have lost purchasing power have not automatically recovered it. Disinflation, falling prices and restored real incomes are different achievements. A credible inflation target therefore requires a baseline, timeframe, intermediate milestones and an explanation of how the measures fit into the wider macroeconomic programme.

From grand announcements to accountable action

The answer is not to abandon the package but to make it scrutinisable.

Government should publish the pricing methodology, define the cost benchmark and disclose who absorbs any shortfall, how recovery will work, how long the arrangement may last and the maximum exposure permitted. Guarantees and other obligations should be assessed and disclosed under applicable rules.

It should clarify the relationship between the 30-day margin-for-going arrangement and the N66-per-litre promotional discount, including eligibility, payment conditions, duration and expected consumer benefits. It should also explain how fuel supply will be protected without imposing unsustainable losses on suppliers.

Cash-transfer announcements should specify eligibility, coverage, payment schedules, funding and grievance procedures. Government should track pump prices, transport fares and distribution costs to determine whether relief reaches households.

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

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Opinion

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South Africa, rights and Ramaphosa's selectivity principle

By Festus Ogwuche

NIGERIA'S decision to suspend official parliamentary engagements with South Africa over continuing attacks on Nigerians has brought an old African wound into sharp contemporary focus. But beneath the diplomatic rupture lies a larger and more uncomfortable question which is whether a state can credibly preach the universality of human rights abroad while struggling to protect the humanity of foreigners at home?

The question acquires particular force because President Cyril Ramaphosa has just told the world at the BRICS summit in New Delhi that international law cannot be applied selectively. Calling for accountability over the suffering of Palestinians, the conflict in Sudan and the war in Iran, he insisted that the same principles of international law must apply to all states and the same protections to all peoples.

It is somewhat difficult to disagree with the South African president on that principle that is well enunciated in global terrains. Indeed, it is precisely because the principle is right that it deserves to be applied without exception.

South Africa's intervention in the Palestinian question has, from its inception, drawn considerable moral attention. Its historical experience of apartheid gives its voice a particular resonance when it speaks about racial domination, dehumanisation and the denial of human rights and dignity.

Its proceedings against Israel before the International Court of Justice have likewise placed the language of international law, genocide prevention and state responsibility at the core of an intensely contested global debate and none of this should be diminished. The Palestinian people are entitled to protection under international law irrespective of who speaks for them and the suffering of civilians does not become less real because the advocate or provocateur happens to be imperfect.

But that is precisely where the harder question begins when it's taken to the broad dimension of uniformity and consistency.

What happens when the same state invoking universal principles abroad is confronted by persistent allegations and documented instances of xenophobic violence against fellow Africans

within its own borders? What does it mean for the universality of human rights when Nigerians and other African nationals are subjected to intimidation, attacks, destruction of businesses and property, displacement and, in some cases, death?

Immigration control is unquestionably a sovereign function and every state has the right to determine who may enter, reside or work within its territory and to enforce its immigration laws. But sovereignty does not confer a licence for arbitrary abuse of power especially in violations that impinge on and dehumanise populations. An irregular migrant remains a human being and a foreigner remains entitled to protection against violence. No matter the level of defiance, the enforcement of immigration law cannot be outsourced to the mob. Never!

This distinction is fundamental, as the question is not whether South Africa has a right to regulate migration, but whether the dignity and security of the foreigner are to become negotiable once that person crosses the border.

South Africa's own constitutional order makes the proposition difficult to evade or circumvent. Take a look for instance at its Bill of Rights which is expressly framed as protecting the rights of "all people". It guarantees equality, human dignity, life and freedom from violence. The constitutional commitment is therefore not constructed around the convenient distinction between citizens whose humanity must be protected and foreigners whose humanity may be tolerated and perhaps abused.

President Ramaphosa himself has, on previous occasions, condemned xenophobia and warned against taking immigration enforcement into the streets. That is very important. The contradiction, therefore, is not necessarily one of presidential rhetoric, but of a wider distance that can arise between a state's powerful international language of universal human rights and the lived experience of vulnerable foreigners within its jurisdiction, and this matters alot.

A state cannot reasonably demand or expect that the world judge violations elsewhere by the highest standards of humanity while treating violations within its own reach as a secondary inconvenience. The credibility of universalism depends upon its formal global outlook, uniformity and consistency.

ity and consistency.

This is not an argument that South Africa's domestic difficulties somehow extinguish the Palestinian cause or invalidate its proceedings before the International Court of Justice because they do not. The Court has already recognised the legal standing of a State Party to the Genocide Convention to invoke the responsibility of another State Party in circumstances contemplated by that Convention.

But it must be rightly understood that legal standing and moral authority are not on a single conceptual plane. Jurisdiction is a question of law; credibility is a question of normative consistency. A state may possess the legal right to invoke an international obligation while simultaneously inviting legitimate scrutiny of whether the values it invokes are reflected in its own internal conduct.

Here, the old equitable maxim that he who comes to equity must come with clean hands acquires renewed significance. Its application in international adjudication is neither mechanical nor a simple jurisdictional bar. But its deeper moral intuition remains powerful that one who invokes justice cannot demand that the juridical principles of balance, fairness and objectivity operate only outwardly and applicable to others and not him.

This is especially compelling in the African context where victims of xenophobia in South Africa are not some distant and unfamiliar population, but Africans. The continent that poured huge resources into the South African struggle against apartheid and whose political liberation South Africa helped to inspire is now watching one of its leading states grapple with hostility towards fellow Africans seeking refuge, opportunity, residence or livelihood within its borders.

The profound lesson of apartheid ought to have been that no human being should be reduced to an identity that makes his or her dignity conditional. It should have produced an uncompromising ethic of human equality, not a morality whose intensity changes according to the nationality of the victim.

And that is why Ramaphosa's words at BRICS deserve to be turned back, respectfully but firmly, upon South Africa itself.

If according to the South African president in-

ternational law cannot be applied selectively, then human dignity cannot be selective either as that definitely poses some dimensions of hypocrisy.

If South Africa demands that the international community judge Israel by universal standards, those same universal standards must remain available to judge South Africa. If Palestinian civilians deserve protection because they are human beings, African migrants deserve the same protection for precisely the same reason even on higher pedestals of kinship and reciprocity.

The issue, therefore, is larger than South Africa. It touches a troubling weakness in the contemporary human-rights project of the proclivity of states, institutions and political movements to discover universal principles most passionately when those principles serve a cause they favour. We have seen from global experience that universalism becomes fragile when it is reduced to political convenience or rhetoric vocabulary.

The real test of a state's commitment to human rights is not merely how passionately it condemns violations committed elsewhere but how faithfully it protects the dignity of the vulnerable within its own reach. We have also seen that while historical experience or suffering does not confer permanent moral exemption of this moral requirement, political virtue in one arena also does not cancel responsibility in another.

The Palestinian and the African migrant do not need ambivalent or competing moralities. If human rights are universal, the humanity we prepared to defend should not be subject to differentiations on undefined scales beyond the dictates or essential attributes of humanity?

That is the question South Africa must answer not only before the international community, but before the moral history from which it draws so much of its season and authority. This is so because human dignity does not change at the border.

Once that principle is abandoned, universal human rights cease to be universal. They become, (as Ramaphosa rightly puts it), instruments of selective conscience.

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Is PR losing to influencers or its own outdated strategies?

By Adebayo Adebola

Between 2021 and 2025, Nigerian brands spent N161b buying influence. But in the same period, I have not seen a published report on how much was spent buying trust. That's a huge gap.

LAST year, Ijeoma Okereke-Adagba weighed in on the debate about influencers and journalists: how social media influencers seemed to have usurped the journalist's role in society in terms of agenda setting, advocacy, and policy influence. She cited a prominent example involving social critic VeryDarkMan and well-known investigative journalist Fisayo Soyombo to buttress her argument.

Soyombo went undercover in a police cell and as an inmate in prison to expose the rot in the country's correctional and law enforcement systems. The investigative story received a negligible reaction from the authorities. Years later, VDM published a scoop on the shenanigans in our prisons—he wasn't personally involved like Soyombo and the authorities were beside themselves trying to clean up the mess: law enforcement personnel deemed culpable got suspended, and the National Assembly initiated a probe.

Influencers versus traditional PR

The VDM-Soyombo episode goes beyond journalism and raises a larger question about influence itself: who now has the power to make people pay attention, change their minds, and, ultimately, act? Brand managers have asked similar questions, and they see that influencers wield such power; hence the willingness to trust them with a substantial share of the communications budget. Traditional PR, meanwhile, struggles to justify its billings (see my 2021 article on brands' reliance on influencer marketing: <https://bizwatchnigeria.ng/influencer-marketing-may-be-nearing-its-sell-by-date/>).

DottsMediaHouse's recent Influencer Marketing Report estimated that brands spent over N161 billion between 2021 and 2025 to buy influence, with N59 billion spent in 2025. Many brand campaigns are now significantly influencer-led. Darling Nigeria's 2019 relaunch, Indomie's "Show Some Love to Mum," CeraVe Nigeria's "CerAwards 2026 – The Ceramove Edition," and Malta Guinness' "Real in Every Way" are a few examples of influencer-led brand campaigns. It would appear that brands are becoming increasingly comfortable putting substantial sums behind influencer

campaigns, even when they cannot clearly explain what those investments delivered beyond engagement, clicks, reach, likes, or impressions.

The real battle PR practitioners miss

Traditional PR is clearly facing significant challenges. But the real threat to PR is that agencies are increasingly being asked to build campaigns around influence rather than reputation.

To be sure, influencers are not taking PR's briefs because they are inherently better communicators. They are winning because they have packaged attention, audience access, relationships, and measurable activity into something that is easy for brands to understand and budget for. PR has historically struggled to package its value in similarly commercial terms.

Thus, the battle isn't influencers versus PR as much as PR undercutting itself with outdated strategies. While it is easy to see influencers as the enemy, the important question is: what exactly has PR failed to demonstrate or deliver?

The changing faces of influence

PR still holds the aces in the communications industry. It just needs to reimagine its playbook template. Digitisation has changed the scale, speed, and urgency of the perception landscape, and brands now seem to have a different definition of influence. Influence is now seen as access to a community. In the old communications playbook, influence is earned over time, and that equals authority. Now, influence is distribution or access. An Aproko Doctor or VDM, for instance, with millions of followers, has more influence and is considered more useful by brands than *The Guardian* or *The Punch*, which has built trust and credibility over decades.

Unfortunately, the PR industry has not evolved quickly enough to embrace the new thinking. Many practitioners still sell media placements, press conferences, and press releases as key solutions to brands that want speed to market, reach, measurable engagement, and perceived authenticity.

PR's poor value communication

PR has also historically struggled, especially in Nigeria, to explain what it purchases with the budget brands give to it. For a long time, Advertising Value Equivalency was used as a measure of campaign success—many PR agencies still use AVE today. Unfortunately, AVE measures outputs: share of media voice, number of stories, quality of media mention, and reach. The International Association for Measurement and Evaluation of Communication's

(AMEC's) Barcelona Principles 3.0 in 2020, to which the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations is a signatory, sought to push PR measurement beyond output to include impact and outcomes, with metrics such as RepTrak, sales correlation, lead quality, share of search, and earned social amplification more conspicuously adopted.

Influencer marketing hasn't solved the measurement problem. Like PR, it has generally measured outputs—how a brand performed in the cyberworld—like clicks, shares, likes, comments, etc. The key difference is that creators are better at explaining to the business managers what the money buys for the brand. They have mastered the art of easy reporting.

Really, Nigerian brands aren't necessarily abandoning PR for influencers. They are increasingly reallocating attention and budgets towards channels that offer visibility, immediacy, and easily packaged results for business managers. PR must quickly evolve a reporting template that can show what changed as a result of the communication efforts and not what happened in the media.

The uncomfortable truth

The influencer economy has also exposed something uncomfortable about PR itself: many PR professionals are exceptionally good at building platforms as intermediaries for others while remaining invisible themselves. Creators have done the opposite. They have turned their personalities, opinions, communities, and relationships into media assets.

PR practitioners must know that marketing/communications managers are rewarded quarterly, so they choose speed, high visibility, followers, and engagement to justify their marketing communications budgets and earn their rewards. This is why a brand that asks for audited circulation for a N2m newspaper advert in *Thisday* will readily approve N30m for two TikTok creators on a WhatsApp voice note.

The influencer boom isn't primarily a threat to PR. The industry should see it as a warning that PR has failed to make its own influence visible and commercially relevant. For an industry in the business of building trust, failing to earn confidence in its own value is a painful irony. Influencers have become very good at monetising attention. PR needs to become much better at monetising—and demonstrating—the value of credibility.

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CRUDE OIL PRICE UPDATE

Brent crude: \$106.8 | WTI crude: \$93.82

FOREX MARKET UPDATE

I&E window: N1,381.87

World Bank, IMF seek efficient AI adoption as Nigeria pitches to investors

From Geoff Iyatse, Bangkok

THE global community, especially developing countries, risks undermining inclusive economic growth and job creation with the aggressive adoption of artificial intelligence (AI), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank warned.

The institutions, which were joined by Singaporean President Tharman Shanmugaratnam at the opening of the ongoing IMF/World Bank yearly meetings in Bangkok, Thailand yesterday, said developing countries could be under pressure to translate technological advances into productive employment.

. Oyedele, others pitch Nigeria's investment opportunities at yearly meetings

The meetings offer the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Taiwo Oyedele, who leads the Nigerian delegation, including the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) team, the opportunity to pitch investment opportunities presented by the country's reforms to the global community.

Fiscal and foreign exchange market reforms, as well as their gains, are talking points in Nigeria's engagement with international investors.

With projections that AI would take a chunk of entry-level jobs, there have been fears that AI adoption could

increase returns on capital but widen income inequality.

Both the IMF and World Bank said countries would need to factor job protection and economic resilience into AI adoption and deployment.

The President of the World Bank Group, Ajay Banga, called for practical applications of AI to raise productivity and expand employment opportunities in developing economies.

Banga said agriculture, primary healthcare, tourism, infrastructure and manufacturing should be priority sectors where smaller, targeted AI solutions could improve pro-

ductivity, support businesses and create jobs.

He urged governments to strengthen infrastructure, improve governance and reduce investment risks to attract private capital needed to generate employment at scale.

He said job creation had become central to the World Bank's development agenda following the huge number of young people entering the global labour market yearly.

"In the coming 15 years, 1.2 billion young people are going to become 18 years of age," Banga said, describing the growth as a potential demographic divi-

dend if countries provide adequate healthcare, education and skills.

He said employment should not be defined solely by working for a large or small company, but should include entrepreneurship and other activities that enable people to contribute productively to society and earn a dignified living.

"The bank's entire focus has moved towards that over the last few years. It is not that we do not build a school, or we would not build a highway, or we would not build a skilling centre or a healthcare clinic. We have to do all those, but we have to do them with the perspective of job creation," he said.

Facebook Marketplace marks 10 years in Nigeria, records over 835,000 listings monthly

By Adeyemi Adepetun

FACEBOOK Marketplace is celebrating its 10th anniversary, marking a decade of helping Nigerians discover products, sell items, and connect with buyers and sellers in their communities. Since its launch, Marketplace has grown into a trusted platform where everyday commerce thrives, from electronics and fashion to furniture and home improvement essentials.

Every month, Nigerians post more than 835,000 listings on Marketplace, reflecting the platform's role as a hub for diverse products and services. Electronics lead the way with over 180,000 monthly listings, while home items and fashion each record more than 110,000 listings. Home improvement contributes more than 40,000 listings monthly. These figures underscore the breadth of opportunities available to buyers and sellers alike, making

Marketplace a vital part of Nigeria's digital economy.

Marketplace was created to give buying and selling a dedicated home on Facebook, simplifying the process of discovering products and connecting with potential buyers and sellers. Ten years later, that mission remains central to the experience.

Head of Communications, Sub-Saharan Africa at Meta, Oluwasola Obagbemi, said:

"People come to Facebook to connect over the things that matter to them, and buying and selling is part of that everyday activity. We built Marketplace because people were already trading in Facebook Groups, and we wanted to give that a dedicated home where it's simpler to discover products and connect with buyers and sellers. As we celebrate 10 years, we're recognising the communities who make Marketplace useful every day."



Deputy Managing Director, eTransact International Plc, Hakeem Adeniji-Adele (left); Founder and Editor-In-Chief, Techeconomy/GrowthX, Peter Oluka; Founder and CEO, Bridge57 Solutions Limited, Roseline Ilori and Chief Technology Officer, First City Monument Bank, Blessing Ehize at the GrowthX by Techeconomy conference recently held in Lagos.

Cut petrol prices by 20% in six months, LCCI charges FG

By Tobin Awodipe

THE Director-General of Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), Dr Chinyere Almona, has urged the Federal Government to implement a six-month petrol price reduction programme aimed at lowering pump prices by at least 20 per cent, warning that stabilising prices at elevated levels cannot provide sufficient relief for businesses and households.

Adding that the present intervention, which is yet to be felt as many petrol stations

.Decries rising costs on businesses, declining purchasing power

are still selling well above the recommended benchmark, she said it should be complemented by a clear, measurable and sustainable plan to reduce domestic petrol prices and ease operating costs across the economy.

She noted that the proposed mechanism is economically justified, particularly as rising energy and transportation costs continue to put serious pressure on businesses, weaken household purchasing power and undermine the competitiveness of Nigerian

enterprises.

She added that the government's proposal acknowledges the significant consequences of excessive energy price volatility for the wider economy and offers a means to introduce greater predictability into petrol pricing without necessarily returning to the former fuel subsidy regime.

However, she stressed that price stability alone cannot restore business competitiveness if petrol remains unaffordable.

"While price stability is desirable, stability at an excessively high price is not sufficient to restore business competitiveness," she said, adding that Nigeria needs a mechanism that delivers both price stability and progressive reductions in petrol prices within a defined period.

She expressed concern that the proposed arrangement, in its present form, might protect businesses against sudden price increases without reducing the staggering cost of energy.

UNDP charges Nigeria, others on poverty reduction as 1.2b people struggle

By Abigail Ikhanghu

NIGERIA has suffered a reversal in efforts to reduce multidimensional poverty, with both the proportion of people affected and their total number rising in the 2020s, as global poverty climbed by 51.5 million to 1.2 billion people.

The latest global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), released yesterday by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), marked the first increase in the number of people living in multidimensional poverty since the index was introduced in 2010.

The report showed that children accounted for 617 million of the 1.2 billion people affected, while 83 per cent of those living in multidimensional poverty were in rural areas.

Nigeria, which recorded substantial improvements during the previous decade, was among the countries that lost ground in the 2020s, highlighting the difficulty of sustaining poverty reduction over time.

UNDP Administrator, Alexander De Croo, said the increase should prompt renewed international efforts to address the overlapping hardships faced by vulnerable populations.

"The rise in poverty should be

a wake-up call for the world. Behind these figures are 1.2 billion people facing hardships that reinforce one another: hunger, missed schooling and a lack of clean water or electricity," he said.

De Croo noted that countries had shown that poverty could be reduced when governments addressed its different dimensions together rather than treating each problem separately.

The index assesses deprivation beyond income, using 10 weighted indicators covering health, education and living standards. People are classified as multidimensionally poor when they are deprived in at least one-third of the indicators.

Its 2026 edition covers 108 countries in developing regions, representing 78 per cent of the global population.

The report attributed part of the increase in the global poverty figure to population growth. In 95 countries without new survey data for the latest assessment, revised population estimates added 15.8 million people to the number counted as multidimensionally poor.

Other changes reflected a combination of shifts in poverty levels, demographic changes and differences in the indicators covered by surveys conducted at different times.

Nigeria, Germany eye investment opportunities under expanded ties

From Joseph Chibueze, Abuja

NIGERIA and Germany are seeking to deepen economic cooperation and expand investment opportunities, with the Federal Government pledging to translate existing bilateral agreements into tangible economic gains.

The Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, Senator Abubakar Atiku Bagudu, gave the assurance yesterday in Abuja when the German Ambassador to Nigeria, Stefan Rössel, paid him a courtesy visit.

Bagudu said Nigeria was committed to strengthening its longstanding relationship with Germany, particularly in investment promotion, energy cooperation and the implementation of existing agreements.

He acknowledged Germany's support for Nigeria's economic reform programme, particularly during its early stages, when the Federal Government sought international backing for major policy changes.

The minister recalled that Germany's engagement intensified around the visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to Nigeria, when the country was implementing significant economic reforms

requiring the support of international partners, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the European Union.

He expressed appreciation for Germany's contribution to Nigeria's reform efforts, as well as its role in facilitating high-level engagements on trade, investment and energy cooperation.

Bagudu also recalled that discussions during the Nigerian President's visit to Germany had advanced engagements on key energy agreements, underscoring the potential for expanded economic collaboration between both countries.

He disclosed that cooperation involving €25 million and €300 million in export credit guarantees had featured in discussions, identifying the arrangements as important areas for continued engagement as Nigeria seeks to attract investment and strengthen productive capacity.

The minister said ongoing economic reforms offered an opportunity to shift greater attention towards investment mobilisation, economic expansion and the effective utilisation of resources available through international partnerships.



REGENCY ALLIANCE
INSURANCE PLC RC 223946

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 32nd Annual General Meeting of Regency Alliance Insurance Plc. will be held at the Rubby Hall, the Zone Business Hub, Plot 9 Gbagada Expressway, Gbagada, Lagos, Lagos State, on Friday the 6th Day of November, 2026 at 11am. to transact the following business:

1. To receive the report of the Directors, the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2025 together with the reports of the Auditors and the Audit Committee thereon.
2. To re-elect Directors retiring by Rotation.
3. To Disclose the remuneration of Managers of the Company.
4. To elect members of the Audit Committee.
5. To appoint Messers Adegoke Adewole as the Company's Auditors.
6. To authorise the Board to fix the remuneration of the Auditors

Special Business:

To consider and if thought fit to pass the following as an ordinary resolution:

7. To approve the remuneration of Non-Executive Directors.
To consider and if thought fit pass the following as special resolutions;
8. That the Articles of Association of the Company be amended by the insertion of the clause below as clause 44 and renumbering all subsequent clauses thereafter accordingly.

'44(i) The Company may hold its general meeting, including an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting, wholly or partly virtually by electronic means or through an electronic platform, in accordance with the applicable Extant Laws, Rules and Regulations and provisions of the Company's Articles.

44(ii).A member participating in any such general meeting by electronic means shall be deemed to be present at the meeting and shall be entitled to exercise all rights available to a member attending the meeting in person, including the right to speak, vote, ask questions and participate in the proceedings.

44(iii) The Board of Directors shall determine the electronic platform or other means through which a Virtual/ electronic general meeting shall be conducted and may establish procedures reasonably necessary for the proper conduct of such meeting.

44(iv) The Company may establish procedures for the identification and verification of members and proxies participating electronically and may require such information or authentication as is reasonably necessary to ensure the integrity and security of the meeting.

44(v) Members participating in a virtual general meeting through electronic means shall be counted for the purpose of determining whether a quorum is present, provided that they are able to participate effectively in the meeting.

44(vi) The Board may make such rules and procedures as it considers appropriate for the effective, orderly and secure conduct of a virtual general meeting through electronic means, provided that such rules and procedures are consistent with the provisions of the relevant laws for the time being in force and other applicable regulatory requirements and these Articles.'

For the Proxy Form to be valid for the purpose of the meeting, it must be completed and deposited at the office of the Registrars; Meristem Registrars and Probate Services Limited, 213, Herbert Macaulay Way, Yaba, Lagos not less than forty-Eight (48) hours prior to the time of the meeting.

CLOSURE OF REGISTER

The Register of Members and Transfer Books of the Company will be closed on Thursday 15th Day of October, 2026 for the purpose of reviewing and updating the register of members.

RE - ELECTION OF DIRECTOR

In line with the provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020, HRM Oba Dr. Francis Olushola Alao and Dr. Sammy Olaniyi will retire by rotation and being eligible offer themselves for re - election at the Annual General Meeting. their profiles are on pages 14 and 15 of the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2025.

AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In accordance with Section 359(5) of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020, any Shareholder may nominate another Shareholder as a member of the Audit Committee by giving notice in writing of such nomination to the Company Secretary at least twenty-one (21) days before the Annual General Meeting.

Please note the provisions of the Code of Corporate Governance that members of the Audit Committee are expected to have basic financial literacy to be able to read Financial Statements.

RIGHT OF SHAREHOLDERS TO ASK QUESTIONS

Shareholders have a right to ask questions not only at the Meeting, but also in writing prior to the Meeting. Such questions must be submitted to the Company Secretary or sent to info@regencyalliance.com before close of work on or before Friday the 23rd day of October 2026.

E - ANNUAL REPORT

In addition to the posted Annual Report CDs, soft copy of the Annual Report will be mailed to all Shareholders who have provided their Email addresses. The soft copy can also be downloaded from the Company's website www.regencyalliance.com or from the website of the Registrars, Meristem Registrars and Probate services <http://www.meristemregistrars.com>

LIVE STREAMING OF THE AGM

To ensure Shareholders, clients and other stakeholders who will not be attending the Company's 32nd Annual General Meeting physically watch the proceedings, the Annual General Meeting will be streamed live. Shareholders, clients and other stakeholders can log on to www.regencyalliance.com to watch the live streaming.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

Anu Shobo
COMPANY SECRETARY
FRC/2013/NBA/00000003654
DATED THIS 24th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2026



NOTES:

PROXIES

A member of the Company entitled to attend, and vote is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of him. A proxy needs not be a member. A Proxy Form is attached to the Annual Report and Accounts. The proxy form can also be downloaded from the Company's website www.regencyalliance.com



REGENCY ALLIANCE INSURANCE PLC

RC 223946

STATEMENT TO THE NIGERIAN EXCHANGE LIMITED ON THE EXTRACT AUDITED RESULT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025. The Board of Directors of Regency Alliance Insurance Plc is pleased to announce the company's audited results for the year ended 31 December, 2025.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	GROUP 2025 =N='000	2024 =N='000	COMPANY 2025 =N='000	2024 =N='000
ASSETS				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,843,249	2,315,714	1,712,148	2,177,990
Financial Assets	9,786,048	9,365,740	9,288,799	8,884,557
Insurance Receivables	39,927	49,354	39,927	49,354
Reinsurance Contract Assets	1,601,896	2,450,746	1,601,896	2,450,746
Other Receivables and Prepayments	298,126	298,181	36,741	57,051
Investment in Subsidiaries	-	-	694,616	694,616
Intangible Assets	76,688	87,540	68,127	76,839
Investment Properties	1,345,547	1,295,547	1,220,000	1,170,000
Property, Plant and Equipment	5,546,730	5,688,343	5,532,881	5,672,558
Statutory Deposits	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Total Assets	20,848,060	21,857,189	20,495,135	21,533,712
LIABILITIES				
Insurance Contract Liabilities	3,656,964	5,027,510	3,656,964	5,027,510
Provision and Other Payables	538,487	697,721	331,590	485,052
Retirement Benefit Obligation	-	4,795	-	4,795
Provision for Current Income Tax Liabilities	110,903	309,499	94,250	293,638
Deferred Income Tax Liabilities	1,592,418	1,505,478	1,592,418	1,505,478
Deposit for shares	245,000	245,000	245,000	245,000
Total Liabilities	6,143,771	7,790,003	5,920,221	7,561,474
EQUITY				
Total equity attributable to owners of the parent:				
Issued and Paid up Share Capital	6,001,875	3,334,375	6,001,875	3,334,375
Contingency Reserve	2,933,955	2,624,625	2,933,955	2,624,625
Retained Earnings	2,891,961	5,239,320	2,804,188	5,178,341
Asset Revaluation Reserve	2,834,896	2,834,896	2,834,896	2,834,896
Other Reserves	17,429	11,122	-	-
Total	14,680,115	14,044,338	14,574,914	13,972,237
Non-controlling Interest in Equity:				
Non-controlling Interest in Equity	24,173	22,846	-	-
Equity and Liabilities	20,848,060	21,857,189	20,495,135	21,533,712

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors on July 13, 2026 and signed on behalf of the board of directors by the directors listed below:

CHIEF WALE TAIWO
FRC/2014/NBA/00000008128
(Acting Chairman)

MR. KEHINDE OYADIRAN
FRC/2013/ICAN/00000003559
Director

MR. TUNDE ALAO
FRC/2013/ICAN/00000003592
(Chief Finance Officer)

UN-AUDITED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	GROUP 2025 =N='000	2024 =N='000	COMPANY 2025 =N='000	2024 =N='000
Insurance Revenue	9,642,997	7,301,956	9,642,997	7,301,956
Insurance Service Expenses	(6,881,446)	(4,117,082)	(6,881,446)	(4,117,082)
Net Expenses from Reinsurance Contracts Held	(2,606,443)	(1,385,054)	(2,606,443)	(1,385,054)
Insurance Service Result	155,108	1,799,819	155,108	1,799,819
Interest on Revenue Calculated Using the Effective Interest Method	1,320,432	1,189,053	1,294,193	1,165,039
Fair value Gain on Investment Properties	50,000	170,000	50,000	170,000
Net Gain/(loss) on Financial Assets	1,241,335	414,000	1,238,381	412,103
(Impairment)/Writeback on Financial Assets	(12,415)	(16,521)	(6,792)	(9,088)
Net Investment Income	2,599,351	1,756,533	2,575,783	1,738,053
Finance Expenses from Insurance Contract Issued	(1,002,668)	92,096	(1,002,668)	92,096
Reinsurance Finance Income from Reinsurance Contract held	464,429	(75,865)	464,429	(75,865)
Net Insurance Finance Income/(Expenses)	(538,240)	16,231	(538,240)	16,231
Net Insurance and Financial Result	2,216,219	3,572,583	2,192,651	3,554,104
Other Operating Income	19,924	32,222	14,233	26,101
Employee benefit expense	(380,618)	(369,855)	(348,681)	(337,732)
Other Operating Expenses	(1,148,515)	(778,535)	(1,109,166)	(739,073)
Profit Before Tax	784,257	2,516,052	749,037	2,503,400
Income Tax Expense	(147,152)	(249,475)	(146,360)	(248,971)
Profit For the year	637,105	2,266,578	602,677	2,254,429
Items that may be subsequently reclassified to the profit or loss account:	-	-	-	-
Total other comprehensive income net of tax	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the Year	637,105	2,266,578	602,677	2,254,429
Profit After Taxation				
Attributable:				
to Owner's of parent	635,778	2,265,976	602,677	2,254,429
to Non Controlling Interest	1,327	602	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the Year	637,105	2,266,578	602,677	2,254,429
Attributable:				
to Owner's of parent	635,778	2,265,976	602,677	2,254,429
to Non Controlling Interest	1,327	602	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the Year	637,105	2,266,578	602,677	2,254,429
Earnings per share				
Basic and diluted earnings per shares (in kobo)	5.31	33.99	5.02	33.81

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

	THE GROUP 2025 =N='000	2024 =N='000	THE COMPANY 2025 =N='000	2024 =N='000
Cash Flow From Operating Activities				
Premium Received	10,320,453	7,261,789	10,320,453	7,261,789
Paid Claim	(7,480,244)	(1,970,144)	(7,480,244)	(1,970,144)
Other Direct Attributable Expenses	(842,008)	(564,933)	(842,008)	(564,933)
Insurance acquisition expenses paid	(1,609,864)	(990,551)	(1,609,864)	(990,551)
Cash Paid to Suppliers/Creditors	(31,347)	(51,347)	-	-
Cash Paid to and On behalf of Employees	(841,339)	(705,428)	(837,492)	(673,304)
Cash Payments for Other Operating Expenses	(1,777,419)	(1,466,535)	(1,698,437)	(1,310,547)
Tax Paid	(258,809)	(41,859)	(258,809)	(41,859)
Net Cash Generated From Operating Activities	(3,722,123)	(1,296,639)	(3,699,567)	(1,128,820)
Cash Flow From Investing Activities				
Purchase of Financial Asset at Amortised Cost	-	(2,235,597)	-	(2,225,097)
Proceeds from Disposal of Financial Assets at Amortised Cost	1,487,032	3,739,836	1,487,032	3,739,836
Purchase of Financial Asset-FVTPL	-	(2,910)	-	(2,910)
Receipt From Repayment Of Loan & Advances	11,297	3,047	11,297	3,047
Receipt From Repayment of Bank Loan & Advances	136,635	62,741	-	-
Addition to Bank Loan & Advances	(149,491)	(91,491)	-	-
Investment Income Received	1,320,432	1,189,053	1,294,193	1,165,039
Other Operating Income Received	6,259	6,032	1,237	406
Rental Income Received	10,253	7,611	9,583	7,117
Acquisition of Intangible Asset	(3,798)	(34,189)	(3,798)	(23,489)
Share Issue/Deposit for Shares in Subsidiaries	-	-	-	(141,500)
Net Cash Generated From Investing Activities	2,775,321	1,954,802	2,757,447	1,839,756
Net Cash Generated From Financing Activities	-	-	-	-
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	(946,802)	658,163	(942,120)	710,936
Effect of Derecognition of Ghana Subsidiary on Cash and Cash Equivalents	-	-	-	-
Effect of Movement in Exchange Rate on Cash and Cash Equivalents	484,706	339,227	484,706	339,227
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash & Cash Equivalents during the year	(462,096)	997,390	(457,414)	1,050,162
Cash and Cash Equivalents as at 1 January	2,315,714	1,328,316	2,177,990	1,136,517
Expected Credit loss provision	(10,369)	(9,992)	(8,430)	(8,691)
Cash and Cash Equivalent as at the end of the Year	1,843,249	2,315,714	1,712,148	2,177,990



for every child

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UNICEF Nigeria is looking for dynamic, qualified vendors ready to grow, compete and create impact.

Join our upcoming Supplier Summits and connect directly with our procurement team. Discover upcoming tender opportunities, understand UNICEF's procurement standards, and learn how to register as a potential supplier.

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SUMMIT LOCATIONS & DATES

• ABUJA

Date: Monday, 26th October 2026 (morning session: 8am-12noon and afternoon session: 1pm - 4pm)

Venue: Abuja Continental Hotel, 1 Ladi Kwali Street, Wuse Zone 4, Abuja.

• LAGOS

Date: Wednesday, 11th November 2026 (morning session: 8am-12noon and afternoon session: 1pm - 4pm)

Venue: Dover Hotel, 14 Aromire Street, off Adeniyi Jones by Allen Avenue, Ikeja, Lagos.

WHO CAN ATTEND?

This summit is **exclusively open to new vendors**, with an active CAC and verifiable online presence, who are not currently registered in the UNICEF supplier database across all sectors (Logistics, information technology, construction, health and shelter supplies, education, WASH, professional services, and other relevant sectors).

ATTENDANCE IS FREE — REGISTRATION IS COMPULSORY

Due to venue capacity, entry is strictly restricted to pre-registered participants, one per prospective vendor. Registration closes by 10am, 23rd October 2026

Scan to Register:



Or register online: tinyurl.com/UNICEF-Summit

UNICEF strongly encourages women-owned businesses and disability-inclusive enterprises to apply.

For further questions and enquiries, send an email to ngrsupply@unicef.org

Participation in the Supplier Summit and completion of the registration process do not constitute prequalification, supplier approval, or a guarantee of a contract award. All procurement opportunities will remain subject to UNICEF's applicable procurement policies and procedures.



UNFPA VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the leading United Nations Reproductive Health and Rights Agency, is recruiting personnel for the following fixed term position:

Title of Position:	National Post: Population and Data Specialist
Job Requisition Number:	37335
Grade Level of Position:	NOD
Position Number:	00056355
Type of Contract:	Fixed Term Appointment
Duty Station:	Abuja, Nigeria
Duration of Assignment:	One Year (Renewable based on availability of funds and satisfactory performance)

CLOSING DATE - SATURDAY, 24 OCTOBER, 2026

HOW TO APPLY

Please click on the link below or copy the link to your browser to access the application site:

https://estm.fa.em2.oraclecloud.com/hcmUI/CandidateExperience/en/sites/CX_2003/job/37335

CLOSING DATE - SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER, 2026

UNFPA has established an electronic application management system. This allow applicants to create a candidate profile, which can be updated regularly and submitted for more than one vacancy. For ease of access to the UNFPA application site, please use - *either Google Chrome browser or Firefox browser.*

UNFPA provides a work environment that reflects the values of gender quality, teamwork, respect for diversity, integrity and a healthy balance of work and life. We are committed to maintaining our balanced gender distribution and therefore encourage qualified women to apply. Please note that UNFPA will respond only to those applicants in whom it has a further interest.

DISCLAIMER

UNFPA does not charge any application, processing, training, interviewing, testing or other fee in connection with the application or recruitment process. UNFPA does not solicit or screen for information in respect of HIV or AIDS and does not discriminate on the basis of HIV/AIDS status.

Six NGX stocks gain 427% YTD as market value hits N185.9b

By Helen Oji

SIX stocks on the Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX) have recorded an average year-to-date (YTD) share price gain of 427 per cent, with their combined market capitalisation reaching N185.89 billion, reflecting strong

price appreciation across the selected equities.

The stocks, Zichis Agro Allied Industries, Fortis Global Insurance, SCOA Nigeria, UPDC Real Estate Investment Trust, Union Dicon Salt and Berger Paints have emerged as the best performers as of October 9,

2026, recording gains ranging from 208 per cent to 757 per cent.

NGX data showed that Zichis Agro Allied Industries led the group with a 757 per cent gain, followed by Fortis Global Insurance with 740 per cent. SCOA Nigeria recorded a 365 per cent increase, while UPDC Real

Estate Investment Trust gained 248 per cent.

Union Dicon Salt advanced by 244 per cent, while Berger Paints recorded a 208 per cent gain.

Together, the six stocks achieved a market capitalisation of N185.89 billion. UPDC Real Estate Investment Trust

accounts for the largest share in market capitalisation, at N64 billion, followed by Berger Paints with N42.8 billion and Fortis Global Insurance with N30.6 billion.

SCOA Nigeria has a market capitalisation of N21.5 billion, while Zichis Agro Allied Industries stands at N20.5 billion. Union Dicon Salt has the smallest market capitalisation among the six, at N6.49 billion.

Operators said the strong performance of the six stocks comes amid a broad rally in the Nigerian equities market this year, with the NGX All-Share Index extending its gains as investors continue to seek opportunities across listed companies.

As of September 30, 2026, the index stood at 251,211.67 points, representing a year-to-date gain of 61.43 per cent, while total market capitalisation reached N163.10 trillion. The market's

performance reflects sustained buying interest in equities, although returns have varied considerably across individual stocks.

In addition, the rally is also an indication of growing investor attention to small- and medium-capitalisation stocks, some of which have delivered returns well above the broader market.

The strong price appreciation recorded by the six stocks suggests that investor interest is extending beyond the market's heavyweight companies to smaller counters offering opportunities for significant price movements.

Reacting to the development, the President of NewDimension Shareholders Association of Nigeria, Patrick Ajudua, described the average 427 per cent share price gain recorded by the six stocks as a welcome development.

WoPU urges transporters to cut fares as FG intervenes in petrol costs

By Gloria Nwafor

WORKING People United (WoPU) has urged transport operators, haulage companies and food distributors to reduce their charges in response to the Federal Government's 30-day petrol intervention, warning that workers may not benefit from lower fuel costs if transportation fares and food prices remain high.

The movement said the success of the intervention should be measured by its impact on the cost of commuting, food and other essential goods,

rather than changes in petrol prices alone.

In a statement, the National Coordinator-General of WoPU, Williams Akporeha, commended President Bola Tinubu for the intervention but called on transporters to pass on any genuine savings in operating expenses to passengers and consumers.

He said transportation costs played a significant role in determining food prices, adding that lower haulage charges could ease pressure on household budgets if the savings were reflected across the distribution chain.

The movement urged commercial drivers, logistics companies and food distributors to review their charges, particularly the cost of moving agricultural produce and other essential commodities across the country.

It said the intervention would offer limited relief to workers if petrol costs declined without corresponding reductions in the cost of transportation and distribution.

"The benefits of this intervention should not end at the fill-

ing stations; they should extend to our markets, homes and workplaces," it said.

The call comes amid persistent pressure on workers' incomes from the cost of transportation and essential commodities, which consume a significant share of household earnings.

WoPU said workers, traders and small business owners could benefit from the intervention if lower petrol costs translated into cheaper commuting and more affordable food.

AGRA, SMEDAN open youth applications for agribusiness contest

By Isaac Chibuike

THE Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) and Jesnoch International Limited have opened applications for the Annual Youth in Agribusiness Innovation Contest, a national competition to train and finance young Nigerians running agribusinesses.

The programme is being delivered by Plus Incubation Hub Nigeria Limited under an AGRA-funded project, "Systems Strengthening for BDS Provision and Access to Finance for Ag-SMEs."

Applications opened on October 8 and close on October 16, through www.youthagriinnovate.ng. The competition is open to Nigerians aged 18 to 35, from the idea stage to established and growing enterprises.

Ten winners will receive seed funding and mentorship, as well as introductions to financiers and off-takers. Thirty finalists

will pitch their businesses in Lagos on October 29, while prizes will be presented at the National MSME Conference scheduled for November 8 to 10 in Lagos.

Applicants who pass the eligibility check will be invited to a free virtual training on Saturday, October 17, covering agribusiness fundamentals, financial literacy, access to finance and investment readiness. Sessions will be recorded for those who cannot attend live.

A further 120 young people, 40 each in Niger, Nasarawa and Kaduna states, will get two days of in-person training on October 21 and 22. Places will be allocated to eligible applicants residing in the states based on the order of verified, complete submissions. Each state will reserve at least 12 places for women and eight for rural participants. The organisers said selection for the training would be separate from the contest's judging process and would not give participants a competitive advantage.

Underwriters bank on agency power to drive Life Insurance growth

By Bankole Orimisan

AS insurers aim to expand access to life protection and savings products for more Nigerians, agency networks are becoming a key growth channel.

The recent MDRT ranking underscores the important role advisers play in broadening insurance coverage.

Amid this, Prudential Zenith Life Insurance Limited emerged as Nigeria's leading MDRT business in the 2026 ranking, placing first in the country and among the global top 100 companies recognised by the International Association of Financial Services Professionals.

The development highlighted the growing role of agency productivity and professional advice in an industry still struggling to extend life insurance beyond a relatively narrow cus-

tomers base, despite the need for households and businesses to protect themselves against financial shocks.

The challenge is significant. Prudential Africa puts life insurance penetration outside South Africa at 0.31 per cent, with insurance spending averaging about \$5 per person yearly. The figures point to the scale of the protection gap and the opportunity for insurers to expand coverage through better distribution, accessible products and stronger customer relationships.

Prudential Africa Chief Executive Officer, Emmanuel Mokobi Aryee, said more individuals and families across the continent are recognising the importance of planning for their financial futures, creating opportunities for advisers to improve access to financial protection.



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Nigeria has recapitalised its banks. Now comes the more difficult question. What happens to the capital? The Central Bank of Nigeria did not embark on the latest recapitalisation programme simply so Nigerian banks could display larger numbers on their balance sheets. The policy had a broader economic logic. Stronger capital buffers should make banks more resilient, but they should also increase their capacity to perform one of banking's most important economic functions i.e financial intermediation.

Nigerian banks have more capital, will Nigerian businesses get more credit?

IN simple terms, banks help move money from where it is available to where it can be productively deployed. That makes the relationship between bank capital and productive credit one of the most significant performance relationships in the Nigerian economy.

Recapitalisation Must Create Capacity

Under the new requirements, international commercial banks were required to reach minimum paid-up capital of ₦500 billion, national banks ₦200 billion and regional banks ₦50 billion.

The CBN said the programme was intended not only to strengthen resilience but also to better position banks to lend to critical sectors of the economy.

The IMF's 2026 Article IV consultation subsequently described the recapitalisation programme as successfully completed, with most institutions meeting revised requirements.

So a new question naturally follows. If banks now possess greater capital capacity, will Nigeria experience greater credit capacity?

Credit Is Growing. But the Real Question Is Where It Goes.

CBN monetary statistics put credit to the private sector at approximately ₦83.43 trillion in July 2026, compared with about ₦83.26 trillion in June. The scale sounds impressive; but aggregate credit alone does not tell us whether financial intermediation is doing what the economy needs.

We must ask about allocation. What proportion supports productive investment rather than short-term consumption? How

much reaches businesses capable of expanding capacity? How much supports manufacturing, Agriculture and agro-processing, Energy, Logistics, Healthcare, Technology, Exports, Small and medium-sized businesses? And at what cost?

Those questions matter because credit only becomes economically transformative when it enables productive activity that might otherwise not occur.

There Is a Structural Tension

Nigeria's banking system is operating in a difficult environment.

The CBN's September Monetary Policy Committee meeting reset the Monetary Policy Rate to 23 per cent and retained a 45 per cent Cash Reserve Requirement for deposit money banks.

At the same time, the IMF noted that banks' holdings of government securities stood at about 22 per cent of total assets and warned that these holdings, combined with the high CRR and other structural constraints, were crowding out private-sector credit. This creates an important economic tension.

Banks have a responsibility to lend responsibly. But they also have choices about where capital is deployed.

When lending to productive businesses is perceived as difficult, risky and expensive while alternative assets offer attractive risk-adjusted returns, rational institutions respond to those incentives.

That means the credit problem cannot be placed entirely at the feet of banks.

Government borrowing matters. Monetary conditions matter. The quality of businesses

seeking credit matters. Credit information matters. Contract enforcement matters. Infrastructure matters. The predictability of the operating environment matters. The quality of financial statements matters. Risk management matters. This is a system problem. And system problems require system solutions.

More Lending Is Not Enough

There is another danger in the conversation. We should not reduce financial intermediation to simply "banks must lend more".

More bad loans will not build Nigeria. Poor underwriting will not build Nigeria. Politically directed credit will not build Nigeria. Capital destroyed through poorly structured lending does not create development. What Nigeria requires is better intermediation.

Banks that understand productive sectors deeply enough to distinguish risk from opportunity, better data, better credit assessment, more sophisticated value-chain financing, appropriate collateral structures, longer-duration instruments where the economics justify them, stronger partnerships with development-finance institutions, better support for exporter and more innovative financing for businesses that have cash flows but insufficient traditional collateral. That is where recapitalisation should meet innovation.

SMEs Reveal the Performance Gap

Many entrepreneurs do not require charity. They require appropriately structured capital.

A business may have customers, demand and expansion potential but still be unable to finance inventory, machinery, distribution, technology or new locations.

When thousands of viable businesses experience the same constraint, we are no longer discussing individual corporate inconvenience. We are discussing national productive capacity.

A financial system that can efficiently identify, price and finance productive opportunity creates leverage for the entire economy. One naira sitting passively on a balance sheet is capital. One naira deployed intelligently into productive enterprise can become machinery, inventory, salaries, exports, taxes, household income and additional economic activity.

That is the conversion we should care about.

The Performance Leadership Question

This month's Performance Leadership Brief™ asks Nigerian Banks Have Recapitalized. Can the Banks Now Recapitalize Nigeria?

The distinction is deliberate because Bank recapitalisation is an institutional event but Recapitalising Nigeria would be an economic outcome.

Visit www.tppafrica.com for the full article

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

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS TO MUSTAPHA OLAYINKA AJENIFUJA, SAN

On his elevation to the prestigious rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN).

This well-deserved recognition is a reflection of his professional excellence, integrity and contribution to the Nigerian Legal Profession.

Alongside his family, colleagues, and the wider legal community, I wish him even greater success as he continues to contribute to the advancement of the profession and the justice system.

Olasunkanmi Owoyemi



Labour & Appointments

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Technology, casualisation deepen young workers' job fears

Nigerian labour unions have raised the alarm about growing job insecurity among young workers, demanding an end to casualisation, poor wages, and employment practices that deny workers social protection and the right to organise, GLORIA NWAFOR writes.

FOR decades, young people worldwide have agitated, struggled, and mobilised for change. Despite different political, social and economic contexts, many share common concerns: high youth unemployment, low wages, precarious work and a cost-of-living crisis that is making it increasingly difficult to build decent lives.

They are demanding a say in the decisions that shape their lives, with young workers saying clearly that the status quo is not delivering the future they deserve.

They expressed their views during this year's World Day for Decent Work (WDDW) commemoration, held on October 7 with the theme "Young Workers Organising for the Future," where they argued that the rising decent work deficit was leaving young Africans trapped in unstable informal employment.

In Nigeria, where young people seek opportunities across formal employment, informal businesses, and digital services, these issues raise questions about how labour protections can extend to workers whose employment arrangements fall outside conventional employer-employee relationships.

Statistics from the International Labour Organisation's Global Employment Trends for Youth 2026 said nearly nine in 10 young workers in low- and lower-middle-income countries work informally.

The global body said the statistics hide millions of young men and women working under precarious conditions, often without formal contracts, social protection, or effective representation, and warned that this menace translates into a profound decent work deficit.

"Behind these figures are young women and men working without contracts, without social protection, without safe conditions and without a voice," it said.

The General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Luc Triangle, said that insecure jobs, low wages and a rising cost of living cannot become the norm for a new generation of workers.

He emphasised how the confederation is organising and leading change, and also demanded policies that deliver decent jobs, living wages, secure employment and workers' rights.

According to him, trade unions play a vital role in ensuring young people can exercise their rights, organise collectively, and build the power to shape their workplaces, economies, and societies.

"Organising gives young workers the collective power to change those conditions. Trade unions must create the space for young workers to organise, lead and make their voices heard. Their fight for decent work is also a fight for a democratic future."

The UNI Global Union has also warned that young workers face growing job insecurity and inadequate social protection, particularly in digital platform employment, where many people work without formal contracts, accident compensation, or guaranteed protection when technology fails.

The global union said access to employment remained the biggest concern for young people across sectors, despite rapid technological advances and the growing use of artificial intelligence in the workplace.

It warned that without enforceable labour protections, young people engaged in platform work risk being left to bear the costs of workplace accidents, algorithmic failures and unfair earnings arrangements without adequate support.

The UNI Youth Global President, Crisnalda Nhamucale, said decent work must go beyond securing employment to guarantee fair wages, equal treatment, safe working conditions, social dialogue and opportunities for professional development.

She said the challenges facing young workers cut across retail, finance, call centres and digital platforms, with access to jobs remaining their most pressing concern.

On digital platform employment, Nhamucale said the absence of traditional employment contracts exposed young workers to significant risks, leaving them without clear mechanisms for securing compensation or challenging unfair practices.

She called for protections to be introduced when workers



Nhamucale

join digital platforms, including compensation for workplace accidents and remedies for algorithmic failures.

According to her, such safeguards would also create room for negotiations over how workers and platform operators share earnings from completed tasks.

She said young platform workers were often left to fend for themselves because adequate protections and collective bargaining arrangements were lacking.

Nhamucale also urged trade unions to strengthen efforts to organise young workers, arguing that collective representation could help them demand better working conditions, professional training and recognised qualifications.

She said unions needed to engage young people through campaigns and activities that addressed their practical concerns, including employment prospects and the quality of available jobs.

Nhamucale called on governments to treat young people as active contributors to economic development rather than as a problem to be managed or a resource to be considered only in the future.

Similarly, ITUC-Africa also expressed concern about the risks confronting young Africans who migrate in search of better economic opportunities, as well as the growing vulnerability of workers in the platform and gig economy. It revealed how they are pushed into dangerous migration routes in search of dignity, exposed to exploitation in platform and gig work, and too often met with repression when they demand change.

The organisation called on African governments, the African Union, Regional Economic Communities and employers to make decent job creation a central component of economic policy.

It urged authorities to pursue industrial policies and structural transformation that can create quality employment for young people, including through opportunities associated with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

On labour migration, ITUC-Africa called for stronger protection for African workers moving across borders, while urging governments and other stakeholders to tackle discrimination against migrants.

In Nigeria, organised labour has demanded an end to the casualisation of workers, poor wages and employment practices that deny employees job security, social protection and the right to organise, warning that technological changes and restructuring must not come at the expense of workers' welfare.



Olusesan



Adesina

The unions said employers must stop replacing permanent jobs with casual, contract, and outsourced employment, and urged the Federal Government and industry regulators to strengthen labour protections and ensure workers receive fair remuneration and decent working conditions.

The Association of Senior Staff of Banks, Insurance and Financial Institutions (ASSBIFI) and the Precision, Electrical and Related Equipment Senior Staff Association (PERESSA) made the demands, with both unions raising concerns over the growing insecurity confronting workers, particularly young people.

Acting National President of ASSBIFI, Fanimokun Isaac Adesina, called on the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) and other regulatory agencies to make compliance with decent work standards a mandatory corporate governance requirement for financial institutions.

Adesina said the banking, insurance and financial services industries had witnessed increasing displacement of permanent employment by casual, contract and outsourced jobs, leaving many qualified graduates without pension benefits, health insurance, job security and collective bargaining rights.

He alleged that some employers compelled workers to surrender their freedom of association rights before or during employment, describing such practices as unacceptable and contrary to the principles of decent work.

He urged employers to respect workers' constitutional right to freedom of association and comply with relevant International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions on union rights, collective bargaining and termination of employment.

The ASSBIFI president also demanded an urgent renewal of the association's sector-wide collective bargaining agreement, which he said had been due for review since 2007, alleging that employers and management in the financial services industry had frustrated efforts to renew it.

He also called for a review of Section 12(4) of the Trade Unions Act, arguing that some employers had exploited its voluntary union membership provisions to discourage workers from joining trade unions.

On wages, Adesina said the N70,000 national minimum wage was inadequate to meet workers' basic needs amid rising living costs.

He urged the Federal Government to reduce the costs of food, transportation, healthcare, housing and education, while strengthening security nationwide.

He also called on Nigeria to ratify ILO Convention 158 on termination of employment, stressing that workers should not be arbitrarily dismissed and that employers must follow due process and pay appropriate compensation when terminating employment.

The ASSBIFI leader appealed to employers in the organised private sector to restore gratuity payments for deserving employees, describing the benefit as recognition of workers' years of service.

Similarly, PERESSA National President, Rufus Olusesan, condemned precarious employment and poor wages, warning that young Nigerians increasingly face insecure jobs, rising living costs, and exploitation in the digital economy.

In a solidarity message at the event, Olusesan said work must provide more than income, insisting that it must guarantee dignity, security and fair remuneration.

He identified casual and contract employment without adequate protection, low wages, digital exploitation and the growing migration of young Nigerians in search of better opportunities as major challenges confronting workers.

ITUC-Africa puts young workers at centre of struggle for decent work

From Collins Olayinka, Abuja

THE African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) has called for young workers to be placed at the centre of Africa's labour and economic policies, warning that widespread informal, insecure and poorly paid employment is undermining the continent's potential demographic dividend.

ITUC-Africa, representing 18 million workers through 107 affiliated national centres

across 52 countries, made the call in a statement marking the World Day for Decent Work, with General Secretary Joel Odigie urging governments, employers and regional institutions to prioritise quality job creation, living wages and social protection for young workers.

The organisation said Africa's youthful population should be an economic advantage, but warned that millions of young people are instead being pushed into informal and precarious work

because they cannot afford to remain unemployed.

According to the organisation, the International Labour Organisation's Global Employment Trends for Youth 2026 showed that nearly nine in 10 young workers in low- and lower-middle-income countries work informally, reflecting what it described as a profound decent-work deficit.

ITUC-Africa said the challenge extends beyond unemployment, as many young workers operate without employment contracts, social protection, safe working conditions or effective representation, while others face

exploitation in platform and gig work and dangerous migration routes in search of better livelihoods.

It also drew attention to the vulnerability of young women, who, it said, face discrimination and gender-based violence in the workplace.

Odigie said young Africans were nevertheless organising across workplaces, markets, offices, communities, online platforms and trade unions to demand greater influence over decisions affecting their livelihoods.

The organisation, therefore, urged African governments, the African Union, regional

economic communities, and employers to make decent job creation a central component of economic policy, particularly through industrialisation, structural transformation, and opportunities created under the African Continental Free Trade Area.

It also demanded living wages and universal social protection for young, informal, migrant and platform workers, alongside safer and fairer labour migration policies and stronger protection against Afrophobia and xenophobia.

ITUC-Africa further called for greater mobilisation of do-

mestic resources by tackling illicit financial flows and unsustainable debt, arguing that these pressures are reducing the resources available for investment in employment, education and healthcare.

The organisation also urged its affiliated unions to intensify the organisation of young workers and create greater leadership opportunities for them within the trade union movement.

"Decent work is a right," ITUC-Africa said, stressing that Africa's young people should have a future built on dignity, justice and economic security.

Glovo confirms Onafeko as Nigeria MD

By Victoria Nwachukwu

GLOVO, a multi-category technology company, has confirmed Reni Onafeko as its Country Managing Director in Nigeria after she led the company's operations in an acting capacity from the beginning of the year.

Her confirmation formalises her leadership of the company's Nigerian business as it expands its operations across major cities and deepens its investment in the country's digital economy.

The company said it has invested tens of billions of naira in Nigeria's digital economy and continues to provide flexible earning opportunities to more than 6,000 independent riders annually.

Onafeko brings more than 11 years of experience in strategy, technology and operational leadership. Since joining Glovo, she has served in several leadership positions, including Head of Strategy and Finance, Head of Growth

and Head of Abuja.

The company said her experience across these functions gave her an understanding of its commercial, financial, and operational activities.

Before joining Glovo, she spent eight years in consulting, including at Boston Consulting Group in London, where she advised senior executives and investors on investment decisions, growth strategies and large-scale business transformation across several industries.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Commenting on her confirmation, Onafeko said her progression through different functions at Glovo had strengthened her understanding of the business and the opportunities in the Nigerian market.

AIIESEC Alumni, CioD join forces to sharpen leadership, boardroom skills

By Silver Nwokoro

TO strengthen leadership and board management skills, AIIESEC Alumni Nigeria and the Chartered Institute of Directors (CioD) have entered a long-term partnership to develop leadership programmes and build capacity among members and other stakeholders.

President of AIIESEC Alumni Nigeria, Marcel Mba, said the partnership was based on the alignment of both organisations' objectives, particularly in leadership development and creating positive impact in society.

He noted that many AIIESEC Alumni members occupy leadership positions in companies, the public sector and non-governmental organisations, making the collaboration important for enhancing their leadership and board management skills.

He added that the partnership would also enable CioD to attract more members while giving AIIESEC Alumni members opportunities to improve their capabilities.

Mba stressed that the collaboration would be long-term and go beyond membership and training,

as both organisations plan to co-develop programmes

that would have sustained impact.

Ososanya at 70 puts workforce skills, AI challenge in focus

From Rotimi Agboluaje, Ibadan

AS Artificial Intelligence (AI) reshapes professional services, concerns are growing over the future of entry-level jobs, with accounting firms facing pressure to adapt their workforce to automated systems without compromising young professionals' career prospects.

Specifically, as AI grows in auditing and management consultancy, the shift raises questions about how young accountants will gain practical experience as technology takes over routine tasks traditionally assigned to junior employees, including checking transactions, preparing audit working papers, and reviewing financial documents.

The assignments have long provided a foundation for developing professional judgment and advancing in the workplace. As automation changes how such work is performed, firms must reconsider how younger professionals acquire the experience needed for career progression.

The implications extend beyond accountancy to banking, insurance and consulting, where digitalisation is changing job requirements

and employers' expectations.

The challenge was a key topic at discussions marking the 70th anniversary of HLB Z. O. Ososanya & Co. in Ibadan, as the firm's experience highlighted the shift from manual accounting procedures to technology-driven operations.

The Managing Partner, Babatunde Kolawole, said the firm had adopted digital audits, virtual meetings, cloud-based file management and online tax platforms.

The President and Chairman of Council of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), Queensley Seghosime, represented by a member of the institute's Governing Council, Olaitan Babatunde, stressed the importance of investing in employees and preparing younger professionals for leadership.

She urged firms to embrace innovation without compromising professional ethics.

"Your task is not simply to preserve what was built; it is to build upon it. You must continue to invest in your people, uphold the highest standards of professional conduct, embrace innovation, and prepare younger professionals to lead with competence and character," she said.

ICSAN honours Sanusi, Ajogwu, two others for governance impact

By Gloria Nwafor

THE Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators of Nigeria (ICSAN) has honoured the Emir of Kano, Khalifa Muhammadu Sanusi II, Professor of Corporate Governance, Lagos Business School (LBS), Fabian Ajogwu, Managing Director, Ministry of Finance Incorporated (MOFI), Dr Armstrong Ume Takang and Chairman, Board of Directors, Dangote Cement Plc, Emmanuel Ikazobor, with its Honorary Fellowship in recognition of their contributions across their respective fields.

The recognition comes amid growing concerns over the need to strengthen ethical leadership, institutional accountability and governance standards in Nigeria's public and private sectors.

The President and Chairman of the Council of ICSAN, Uto Ukanah, announced the distinguished Nigerians as recipients of the institute's honorary fellowship at its 60th anniversary award night and diamond jubilee celebration held in Lagos.

Ukanah said the institute was proud to recognise individuals whose contributions had made significant impacts in their respective fields, adding that the honours reflected ICSAN's commitment to promoting professional excellence and sound governance.

While welcoming them into the ICSAN community, she said the recognition formed part of activities marking the institute's 60th anniversary, celebrated under the theme: 'Six Decades of Excellence: Shaping Governance, Empowering Futures.'

PUBLIC NOTICE

RE: EAGLE TOASTMASTERS CLUB NIGERIA

The general public is hereby notified that the above-named Club has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act.

TRUSTEES

1. Apena Yusuf
2. Olunike Oladele
3. Adeosun Oluyemi
4. Egbeyemi Oyindamola
5. Akanimoh Kolawole
6. Emeka Enwere

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1. To promote effective communication and public speaking.
2. To provide speech and leadership training.
3. To encourage critical thinking, constructive evaluation and effective meeting participation.
4. To foster members' confidence and personal development.

Any objection must reach the Registrar-General, CAC, Abuja, within 28 days of this publication.



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FANYVAL VISION LIMITED

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WE ARE HIRING

ADVERT PLACEMENT

ABOUT US

Fanyval Vision Limited is an indigenous pharmaceutical company with interest in the development, manufacture, marketing and distribution of quality finished dosages in the domestic market. Established in 2017 with its Head Office in Lagos and Medical Representatives in major cities across Nigeria, we are committed to serving the healthcare needs of our people. We have made a reputable landmark in ophthalmic solutions that has earned us the goodwill of healthcare professionals.

POSITION 1: Medical Sales Representative

Location 1 Enugu Territory (Enugu, Anambra & Ebonyi)
Location 2 Abuja Territory (Abuja, Kogi, Niger & Nasarawa)

JOB SUMMARY

Fanyval Vision Limited is looking for an experienced Medical Sales Representative who will be the key point of contact between the organization and healthcare professionals, to promote our range of ophthalmic solutions, tablets and eye supplements, and to generate sales leads.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Act as company brand ambassador in the assigned field of operation.
- Provide product information and deliver product samples.
- Obtain customer feedback on product use experience and relay it to superiors.
- Communicate with end users to target prescribers.
- Organize clinical meetings to promote, sell or receive feedback about our products.
- Identify and establish new business opportunities to increase company sales.
- Work with the sales team to develop and implement brand strategies that ensure a consistent marketing message.
- Write reports and other documents giving feedback received from customers.
- Take orders from customers.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION / REQUIREMENTS

- University graduate with a science background, i.e. Pharmacy, Pharmacology, Chemistry or Biological Sciences.
- 1-3 years work experience as a Medical Sales Representative or similar role.
- Good knowledge of product lines, medical terminology and the latest medical issues in ophthalmics.
- Knowledge of MS Office.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Knowledge of the territory.
- Excellent teamwork and networking skills.
- Strong organizational and time management skills.
- Highly motivated and target driven, with a proven track record in sales.
- Strong negotiation and selling skills.
- Ability to travel frequently.
- Knowledge of marketing strategies is an added advantage.

POSITION 2: Assistant Account Officer

Location Lagos (Head Office)
Qualification HND

JOB SUMMARY

Fanyval Vision Limited is looking for a diligent and detail-oriented Assistant Account Officer to support the Finance Department in maintaining accurate financial records, processing transactions and ensuring timely, compliant financial reporting.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist in the day-to-day bookkeeping and posting of accounting entries, accurately and on time.
- Process and reconcile payments, receipts, invoices and expense claims, with proper supporting documents.
- Assist with bank reconciliations and cash book maintenance.
- Support accounts receivable and payable, including tracking customer collections and supplier payments.
- Prepare and maintain records of sales orders, invoices and stock-related transactions in coordination with the sales and warehouse teams.
- Reconcile Medical Representatives' expense and sales records against submitted reports.
- Assist in preparing weekly, monthly and annual financial reports and schedules.
- Support the computation, filing and documentation of statutory deductions and taxes (VAT, PAYE, WHT) under the guidance of the Accountant.
- Maintain orderly filing of financial documents and ensure records are ready for internal and external audits.
- Respond to financial queries from staff, customers and vendors, and escalate issues to superiors where necessary.
- Perform any other duties assigned by the General Manager or Head of Finance.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION / REQUIREMENTS

- HND in Accounting, Finance, Banking, Business Administration or a related field.
- Working knowledge of accounting principles and practices.
- Proficiency in MS Office, especially Excel; knowledge of accounting software is an added advantage.
- Strong numerical, analytical and problem-solving skills.
- High attention to detail, accuracy and integrity.
- Good verbal and written communication skills.
- Strong organizational and time management skills, with the ability to meet deadlines.
- Ability to work with minimal supervision and as part of a team.
- Prior experience in a similar role, or progress towards ICAN/ANAN, is an added advantage.

HOW TO APPLY

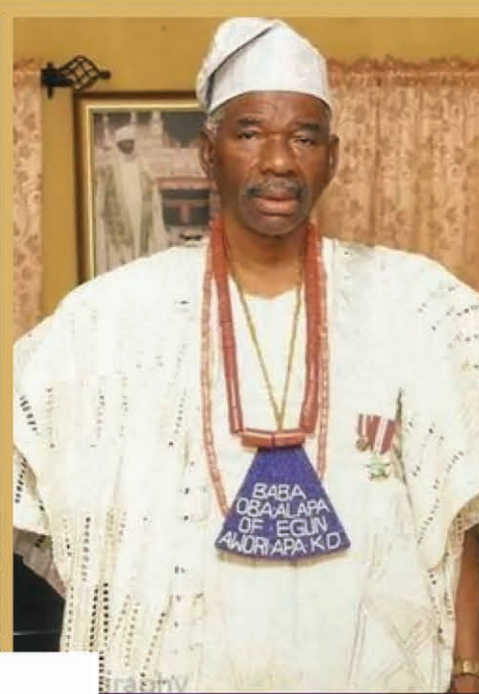
Only candidates who meet the minimum criteria outlined above are invited to send an application letter, a comprehensive CV and copies of credentials in ONE PDF document to:

info@fanyvalvisions.com

- Name the document with the candidate's name and
- Email subject "Medical Representative of Fanyval Vision" or "Assistant Account Officer of Fanyval Vision", depending on the position applied for.
- Address the application to: The General Manager, Fanyval Vision Limited, Lagos.
- Application deadline: 31/10/2025.

NB: ONLY SHORT-LISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTACTED

Applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. The vacancies may close ahead of schedule once suitable candidates have been found.



Egbon,

(CHAIRMAN, LAGOS STATE
GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COUNCIL)

My Egbon,

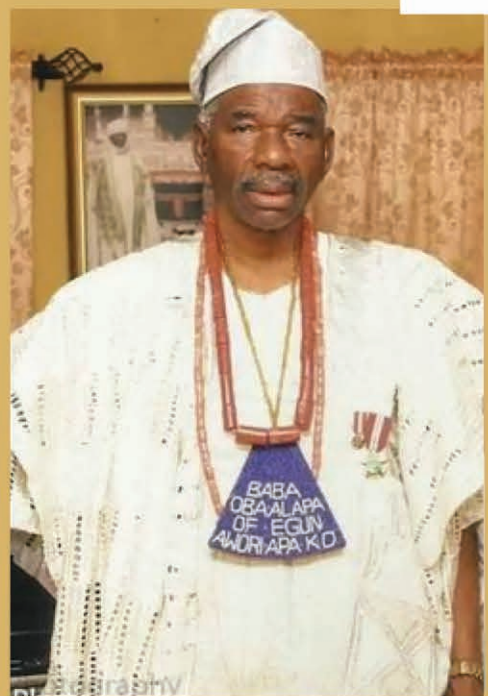
Ninety years of wisdom, loyalty and
important service to Lagos and to Nigeria.

You set the standard long before many
of us understood what a standard was.

May the Almighty preserve you in health,
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Congratulations, Egbon.

Chief (Dr.) Razaq Akanni Okoya, CON
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NHRC urges govs, FG to commute over 3000 death row inmates' sentences

From Divine Obasesam, Abuja

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has urged state governors to commute death sentences and the Federal Government to formalise a moratorium on executions, warning that more than 3,000 inmates remain on death row amid prolonged uncertainty over their fate.

The Commission said Nigeria was approaching 10 consecutive years without a state execution, despite courts continuing to impose death sentences and condemned inmates spending years in custody.

Its Executive Secretary, Chief Tony Ojukwu (SAN), made the call in Abuja during the commemoration of the 2026 World Day Against the Death Penalty.

Ojukwu said the absence of executions had created an opportunity for the government to reconsider its approach to

capital punishment, urging authorities to translate the longstanding suspension into a formal policy.

He called on governors to exercise their constitutional power of mercy to commute death sentences, particularly in cases where inmates had exhausted their appeals but remained in custody without a clear resolution of their cases.

The NHRC also advocated a review of laws prescribing mandatory death sentences, arguing that judges should have the discretion to consider mitigating circumstances and vulnerabilities within the criminal justice system before imposing capital punishment.

The Commission identified inadequate access to pro bono legal representation, forced confessions and delays in bringing suspects to trial as concerns that could undermine fair trial guarantees in capital cases.

According to the NHRC, Nigeria's continued use of the death

penalty must be assessed against its human rights obligations, including the protection of life, human dignity and the right to a fair hearing.

The prolonged stay of condemned inmates in correctional facilities has also raised concerns about the consequences of leaving death sentences unresolved for years.

The Nigerian Correctional Service has identified governors' reluctance to sign death warrants or commute sentences as a major factor contributing to the situation, with some inmates spending decades in custody after the conclusion

of their appeals.

The Commission said governors could commute such sentences to life imprisonment or grant pardons on compassionate grounds rather than allow inmates to remain indefinitely under sentence of death.

Australia's High Commissioner to Nigeria, Ms Leilani Bin-Juda, PSM, aligned with the NHRC's position, reaffirming Australia's opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances.

She urged Nigeria to use the approaching 10-year milestone without executions as an opportunity for broader legal and institutional reforms.



Ojukwu

Ondo communities urge court to dismiss firm's objection to N500m suit

By Joseph Onyekwere

Eight host communities in Ondo State have urged the State High Court sitting in Okitipupa to dismiss a preliminary objection by Rex Forestry Limited seeking to terminate a suit over alleged breaches of employment and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) obligations under a 2021 forestry concession agreement.

The claimants, Chief Olorun-tobi Kehinde, the Mayegun of Kajola Community, and Ayadi Kola, General Youth Leader of the G-8 Communities Development Union, argued that they have the legal standing to enforce provisions of the agreement intended to protect the economic and social interests of the host communities.

In a counter-affidavit and written address in suit marked HCOK/88/CIV/2026, they opposed the company's application dated September 22, 2026, which challenged their locus standi and relied on the doctrine of privity of contract.

The suit also named the Ondo State Governor and the state Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice as defendants.

The communities maintained that although the concession agreement was exe-

cuted between Rex Forestry and the state government on August 17, 2021, its provisions were designed to benefit the host communities, making them entitled to seek judicial enforcement.

They specifically relied on Clause 7.0, which they said requires the allocation of one per cent of the company's yearly operational budget to CSR projects for the communities, alongside provisions giving qualified indigenes employment preference.

Citing *Afolabi v. Olarewaju* (2011) LPELR-3995(SC) and *Rebold Industries Ltd v. Magreola* (2015) 8 NWLR (Pt. 1416) 201, the claimants argued that the doctrine of privity should not defeat claims by intended beneficiaries where trust or agency principles apply.

They further alleged that the company bypassed qualified local candidates despite receiving their credentials during a stakeholders' meeting on September 18, 2026.

The candidates, according to the claimants, included experienced professionals and young graduates with bachelor's and master's degrees.

The communities said an audiovisual recording of the meeting and minutes of a CSR Committee meeting held

on September 25, 2026, supported their allegations concerning recruitment and the company's engagement with host-community representatives.

They also accused Rex Forestry of allegedly diverting CSR funds to Araromi-Obu Community, which they contended is outside the designated G-8 host communities, and introducing outsiders into the CSR monitoring committee.

The claimants further questioned the implementation and accounting of projects reportedly covering bore-

holes, school renovations, classroom construction, furniture, teacher support and solar lighting between 2022 and 2026.

They alleged that some projects were defective and sought access to the company's audited financial records and project ledgers.

In the substantive suit, the communities are seeking N500 million in damages, orders to produce financial records, restructuring of the CSR monitoring committee and an injunction against further alleged diversion of funds.



Ondo AG, Ajulo

Catholic church asks Appeal court to reverse Lagos property judgment

By Yetunde Ayobami Ojo

The Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos has approached the Court of Appeal, Lagos Division, seeking to overturn a Lagos State High Court judgment declaring the Lagos State Government the owner of a disputed property at No. 17/19 Okoya Street, Idumagbo, Lagos Island.

The Archdiocese, through the Sole Trustee of the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, is asking the appellate court to set aside the judgment delivered by Justice Iyabo Kasali on January 10, 2018, and uphold its claim to ownership of the property.

In its proposed amended notice of appeal, filed in appeal marked CA/L/W/644/2019, arising from suit No. LD/120/2000, the church challenged the lower court's decision, arguing that the Lagos State Government's takeover of the management of St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School did not automatically confer ownership of the land on the government.

The Archdiocese maintained that it acquired the entire property at No. 17/19 Okoya Street from the Lagos Executive Development Board through a conveyance dated September 15, 1938, registered as No. 27 at page 27 in Volume 483 at the Lands Registry, Alausa.

It argued that the title document constituted evidence of its ownership, adding that there was no proof that its proprietary interest in the disputed property

had been lawfully acquired or revoked by the state government.

According to the church, the property comprises a large tract of land covering Block 1, Plots 1, 2, 3, 16, 17 and 18, where St. Patrick's Catholic Church and the primary school are located.

The appellant maintained that the government had claimed to have acquired the school, not the church premises or the entire property.

It further argued that the trial court failed to distinguish between the school premises and the church's other facilities, including a dilapidated structure that had previously served as a school building and church hall before the construction of a new school building.

The church alleged that the old structure continued to serve as a church hall for Sunday services and other religious activities, insisting that the government had never used the building after taking over the management of the school.

The Archdiocese faulted the trial judge for declaring the entire property government-owned and granting possession to the Lagos State Government without sufficient evidence establishing the precise boundaries and extent of the land allegedly acquired.

It contended that the government failed to produce the relevant acquisition instrument or establish the exact portion of the property covered by the purported acquisition.

Court fixes November 19 for Seplat's defence in N4.9 billion ITF suit

By Yetunde Ayobami Ojo

Justice Ibrahim Ahmad Kala of the Federal High Court, Lagos, has fixed November 19, 2026, for further hearing in a suit filed by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) against Seplat Energy Producing Nigeria Unlimited over an alleged N4.907 billion unpaid training fund contribution for the years 2013 to 2016.

The judge fixed the date following a request for adjournment by Seplat's lawyer, who told the court that the matter was scheduled for the company to open its defence.

The suit, marked

FHC/L/CS/177/2025, was filed by the ITF and its Governing Council, seeking an order directing Seplat Energy Producing Nigeria Unlimited to pay the alleged outstanding statutory training contribution of N4.907 billion for the four years.

The applicants are also seeking interest at the rate of five per cent per month on the alleged debt from February 13, 2020, until judgment and thereafter until the judgment sum is fully liquidated.

In its amended statement of claim, filed pursuant to an order of the court dated

January 21, 2025, the ITF maintained that Seplat, as an employer of labour with five or more employees, was liable to make statutory contributions to the Fund.

The applicants alleged that the dispute arose from Seplat's refusal to accept the inclusion of certain staff-related costs in the computation of its yearly payroll for the relevant years.

According to the ITF, Seplat objected to the inclusion of contract labour costs involving national and non-national employees outsourced through manpower service

providers, including salaries and benefits relating to Nigerian Supernumerary Police (SPY) officers deployed to its facilities.

The company also reportedly challenged the inclusion of other benefits paid through third-party manpower providers, as well as a provisional sum representing its contribution to its staff pension fund.

The ITF said it explained to Seplat that outsourced contract staff and SPY Police officers were, for the statutory contribution, bona fide employees of the company.

The fund added that it relied on a Supreme Court judgment delivered on April 20, 2018, which it said supported its position on the status of the affected workers.

The applicants further stated that the Fund issued seven demand notices to Seplat between November 2017 and January 2020 through its financial consultants, Jim Okhai & Co., and solicitors, Clifford Okoye & Co.

According to the ITF, several meetings were subsequently held between the parties to reconcile their differences, but the discussions failed to

produce an agreement.

However, Seplat, in its consequential amended statement of defence, denied owing the ITF any outstanding contribution.

The company maintained that it was up to date with its statutory contributions for the period between 2013 and 2016 and had no outstanding liability to the fund.

Seplat further stated that the ITF had recognised and presented it with awards in 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2021 as the best contributor in the Victoria Island area of Lagos State.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA IN THE PORT HARCOURT JUDICIAL DIVISION HOLDEN AT PORT HARCOURT

IN THE HIGH COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA
IN THE PORT HARCOURT JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT PORT HARCOURT

SUIT NO: PHC/2554/CS/2026

BETWEEN:

MONIER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY
(NIGERIA) LTD.

CLAIMANT/
APPLICANT

AND

(1) JOHN AZUTA - MBATA
(2) JOHNSON ROADWORKS & PROPERTIES
(3) FINANCIAL FLEX LIMITED
(4) MR. MBATA VICTOR
(5) GOVERNMENT OF RIVERS STATE
(6) ATTORNEY GENERAL & COMMISSIONER
FOR JUSTICE, RIVERS STATE

DEFENDANT
RESPONDENT

ORDER FOR SUBSTITUTED SERVICE

UPON READING THE AFFIDAVIT deposed to by Mercy Barlesia Igboh, adult, female, Nigerian Citizen and Litigation Secretary of No. 1c Isaac Boro Street (Asarama Road) Old GRA Port Harcourt and after hearing A. N. Odebe, Esq. of Counsel for the Claimant/Applicant with E. O. Goodwill, Esq. and C. P. Diepirl, Esq. in the Motion Exparte of 28th September, 2026. No Counsel appeared for the Defendants/Respondents.

IT IS ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

- That Leave is granted the Claimant/Applicant to serve the Writ of Summons and other processes filed in this Suit on the 1st - 4th Defendants/Respondents by publishing the said processes in one National Newspaper and another Newspaper circulating within Rivers State.
- That upon the publication of the processes, the Bailiff of this Court shall depose to an Affidavit of Service stating the facts of the publication and how the processes were served on the 1st - 4th Defendants/Respondents and transmit same to the Court as appropriate and also return copies of Newspaper to the Court.
- That the matter be adjourned to the 23rd day of October, 2026 for motion.

GIVEN AT PORT HARCOURT, under the Seal of the Court and the Hand of the Presiding Judge, this 2nd day of October, 2026.

IGWE JOHN PROMISE (ACA)
ASSISTANT CHIEF REGISTRAR (LIT)

IN THE HIGH COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA
IN THE PORT HARCOURT JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT PORT HARCOURT

SUIT NO: PHC/ /CS/2026

BETWEEN

MONIER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY =====
(NIGERIA) LTD

CLAIMANT

AND

1. JOHN AZUTA-MBATA
2. JOHNSON ROADWORKS & PROPERTIES
3. FINANCIAL FLEX LIMITED
4. MR. MBATA VICTOR
5. GOVERNMENT OF RIVERS STATE
6. ATTORNEY GENERAL & COMMISSIONER
FOR JUSTICE, RIVERS STATE

DEFENDANTS

TO: THE 1ST 3RD AND 4TH DEFENDANTS

OF: No. 17 Liberty Close, Off Ada George Road,
Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

TO: THE 2ND DEFENDANT

OF: Rd.2, Plot 43, Rumuobiakani Housing Est. P/Harcourt, Rivers,
P/Harcourt, Rivers State.

TO: THE 5TH AND 6TH DEFENDANTS

OF: Ministry of Justice, Rivers State Secretariat Complex,
Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

You are hereby commanded that within Thirty (30) days after the service of this Writ on you, inclusive of the day of such service, you do cause an appearance to be entered for you in an action at the suit of the Claimant above and take notice that in default of your doing so, the Claimant may proceed therein and judgment may be given in your absence.

DATED THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 2026.

A. N. Odebe & Co.
anodebe_c@yahoo.com

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AMENDED WRIT OF SUMMONS PHC/2554/CS/2026

BY ORDER OF THIS COURT

10 day of July 2026

Ndu Lillian O. (PhD)
REGISTRAR

N/B: This Writ is to be served within six (6) calendar months from the date thereof, or if renewed within six (6) Calendar Months from the date of the last renewal, including the day of such date and afterwards.

The Defendants may enter appearance personally or by Legal practitioner either by handing in the appropriate forms duly completed at the Registry of the High Court or by Registered post.

ENDORSEMENT TO BE MADE ON THE WRIT BEFORE ISSUE THEREOF:

THE CLAIMANT CLAIMS AGAINST THE DEFENDANTS JOINTLY AND SEVERALLY AS FOLLOWS:

- A DECLARATION that the 2nd and 3rd Defendants are mere alter egos, conduits, and sham corporate vehicles created, controlled, and used by the 1st and 4th Defendants to fraudulently divert funds, profits, and business opportunities belonging to the Claimant, particularly funds and profits accruing from the contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State awarded by the 5th Defendant.
- A DECLARATION that the 3rd Defendant, by procuring contracts for itself and sub-letting portions thereof to the Claimant as a subcontractor, fundamentally repudiated and breached its core contractual and agency duties under the Letter of Appointment dated January 15th, 2015 (Ref: MCC/GMO.015/15), and that the Claimant is entitled to treat the said Agency Agreement as terminated and to claim damages for breach of contract.
- A DECLARATION that the 2nd and 3rd Defendants, directly and/or through their agents including the 1st and 4th Defendants, have unjustly enriched themselves at the expense of the Claimant by receiving and retaining agreed remuneration pursuant to the letter of appointment dated January 15th, 2015, and by receiving and retaining the profits, revenues, and benefits from the main contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers state, which benefits were derived directly from the Claimant's resources, expertise, reputation, and the fiduciary position of the 1st Defendant, and for which the 1st - 4th Defendants have provided no lawful consideration.

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4. A DECLARATION that all profits, revenues, and benefits derived by the 1st 2nd, 3rd and 4th Defendants directly and/or through their agents from contracts sourced through the Claimant's resources, reputation, and efforts, including but not limited to the contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State, are held in a CONSTRUCTIVE TRUST for the absolute benefit of the Claimant.

5. A DECLARATION that the letter of appointment dated January 15th, 2015 (Reference No: MCC/GMO.015/15), appointing the 3rd Defendant as a "Contract Sourcing Agent" was part of a fraudulent scheme orchestrated by the 1st Defendant in his former capacity as Chairman/CEO of the Claimant, and the 4th Defendant, to swindle the Claimant for their personal benefit and is therefore null, void, and of no legal effect.

6. A DECLARATION that the 1st, 3rd and 4th Defendants, under a scheme orchestrated by the 1st Defendant, acted in gross breach of their fiduciary duties to the Claimant by usurping the Claimant's corporate opportunities, engaging in corporate self-dealing, and conspiring to defraud the Claimant for their personal enrichment by diverting the award of the said contract for the Construction of Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni LGA to themselves and turning around to issue subcontracts to the Claimant while acting as financial consultants and Chairman/CEO of the Claimant respectively.

7. A DECLARATION that the Claimant is entitled to the direct award of the said contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State from the 5th Defendant, the 5th Defendant having acknowledged the Claimant's primary execution role and by virtue of the underlying contractual layouts.

8. AN ORDER directing the 1st, 3rd and 4th Defendants to pay to the Claimant the sum of **N100,000,000.00 (One Hundred Billion Naira)** as general damages for breach of contract perpetrated against the Claimant.

9. AN ORDER directing the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Defendants to pay to the Claimant the sum of **N100,000,000.00 (One Hundred Billion Naira)** as damages for the fraud perpetrated against the Claimant in their roles as mere alter egos, conduits, and sham corporate vehicles used to fraudulently divert funds, profits, and business opportunities belonging to the Claimant arising from the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road Contract.

10. AN ORDER directing the 1st, 3rd and 4th Defendants to pay to the Claimant the sum of **N100,000,000.00 (One Hundred Billion Naira)** as damages for breach of their fiduciary duties to the Claimant by usurping corporate opportunities, engaging in gross self-dealing, and conspiring to defraud the Claimant.

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anodebe_c@yahoo.com

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11. AN ORDER directing the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Defendants to pay to the Claimant the sum of **N10,000,000.00 (Ten Million Naira)** as Exemplary and Punitive Damages for the pre-meditated fraud and stratified corporate concealment orchestrated to siphon business opportunities and profits from the Claimant.

12. AN ORDER directing the 1st Defendant to pay to the Claimant the sum of **N100,000,000.00 (One Hundred Billion Naira)** as Exemplary and Punitive Damages for the scheme orchestrated by the 1st Defendant, and for acting in gross breach of his fiduciary duties to the Claimant by usurping the Claimant's corporate opportunities, engaging in corporate self-dealing, and conspiring to defraud the Claimant for his personal enrichment by deliberately refusing to accept the contract offer made to the Claimant, allowing it to lapse, and converting the award of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni LGA contract to himself through the 2nd Defendant while acting as the Chairman/CEO of the Claimant.

13. AN ORDER directing the 5th Defendant to award of the said contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State to the Claimant and to pay to the Claimant all sums due from the contract.

14. AN ORDER OF PERPETUAL INJUNCTION restraining the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Defendants, whether by themselves, directors, officers, or privies, from disposing of, transferring, or dealing in any assets or bank funds belonging to the Claimant or traceable to the fraudulent scheme described in this Statement of Claim.

15. AN ORDER OF PERPETUAL INJUNCTION restraining the 5th Defendant from making any further project payments with regards to the contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni LGA to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th Defendants, or to any corporate bank accounts provided by them.

16. 30% post-judgment interest on all sums awarded, to be paid annually until the judgment debt is finally and completely liquidated.

17. Costs of this action assessed at **N250,000,000.00 (Two Hundred and Fifty Million Naira)**.

DATED THIS _____ 10TH _____ DAY OF _____ JULY _____ 2026.

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anodebe_c@yahoo.com

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THE JUDICIARY
HIGH COURT REGISTRY
PORT HARCOURT
CASH OFFICE
10 day of July 2026

A. N. ODEBE, ESQ. (SIGNED)
MILLS C. ORLU-ORLU, ESQ.
A. N. ODEBE & CO.
(CLAIMANT'S SOLICITORS)
2ND FLOOR,
NO. 15, ISAAC BORO STREET,
(ASARAMA ROAD),
OLD GRA, PORT HARCOURT,
RIVERS STATE.
08033121742
anodebe_c@yahoo.com
anthonyodebe@nigerianbar.ng

FOR SERVICE ON:

THE 1ST 3RD AND 4TH DEFENDANTS
No. 17 Liberty Close, Off Ada George Road,
Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

THE 2ND DEFENDANT
Rd.2, Plot 43, Rumuobiakani
Housing Est. P/Harcourt, Rivers,
P/Harcourt, Rivers State.

THE 5TH AND 6TH DEFENDANTS
Ministry of Justice, Rivers State Secretariat Complex,
Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

This Writ is issued at the instance of the Claimant by A. N. ODEBE, ESQ. of A.N. ODEBE & CO., whose Address for Service is No. 1c Isaac Boro Street (Asarama Road) Old GRA, Port Harcourt, Nigeria, Legal Practitioners for the said Claimants who reside in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

This Writ was served by me at _____

On the Defendants (here insert mode of service) _____

On the _____ day of _____ 2026

A. N. Odebe & Co.
anodebe_c@yahoo.com

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Endorsed the _____ day of _____, 2026

SIGNED _____

ADDRESSED _____

ENDORSEMENT TO BE MADE ON COPY OF WRIT FORTHWITH AFTER SERVICE.

A sufficient affidavit in verification of the endorsement on this Writ to authorize the signing and stamping thereof has been produced to me this _____ day of _____ 2026.

Ndu Lillian O. (PhD)
(Signature of Registrar)

A. N. Odebe & Co.
anodebe_c@yahoo.com

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IN THE HIGH COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA
IN THE PORT HARCOURT JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT PORT HARCOURT

SUIT NO: PHC/ /CS/2026

BETWEEN

MONIER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY ===== CLAIMANT/APPLICANT
(NIGERIA) LTD

AND

1. JOHN AZUTA-MBATA
2. JOHNSON ROADWORKS & PROPERTIES LTD
3. FINANCIAL FLEX LIMITED
4. MR. MBATA VICTOR
5. GOVERNMENT OF RIVERS STATE
6. ATTORNEY GENERAL & COMMISSIONER
FOR JUSTICE, RIVERS STATE

DEFENDANTS/
RESPONDENTS

STATEMENT OF CLAIM

- The Claimant is a leading building and civil engineering contractor, duly incorporated as a limited liability company under the Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA), Cap. C20, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2020, with its registered office situated at Mile 7 Ikwerre Road, Rumuigbo, Port Harcourt. The status report of the Claimant is hereby pleaded as ANNEXURE A.
- The 1st Defendant was a Director and at all material times up to the 9th day of December, 2025, the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Claimant Company. In these capacities, he owed the Claimant the highest fiduciary duties of good faith, absolute disclosure, diligence, trust, confidence, and loyalty. The Claimant's Notice of Reconstitution of Board of Directors dated 9th October, 2024 is hereby pleaded as ANNEXURE A1.
- The 2nd Defendant is a private company limited by shares, incorporated by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) on 2nd March, 2000, which formerly bore the name "Johnson Properties Limited" until its name was suddenly changed under the secret direction of the 1st Defendant to act as an engineering front. The Certified Status Report of the 2nd Defendant issued by the CAC is hereby pleaded as ANNEXURE B.
- The 3rd Defendant is a company limited by shares, incorporated in Nigeria, which at all material times was utilized as an alter ego, conduit, and sham

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corporate vehicle by the 1st and 4th Defendants to perpetrate a massive fraud against the Claimant.

- The 4th Defendant, is a shareholder and director of the 3rd Defendant and a close blood relative of the 1st Defendant. The 4th Defendant at all material times acted at the direction and for the personal enrichment of himself and the 1st Defendant through the use of sham corporate entities. A copy of the status report of the 3rd Defendant issued by the CAC is hereby pleaded as ANNEXURE C.
- The 5th Defendant is the Government of Rivers State, which is the Statutory Authority that awarded the main contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State.
- The 6th Defendant is the Chief Law Officer of Rivers State and is joined as the legal representative of the 5th Defendant.
- The Claimant avers that on or about 30th July, 2014, the 1st Defendant, acting in his capacity as Chairman/CEO of the Claimant, issued an internal memo approving a sham corporate arrangement to benefit his relative, the 4th Defendant, under the guise of the 3rd Defendant.
- Consequently, on or about 15th January, 2015, the 1st Defendant, leveraging his absolute control over the Claimant's management, caused the Claimant to issue an official letter of appointment (Ref: MCC/GMO.015/15) titled "APPOINTMENT AS CONTRACTOR SOURCING AGENT FOR MONIER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY (NIGERIA) LTD (MCC)" to the 3rd Defendant. A copy of the internal memo dated 30th July, 2014 and the letter of appointment dated 15th January, 2015 are hereby pleaded as ANNEXURES C and C1 respectively.
- The said letter of appointment purported to appoint the 3rd Defendant as a "Contract Sourcing Agent" for the Claimant, promising a finder's fee of 4% of the total contract value of any project secured or N50,000,000.00 (Fifty Million Naira) per annum, whichever was higher. The 3rd Defendant was further designated Finance Consultant/Business Development Manager on an honorary basis for a consideration of a monthly impress of N400,000.00 (Four Hundred Thousand Naira) for logistics, entertainment, transport, and public relations.
- The Claimant avers that this appointment was not an arm's-length commercial agreement but was a fraudulent scheme orchestrated by the 1st and 4th Defendants for their personal enrichment. The 3rd Defendant possessed no independent capacity, technical expertise, or track record as a contract sourcing agent in the civil engineering industry. It existed solely as

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an intercepting financial shell to claim remunerations and siphon corporate opportunities rightfully belonging to the Claimant.

- Sometime in early 2024, following the Claimant's highly successful and impressive completion of the Unity Road (cutting across Ogoni to Opobo to Andoni), the Executive Governor of Rivers State Sir Similaye Fubara visited the construction site for the purpose of commissioning the road.
- On that occasion, local natives pleaded with the Governor to extend the infrastructure to the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road to open up access to one of the largest fishing settlements in Nigeria. In response, the Governor expressly and publicly announced that the contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road would be carried out by the Claimant due to its track record. The Claimant shall rely on the radio/media publications covering the said event at the trial.
- The Claimant avers that following this development, the 1st Defendant—instead of protecting the Claimant's interests—conspiratorially set a fraudulent diversion scheme into motion along with the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Defendants.
- In execution of this scheme, on 6th June, 2024, the 1st Defendant used his overwhelming internal influence to compel the Claimant to sign a highly restrictive and lopsided subcontract agreement with the 3rd Defendant for only a minor segment of the project (Earthworks to Stone Base) valued at N6,404,696,103.00. The letter of award and the concomitant subcontract agreement are hereby pleaded as ANNEXURES D and D1.
- On 20th June, 2024, while presiding as Chairman/MD at the Claimant's Board of Directors Meeting, the 1st Defendant actively suppressed the existence of this subcontract layout and falsely led the Board to believe the main contract was still awaiting direct award to the Claimant.
- Shortly after successfully misleading the Board, the 1st Defendant on 9th July, 2024, processed a radical corporate name change for his dormant real estate vehicle from "Johnson Properties Limited" to "JOHNSON ROADWORKS & PROPERTIES LTD" to fabricate an artificial image of engineering capacity.
- On 10th October, 2024, the 1st Defendant maintained this false corporate impression before the Claimant's Board of Directors. Meanwhile, the 3rd Defendant (acting through the 4th Defendant under the master direction of the 1st Defendant) finalized the siphoning framework.
- Consequently, on 29th October, 2024, the 1st Defendant successfully diverted the contract matrix away from the Claimant, causing the 5th Defendant to formally award the principal contract for "The Construction of Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State"—

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**IN THE HIGH COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA
IN THE PORT HARCOURT JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT PORT HARCOURT**

AMENDED WRIT OF SUMMONS

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comprising a 13.52km road corridor valued at ₦27,999,167,581.38 (approximately ₦28 Billion Naira)—directly to his front, the 2nd Defendant.

20. The Claimant avers that this fraudulent layout forced the Claimant to act as a minor subcontractor to its own paid agent (the 3rd Defendant) and front company (the 2nd Defendant) on a contract publicly designated for the Claimant. This allowed the 2nd and 3rd Defendants to retain the lion's share of the principal contract sum (over ₦21 Billion Naira) for themselves without providing any lawful consideration, equipment, or technical inputs.
21. On the 9th day of December, 2025, the 1st Defendant resigned from his position as Chairman/CEO of the Claimant company. Following his resignation, MR. HENRY ADAWARI MACPEPPE, who was previously the Vice Chairman, became the substantive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Claimant Company with immediate effect.
22. Upon taking office, the Claimant's new management conducted extensive internal and field investigations. These investigations revealed that neither the 2nd Defendant nor the 3rd Defendant possessed a single engineering plant, substantive technical staff, or physical office infrastructure capable of executing a 13.52km road corridor, and that both entities operated purely as financial shells to launder siphoned contract funds.

PARTICULARS OF FRAUD AND BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY

The Claimant shall rely on the following facts at the trial to establish fraud, active corporate concealment, insider self-dealing, and conspiracy:

- a. The 1st Defendant caused the Claimant to execute the restrictive Earthworks subcontract with Financial Flex Ltd on 6th June 2024.
- b. Barely two weeks later, on 20th June 2024, while presiding as Chairman/MD at the Claimant's Board of Directors Meeting, the 1st Defendant actively suppressed the existence of this subcontract layout.
- c. The 1st Defendant deliberately misled the Board by creating a false corporate impression into page 4 of the official Board Minutes under the heading "PROJECTS AWAITING AWARD" that the Ngo-Oyorokoto project was still awaiting direct award to the Claimant from the 5th Defendant, who was listed as the Claimant's major client.
- d. The 1st Defendant maintained this false corporate impression through continuous updates, including at the meeting of 10th October, 2024. Copies of the Minutes of the Board Meetings dated 20th June, 2024, and 10th October, 2024, are pleaded as ANNEXURES E and E1 respectively.

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- e. Immediately after successfully misleading the Board on 20th June, 2024, the 1st Defendant, on 9th July 2024, processed a radical corporate name change of his dormant real estate firm "Johnson Properties Limited" to "JOHNSON ROADWORKS & PROPERTIES LTD" to fabricate an impression of engineering capacity.
- f. The 1st Defendant actively concealed that he holds the absolute controlling interest of 600,000 ordinary shares (60% equity) in the 2nd Defendant, utilizing it to intercept the principal contract from the Rivers State Government on 29th October, 2024.
- g. The 1st Defendant caused the Claimant to enter into subcontracts presented as standard commercial agreements between independent parties, when in fact they were steps to create a false paper trail legitimizing the siphoning of principal contract funds to entities owned by its own Chairman/CEO.
- h. This structure created a fraudulent record that the 3rd or 2nd Defendant was the main contractor and the Claimant a mere subcontractor, when the reverse was the true commercial, financial, and operational reality.
- i. Shockingly and against standard corporate accounting practice, all funds meant for the 3rd Defendant under the sham agency arrangement were instructed to be paid, and were indeed paid, directly into the 4th Defendant's personal bank account with Guaranty Trust Bank (Account Number: 0001448523 in the name of Victor Mbata), entirely bypassing standard corporate oversight. Copies of the written payment instructions issued to Levite Microfinance Bank Ltd, which were received and complied with, are hereby pleaded as ANNEXURE F.
- j. The 3rd and 2nd Defendants lack independent management, separate infrastructure, technical staff, or equipment to execute construction contracts.
- k. The 4th Defendant allowed his name to be used as a shareholder and director of the 3rd Defendant with full knowledge that he was acting as a nominee to conceal the 1st Defendant's beneficial interests and avoid legal liability, constituting a fraud on the corporate form.
- l. The 3rd Defendant either directly or through the 4th Defendant received several payments from the Claimant for which it furnished no real consideration. The payment instructions from the Claimant for the benefit of the 4th Defendant are hereby pleaded as ANNEXURE F1.
23. The Claimant avers that by their respective actions, the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Defendants flagrantly breached their fiduciary duties to the Claimant by placing themselves in positions of direct conflict of interest, usurping the

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- Claimant's corporate opportunities, making secret profits, and entering into an unlawful conspiracy to defraud the Claimant for their personal enrichment.
24. The 2nd and 4th Defendants knowingly participated in, facilitated, and received the benefits of this dishonest and fraudulent scheme, and have provided no legitimate service, consideration, or commercial value to justify retaining the massive profits derived from the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road project contract.
 25. As a direct, foreseeable, and continuous result of the Defendants' wrongful acts, the Claimant has suffered immense financial loss and damage, including being deprived of the full profit margin on the main contract value, being forced into an inferior subcontracting position to its own agent, and suffering severe disruption to its civil engineering business affairs.
 26. The Claimant further avers that the 5th Defendant, through its high-ranking officials and agents across various public functions, was fully aware of and acknowledged the Claimant's primary, historical role and technical capacity as the actual *bona fide* contractor executing the road corridor.
 27. In light of the massive corporate fraud now uncovered, the channeling of the contract through the 2nd Defendant is deeply tainted, and the proper, equitable course is for the 5th Defendant to formally recognize the Claimant as the direct contracting party entitled to all remaining values, payouts, and extensions on the project.
 28. The Claimant has made formal demands for an account, but the 1st to 4th Defendants have completely failed, refused, and neglected to account for or return the misappropriated funds.
 29. Consequently, the Claimant engaged the services of A. N. Odebe Esq for a fee of ₦250,000,000 (Two Hundred and Fifty Million Naira) to prosecute this suit. Invoice issued by the office of the Claimant's counsel dated 29th December, 2025 is pleaded as ANNEXURE G.

WHEREOF the Claimant claims against the Defendants jointly and severally as follows:

1. A DECLARATION that the 2nd and 3rd Defendants are mere alter egos, conduits, and sham corporate vehicles created, controlled, and used by the 1st and 4th Defendants to fraudulently divert funds, profits, and business opportunities belonging to the Claimant, particularly funds and profits accruing from the contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State awarded by the 5th Defendant.

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2. A DECLARATION that the 3rd Defendant, by procuring contracts for itself and sub-letting portions thereof to the Claimant as a subcontractor, fundamentally repudiated and breached its core contractual and agency duties under the Letter of Appointment dated January 15th, 2015 (Ref: MCC/GMO.015/15), and that the Claimant is entitled to treat the said Agency Agreement as terminated and to claim damages for breach of contract.
3. A DECLARATION that the 2nd and 3rd Defendants, directly and/or through their agents including the 1st and 4th Defendants, have unjustly enriched themselves at the expense of the Claimant by receiving and retaining agreed remuneration pursuant to the letter of appointment dated January 15th, 2015, and by receiving and retaining the profits, revenues, and benefits from the main contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers state, which benefits were derived directly from the Claimant's resources, expertise, reputation, and the fiduciary position of the 1st Defendant, and for which the 1st – 4th Defendants have provided no lawful consideration.
4. A DECLARATION that all profits, revenues, and benefits derived by the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Defendants directly and/or through their agents from contracts sourced through the Claimant's resources, reputation, and efforts, including but not limited to the contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State, are held in a CONSTRUCTIVE TRUST for the absolute benefit of the Claimant.
5. A DECLARATION that the letter of appointment dated January 15th, 2015 (Reference No: MCC/GMO.015/15), appointing the 3rd Defendant as a "Contract Sourcing Agent" was part of a fraudulent scheme orchestrated by the 1st Defendant in his former capacity as Chairman/CEO of the Claimant, and the 4th Defendant, to swindle the Claimant for their personal benefit and is therefore null, void, and of no legal effect.
6. A DECLARATION that the 1st, 3rd and 4th Defendants, under a scheme orchestrated by the 1st Defendant, acted in gross breach of their fiduciary duties to the Claimant by usurping the Claimant's corporate opportunities, engaging in corporate self-dealing, and conspiring to defraud the Claimant for their personal enrichment by diverting the award of the said contract for the construction of Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni LGA to themselves and turning around to issue subcontracts to the Claimant while acting as financial consultants and Chairman/CEO of the Claimant respectively.
7. A DECLARATION that the Claimant is entitled to the direct award of the said contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State from the 5th Defendant, the 5th Defendant

A. N. Odebe & Co.
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AMENDED WRIT OF SUMMONS

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having acknowledged the Claimant's primary execution role and by virtue of the underlying contractual layouts.

8. AN ORDER directing the 1st, 3rd and 4th Defendants to pay to the Claimant the sum of ₦100,000,000,000.00 (One Hundred Billion Naira) as general damages for breach of contract perpetrated against the Claimant.
9. AN ORDER directing the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Defendants to pay to the Claimant the sum of ₦100,000,000,000.00 (One Hundred Billion Naira) as damages for the fraud perpetrated against the Claimant in their roles as mere alter egos, conduits, and sham corporate vehicles used to fraudulently divert funds, profits, and business opportunities belonging to the Claimant arising from the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road Contract.
10. AN ORDER directing the 1st, 3rd and 4th Defendants to pay to the Claimant the sum of ₦100,000,000,000.00 (One Hundred Billion Naira) as damages for breach of their fiduciary duties to the Claimant by usurping corporate opportunities, engaging in gross self-dealing, and conspiring to defraud the Claimant.
11. AN ORDER directing the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Defendants to pay to the Claimant the sum of ₦10,000,000,000.00 (One Hundred Billion Naira) as Exemplary and Punitive Damages for the pre-meditated fraud and stratified corporate concealment orchestrated to siphon business opportunities and profits from the Claimant.
12. AN ORDER directing the 1st Defendant to pay to the Claimant the sum of ₦100,000,000,000.00 (One Hundred Billion Naira) as Exemplary and Punitive Damages for the scheme orchestrated by the 1st Defendant, and for acting in gross breach of his fiduciary duties to the Claimant by usurping the Claimant's corporate opportunities, engaging in corporate self-dealing, and conspiring to defraud the Claimant for his personal enrichment by deliberately refusing to accept the contract offer made to the Claimant, allowing it to lapse, and converting the award of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni LGA contract to himself through the 2nd Defendant while acting as the Chairman/CEO of the Claimant.
13. AN ORDER directing the 5th Defendant to award of the said contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State to the Claimant and to pay to the Claimant all sums due from the contract.
14. AN ORDER OF PERPETUAL INJUNCTION restraining the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Defendants, whether by themselves, directors, officers, or privies, from disposing of, transferring, or dealing in any assets or bank funds

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belonging to the Claimant or traceable to the fraudulent scheme described in this Statement of Claim.

15. AN ORDER OF PERPETUAL INJUNCTION restraining the 5th Defendant from making any further project payments with regards to the contract for the construction of the Ngo-Oyorokoto Road in Andoni LGA to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th Defendants, or to any corporate bank accounts provided by them.
16. 30% post-judgment interest on all sums awarded, to be paid annually until the judgment debt is finally and completely liquidated.
17. Costs of this action assessed at ₦250,000,000.00 (Two Hundred and Fifty Million Naira).

DATED THIS 10TH DAY OF JULY 2026.



A. N. ODEBE, ESQ. (SIGNED)
MILLS C. ORLU-ORLU, ESQ.
N. ODEBE & CO.
(CLAIMANT'S SOLICITORS)
2ND FLOOR,
NO. 15, ISAAC BORO STREET,
(ASARAMA ROAD),
OLD GRA, PORT HARCOURT,
RIVERS STATE.
08033121742
anodebe.co@yahoo.com
anthonyodebe@nigerianbar.ng

FOR SERVICE ON:

THE 1ST, 3RD AND 4TH DEFENDANTS
No. 17 Liberty Close, Off Ada George Road,
Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

THE 2ND DEFENDANT
Rd.2, Plot 43, Rumuohokani
Housing Est. P/Harcourt, Rivers,
P/Harcourt, Rivers State.

A. N. Odebe & Co.
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THE 5TH AND 6TH DEFENDANTS
Ministry of Justice, Rivers State
Secretariat Complex,
Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA
IN THE PORT HARCOURT JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT PORT HARCOURT**

SUIT NO: PHC/ /CS/2026

BETWEEN
MONIER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY ----- CLAIMANT/APPLICANT
(NIGERIA) LTD

AND

1. JOHN AZUTA-MBATA
2. JOHNSON ROADWORKS & PROPERTIES LTD
3. FINANCIAL FLEX LIMITED
4. MR. MBATA VICTOR
5. GOVERNMENT OF RIVERS STATE
6. ATTORNEY GENERAL & COMMISSIONER FOR JUSTICE, RIVERS STATE

DEFENDANTS/
RESPONDENTS

MOTION ON NOTICE

BROUGHT PURSUANT TO ORDER 39 OF THE HIGH COURT OF RIVERS STATE (CIVIL PROCEDURE) RULES 2023 AND UNDER THE INHERENT JURISDICTION OF THIS HONOURABLE COURT.

TAKE NOTICE that this Honourable Court will be moved on the _____ day of _____ 2026 at the hour of 9 o'clock in the forenoon or so soon thereafter as Counsel for the Claimant/Applicant may be heard praying this Honourable Court for:

1. AN ORDER OF INTERLOCUTORY INJUNCTION restraining the 5th Defendant (Government of Rivers State), its ministries, departments, agencies, officials, or privies from making any further project payments, mobilization funds, interim valuations, or financial disbursements with regards to the contracts for the Construction of Ngo – Oyorokoto Road in Andoni LGAs to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th Defendants, or to any corporate or personal bank accounts designated by them pending the determination of this Suit.
2. AN ORDER OF INTERLOCUTORY INJUNCTION restraining the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Defendants, whether by themselves, directors, officers, or privies, from disposing of, transferring, or dealing in any assets or bank funds belonging to the Claimant or traceable to the scheme described in this Statement of Claim pending the hearing and determination of this Suit.
3. AND FOR SUCH FURTHER ORDER OR ORDERS as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make in the circumstances.

GROUND(S) FOR THE APPLICATION:

PHC/2554/CS/2026

1. There is a serious, triable issue raised between the Claimant and the Defendants concerning a massive corporate insider fraud, diversion of business opportunities, and direct breach of fiduciary duties by the 1st Defendant (former MD/CEO).
2. The balance of convenience tilts heavily in favor of the Claimant/Applicant, who generated the technical and engineering proposals used to secure the subject contracts.
3. Irreparable damage and loss will be suffered by the Claimant if the 3rd Defendant continues to pay out multi-billion Naira project sums into the unverified corporate structures of the 1st and 5th Defendants or the personal accounts of the 2nd Defendant while the main suit is pending.
4. Damages will not be an adequate remedy to compensate the Claimant if the funds are fully dissipated and siphoned out of the jurisdiction during the pendency of litigation.

DATED THIS 10TH DAY OF JULY 2026.



A. N. ODEBE, ESQ. (SIGNED)
MILLS C. ORLU-ORLU, ESQ.
A. N. ODEBE & CO.
(CLAIMANT'S SOLICITORS)
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(ASARAMA ROAD),
OLD GRA, PORT HARCOURT,
RIVERS STATE.
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FOR SERVICE ON:

PHC/2554/CS/2026

THE 1ST, 3RD AND 4TH DEFENDANTS
No. 17 Liberty Close, Off Ada George Road,
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Housing Est. P/Harcourt, Rivers,
P/Harcourt, Rivers State.

THE 5TH AND 6TH DEFENDANTS
Ministry of Justice, Rivers State Secretariat Complex,
Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Media & Marketing

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NBC renew calls for responsible broadcasting ahead general elections

By Sunday Aikulola

DIRECTOR General, National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), Charles Ebuebu, has restated need for broadcast professionals to be socially responsible ahead of the 2027 general elections. To Ebuebu, as the 2027 elections campaigns continue, broadcasters carry the duty of ensuring free, fair,

credible, and responsible coverage. He noted, "the NBC reminds broadcasters and other stakeholders to uphold fairness, accuracy, professionalism, impartiality and responsibility during this period." Saying it is important to safeguard integrity of the nation's airwaves and contribute to a peaceful, credible and transparent electoral

process, he further urged broadcasters to always verify before amplifying. Ebuebu advised, "let every broadcast inform, educate and promote peaceful participation. Broadcast of partisan political campaign, announcements and any other form of partisan party identification or symbol coded and later than

twenty-four hours before polling day." In addition, he said contents shall be devoid of hate speech, fake news, inflammatory, derogatory, divisive, inciting comments or allusions; political parties and candidates must be given equal access and equitable airtime subject to payments of appropriate fees.



Ebuebu

Report advocates inclusive access to electoral information

By Sunday Aikulola

THE BO Foundation for Inclusive Media (BOFIM) under, 'Her Voice, Her Vote' project has stressed the need for inclusive access to information, especially for Persons with Disabilities during election. This was stated during the launch of a report titled, 'Access to information and participation in Osun State's 2026 governorship election'. The conversation focused on digital inclusion of women with disabilities in the electoral process.

The event featured presentations from key participants including Sussan Ihuoma from the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities, who argued that political participation is a right for all citizens including women and persons with disabilities.

The Executive Director of BOFIM, Blessing Oladunjoye, presented findings from their digital-based engagement with 30 women with disabilities across different disability clusters in Osun State.

The team shared videos created by women with disabilities demanding accessible electoral systems, discussed their methodology of providing information in accessible formats including plain text, graphics, audio messages, and videos, and highlighted both successes and ongoing challenges such as physical accessibility issues and lack of sign language interpretation at polling stations.

The meeting also includes a presentation on digital accessibility challenges and recommendations for improving electoral information access for persons with disabilities, with participants discussing plans for advocacy engagement with Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and other stakeholders to drive implementation of the report's recommendations ahead of the 2027 general election.

Reputation Pulse commits to intelligence, audit services

ARP, a continental independent reputation intelligence and audit infrastructure, has been launched to give African institutions access to evidence led intelligence on how they are seen, trusted, represented and positioned across media, public narratives and generative AI environments.

ARP is not simply a media monitoring or media intelligence platform. It brings together reputation intelligence, institutional auditing, media intelligence, narrative analysis, peer benchmarking, risk intelligence and AI/GEO visibility into a single continental intelligence infrastructure designed to help African institutions understand and strengthen their reputation.

Built for Africa and focused on African institutional context, ARP provides open access reputation intelligence for public institutions, with dossiers continuously added across the continent. The platform launches with eight dossiers spanning public institutions, faith based institutions and Africa's ride hailing sector, with additional institutional audits to be published continuously.

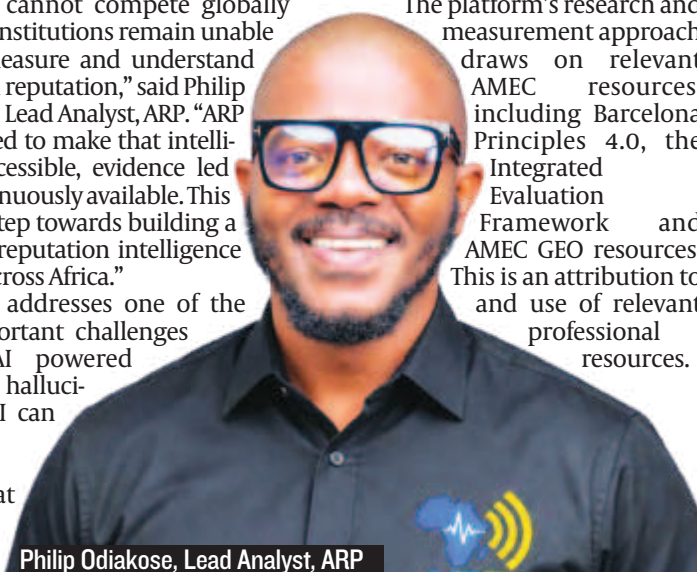
The central proposition is simple: public institution reputation matters. Institutions that understand how they are perceived can identify reputation risks, benchmark themselves against peers, improve stakeholder trust and build the credibility required to compete more effectively, not only within Africa, but globally.

"Africa cannot compete globally while its institutions remain unable to see, measure and understand their own reputation," said Philip Odiakose, Lead Analyst, ARP. "ARP is designed to make that intelligence accessible, evidence led and continuously available. This is a first step towards building a stronger reputation intelligence culture across Africa."

ARP also addresses one of the most important challenges facing AI powered research: hallucination. AI can generate information that sounds authoritative without sufficient evidence.

ARP therefore uses AI to assist with query processing and retrieval, while evidence, citations, historical records and analytical outputs are subject to human review and evidence controls. Where evidence does not exist, ARP's position is to say so, rather than manufacture an answer.

The platform's research and measurement approach draws on relevant AMEC resources, including Barcelona Principles 4.0, the Integrated Evaluation Framework and AMEC GEO resources. This is an attribution to and use of relevant professional resources.



Philip Odiakose, Lead Analyst, ARP

ARP's intelligence engine is powered by P+ Measurement Services, bringing specialist experience in reputation, media intelligence, measurement and auditing. Its role provides the research, measurement, review and analytical engine supporting the platform.

"Reputation intelligence must be treated as institutional infrastructure, not an occasional communications exercise," said Mildred Kaunda, Strategic Advisor, ARP. "Africa needs institutions capable of understanding how trust is built, challenged and sustained. ARP creates a shared evidence base for that conversation."

Public institutions can request full-reputation dossiers free of charge, while the platform will continue publishing new intelligence as research progresses. Corporate and financial sector research is paid, helping to subvert the continued availability of public sector intelligence at no cost. Donations to research are also welcomed to expand continuous continental auditing and evidence generation.

Dabiri-Erewa, communication scholars pay tributes to Sobowale

By Sunday Aikulola

CHAIRMAN / Chief Executive Officer of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), Abike Dabiri-Erewa, National President Association of Communication Scholars & Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN) Prof. Rotimi Olatunji, former Head Department of Mass Communication University of Lagos (UNILAG), Prof. Abigail Ogwezy-Ndisika, African representative at the World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC), Prof. Ralph Akinfeleye, Prof. of Publishing, Journalism and Media Studies Babcock University, Samuel Okere and lecturer Department of Mass Communication, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago Iwoye, Ogun State, Dr Oludare Ogunyombo were among the distinguished personalities who described the media scholar, Prof. Idowu Sobowale as a great Nigerian, whose exemplary leadership qualities is worthy of emulation.

In separate reactions, they also agreed Prof. Sobowale left a legacy of academic and professional excellence.

Saying everyone who went through Sobowale's tutelage cannot be the same without his guidance and mentorship, Dabiri-Erewa described

him as one of the lecturers that students would love to remain in touch with, even after many years of leaving the institution.

She added, "I condole with his lovely wife and family and his legacy will leave on in the lives of all of us that he has taught and mentored. May his soul rest in perfect peace, dear Prof. Sho!"

Speaking in a similar vein, Olatunji recalled, "I first met Prof. Sobowale as pioneer dean, School of Communication, LASU in 2002/2003. I later served under him as sub-Dean. He personally used his hard earned income to import desktop computers for the use of the entire students population in the school and gave a set of the desktop computers to each academic staff at the time. He compelled each staff member to use the computer, by insisting that each of us submitted our reports and requests in type-written form. That was leadership that empowers mentors."

Describing him as a man, who led by example, Olatunji said, "he

was prompt at his scheduled lectures.

His interpersonal relationships were unrivalled. He gave me his shoulders to ride on, and gave me wings to fly. He introduced me to his circle of influence. He gave me

assignments that prepared me for life. He positively impacted my family and career. He was instrumental to my serving as National Public Relations Executive of the African Council of Communication Education (ACCE). He ensured that I was involved in the activities of the Association of Communication Scholars & Professionals from inception."

"He shaped my administrative acumen. He was with us wherever we took the Idowu Sobowale International Conference, which was instituted by another equally impactful personality, late Prof. Lai Oso. The leadership and Mentorship qualities of Prof Sobowale were unrivalled. He was a transformational leader. He was a father, an amazing person, an enigmatic personality, an iconic character, a phenomenal and truly amazing leader. He was recently conferred with the ACSPN Fellowship and life membership of the Association, an Association where he served as the pioneer and Lifetime Chair of the Board of Trustees. May God grant his soul eternal rest."

On her part, Ogwezy-Ndisika recounted, "on personal reflection, to many of us at the Department of Mass Communication, University of Lagos and across academia, Prof. Sobowale was more than a professor; he was a beacon of intellectual discipline, integrity and warmth. As one who followed in the footsteps of giants at UNILAG, I benefited immensely from his encouragement and commitment to nurturing generations of scholars and media practitioners. He modelled what it meant to lead with passion, scholarly exactitude and administrative clarity."



Sobowale

VACANCIES



BACKGROUND

Our client is a technical services and engineering solutions company headquartered in Warri, Delta State, Nigeria, specializing in infrastructure, energy, and industrial support systems. The company delivers end-to-end design, procurement, installation, and maintenance services across the water, energy, and oil and gas sectors, with an unwavering commitment to safety, quality, and regulatory compliance. Its workforce is diverse, bringing together professionals of varied backgrounds, ages, and cultures, united by a shared standard of technical excellence and integrity. The company is recruiting professionals with cognate experience to join its team. In addition to meeting function-specific requirements, all candidates must be fluent in English and able to communicate professionally at all levels of the organization. Demonstrate strong communication, negotiation, organizational, and stakeholder management skills.

THE FOLLOWING VACANCIES EXIST:

1. Welding Inspector (Quality Inspector) (Ref: ICT01).
2. Quality Assurance Quality Control (QA/QC) Engineer (Ref: ICT02).
3. Construction Engineer (Ref: ICT03).
4. Project Engineer (Ref: ICT04).
5. Installation Engineer (Ref: ICT05).
6. Material Officer (Ref: ICT06).
7. HSE Engineer (Ref: ICT07).

Successful candidates for all roles must be willing to work in any part of Nigeria. Please note that only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

1. WELDING INSPECTOR (REF: ICT01)

Job Title: Welding Inspector

Reference: ICT 01

Role Overview

We are recruiting an experienced Welding Inspector to oversee and verify welding activities on large scale water infrastructure projects, including reinforced concrete reservoirs, conveyance mains, and associated steelwork. The role requires strong technical knowledge of welding standards, inspection procedures, quality control, and documentation to ensure all welding works meet specified quality, safety, and project requirements.

Job Summary

- Inspect and monitor welding activities to ensure compliance with approved WPS, drawings, specifications, and applicable standards.
- Conduct visual inspections and coordinate NDT activities, including RT, UT, MT, and PT where required.
- Verify welder qualifications, welding consumables, joint preparation, fit-up, preheating, and welding procedures.
- Identify, document, and follow up on welding defects, non-conformities, and corrective actions.
- Maintain accurate inspection reports, weld records, test reports, and quality documentation.
- Liaise with contractors, QA/QC teams, engineers, and project management to ensure welding works are completed to the required quality, safety, and schedule standards.

Qualification, Experience, Skills and Competencies

- B.Eng/B.Sc. in Engineering or a related discipline.
- AWS/CWI or CSWIP 3.1 certification is required.
- Minimum 10 years experience in onshore/offshore fabrication and installation of piping and structural steelwork.
- Strong ability to interpret piping and structural fabrication drawings, weld maps, and related technical documentation.
- Strong technical proficiency in BS/EN Standards, ASME, AWS, ASTM, API Codes, and Client Specifications.
- Demonstrated experience in welding inspection, quality control, NDT coordination, documentation, and compliance with project specifications and standards.
- Strong leadership, communication, and commercial acumen.

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE QUALITY CONTROL

(QA/QC) Engineer (Ref: ICT02)

Job Title: Quality Assurance Quality Control (QA/QC) Engineer

Reference: ICT 02

Role Overview

We are recruiting an experienced QA/QC Engineer to oversee quality assurance and quality control activities for onshore/offshore fabrication and installation works, ensuring compliance with approved drawings, project specifications, applicable codes, and quality standards.

Job Summary

- Implement and monitor QA/QC procedures, Inspection & Test Plans (ITPs), and quality requirements.
- Minimum of 10 years Experience in onshore/offshore fabrication and installation piping and structural steel work.
- Review fabrication drawings, specifications, method statements, and inspection documentation.
- Coordinate and monitor NDT activities, including review of relevant test reports.
- Identify, document, and follow up on non-conformities, corrective actions, and quality issues.
- Prepare and maintain quality records, inspection reports, test documentation, and final QA/QC dossiers.

Qualification, Experience, Skills and Competencies

- B.Eng/ B.Sc in Engineering or a related discipline.
- ASNT Level II certification is required.
- Minimum 10 years' experience in onshore/offshore fabrication and

installation of piping and structural steel work.

- Detailed understanding of piping and structural fabrication drawings and technical specifications.
- Strong knowledge of QA/QC procedures, inspection processes, NDT requirements, and quality documentation.
- Familiarity with applicable ASME, AWS, ASTM, API, BS/EN Standards, and Client Specifications is an added advantage.

3. CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER (REF: ICT03)

Job Title: Construction Engineer

Reference: ICT 03

Role Overview

We are recruiting an experienced Construction Engineer to supervise and coordinate onshore/offshore fabrication and installation activities, ensuring works are executed safely, efficiently, and in accordance with approved drawings, specifications, quality standards, and project schedules.

Job Summary

- Plan, coordinate, and supervise piping and structural steel fabrication and installation activities.
- Interpret and review construction, piping, structural, and fabrication drawings.
- Coordinate site activities with contractors, subcontractors, QA/QC teams, and other disciplines.
- Monitor construction progress, productivity, materials, and compliance with project specifications.
- Ensure adherence to HSE requirements, construction procedures, and approved work methods.
- Support project reporting, progress tracking, inspections, and resolution of technical/construction issues.

Qualification, Experience, Skills and Competencies

- B.Eng/B.Sc in Engineering or a related discipline.
- Minimum 10 years experience in onshore/offshore fabrication and installation of piping and structural steelwork.
- Proficiency in AutoCAD, PDMS, and MS Office applications.
- Strong ability to interpret piping, structural, fabrication, and construction drawings.
- Good knowledge of construction methods, fabrication practices, installation procedures, and project specifications.
- Strong site supervision, coordination, problem-solving, communication, and project execution skills.

4. PROJECT ENGINEER (REF: ICT04)

Job Title: Project Engineer

Reference: ICT 04

Role Overview

We are recruiting an experienced Project Engineer to coordinate and manage engineering and construction activities for onshore/offshore fabrication and installation projects, ensuring technical compliance, timely execution, quality, safety, and effective project delivery.

Job Summary

- Coordinate and monitor engineering, fabrication, and installation activities across project disciplines.
- Review and interpret engineering, piping, structural, and fabrication drawings and specifications.
- Develop and monitor project schedules, work plans, progress, and deliverables.
- Coordinate with construction, QA/QC, HSE, contractors, and other project stakeholders.
- Monitor project performance against scope, schedule, quality, and technical requirements.
- Prepare progress reports, technical documentation, and project updates, while supporting resolution of technical and execution issues.

Qualification, Experience, Skills and Competencies

- B.Eng/B.Sc in Engineering, preferably Mechanical or Civil Engineering.
- Minimum 10 years experience in onshore/offshore fabrication and installation of piping and structural steelwork.
- Proficiency in AutoCAD, PDMS, MS Office, MS Project, and Primavera P6.
- Strong ability to interpret and coordinate engineering, piping, structural, and fabrication drawings.
- Good knowledge of project planning, scheduling, construction methodologies, and engineering standards.
- Strong project coordination, analytical, problem-solving, communication, and stakeholder management skills.

5. INSTALLATION ENGINEER (REF: ICT05)

Job Title: Installation Engineer

Reference: ICT 05

Role Overview

We are recruiting an experienced Installation Engineer to supervise and coordinate onshore/offshore piping and structural steel installation activities, ensuring works are executed safely, efficiently, and in accordance with approved drawings, specifications, quality standards, and project requirements.

Job Summary

- Supervise and coordinate piping and structural steel installation activities.
- Interpret and verify structural, piping, and fabrication drawings for installation works.
- Coordinate installation activities with construction, QA/QC, HSE, and other project teams.

- Monitor installation progress, materials, equipment, and workforce requirements.
- Ensure compliance with approved procedures, technical specifications, quality, and HSE requirements.
- Identify and resolve site installation issues and support timely project execution.

Qualification, Experience, Skills and Competencies

- B.Eng/B.Sc in Engineering, preferably Mechanical, Civil, or Electrical Engineering.
- Minimum 10 years experience in onshore/offshore fabrication and installation of piping and structural steelwork.
- Proficiency in AutoCAD, PDMS, and MS Office.
- Detailed understanding of structural, piping, and fabrication drawings.
- Strong knowledge of installation methods, construction practices, and project specifications.
- Strong site supervision, coordination, problem-solving, communication, and technical execution skills.

6. MATERIAL OFFICER (REF: ICT06)

Job Title: Material Officer

Reference: ICT 06

Role Overview

We are recruiting an experienced Materials Engineer/Officer to manage material identification, quantity take-off, procurement support, tracking, and control for onshore/offshore piping and structural steel fabrication and installation works.

Job Summary

- Prepare accurate Material Take-Offs (MTOs) for piping and structural steel works.
- Review drawings and specifications to determine material types, quantities, sizes, and requirements.
- Monitor material availability, receipt, storage, issuance, and utilization on site.
- Verify materials against approved specifications, standards, and project requirements.
- Maintain accurate material registers, inventory records, and tracking reports.
- Coordinate with engineering, procurement, construction, and QA/QC teams to ensure timely material availability.

Qualification, Experience, Skills and Competencies

- B.Eng/B.Sc in Engineering or a related discipline.
- Minimum 5 years experience in onshore/offshore fabrication and installation of piping and structural steelwork.
- Proficiency in MS Excel and MS Word.
- Good understanding of construction materials, tools, piping, and structural steel components.
- Ability to prepare accurate piping and structural steel MTOs in accordance with applicable standards and project specifications.
- Strong material control, documentation, analytical, coordination, and attention-to-detail skills.

7. HSE Engineer (Ref: ICT07)

Job Title: HSE Engineer

Reference: ICT 07

Role Overview

We are recruiting an experienced HSE Engineer to oversee health, safety, and environmental activities across onshore/offshore fabrication and installation works, ensuring compliance with applicable HSE standards, regulations, and project requirements.

Job Summary

- Implement and monitor HSE policies, procedures, plans, and site requirements.
- Conduct risk assessments, JHA/JSA, toolbox talks, site inspections, and safety audits.
- Monitor compliance with safe work practices, permit-to-work systems, and emergency procedures.
- Investigate and report incidents, near misses, unsafe acts, and environmental issues.
- Promote HSE awareness and provide safety inductions, training, and toolbox meetings.
- Maintain accurate HSE records, reports, statistics, and compliance documentation.

Qualification, Experience, Skills and Competencies

- B.Sc in Environmental Science or any relevant degree.
- Membership of the Nigerian Institute of Safety Professionals (NISP) is required.
- NEBOSH, ISP, and IOSH certifications are required.
- Minimum 8 years experience in onshore/offshore fabrication and installation of piping and structural steelwork.
- Strong knowledge of HSE management systems, risk assessment, incident investigation, and regulatory compliance.
- Strong communication, leadership, safety awareness, reporting, and site inspection skills.

Remuneration:

Attractive

Method of Application:

Interested and qualified candidates should submit applications through the link : <https://shorturl.at/nfe4w>.

Application deadline : 27 October 2026

Age, health, cost, insecurity blamed for campaign lull

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

to the coming election. The ruling party is depending on its control of power. It has people like Senators Godswill Akpabio and Adams Oshiomhole, Nyesom Wike, Senator Ali Modu Sheriff and Abdullaziz Yari.

"The party does not want to engage Nigerians on serious issues such as security and the cost of electricity. The party has also been sidelined because the campaign structures of the President's wife and son are occupying centre stage. I am worried about Nigeria's democracy."

For his part, Okorie said the atmosphere at this stage of the electoral cycle should ordinarily be upbeat, with most candidates campaigning on what they intend to do if elected, while the incumbent explains what it plans to do differently.

"On the contrary, there have been so many threats, intimidation and the

possibility of violence, coming principally from the ruling party and the government. This government has leverage that no other ruling party has ever had, with as many as 32 governors declaring support for the President.

"The APC has overwhelming support in the National Assembly, which Nigerians have described as a rubber stamp. But the ruling party is afraid of the people's verdict at the polls. Instead of rendering accounts and telling Nigerians what they intend to do differently, they resort to threats.

"This has brought about a halt or lull in the struggle for 2027. What we are observing is the silence of the graveyard. Nigerians are waiting for the day of voting. Any attempt to manipulate their franchise will be very devastating and could determine the fate of the nation," he said.

Okorie, who contested the 2015 presidential election on the UPP platform, decried the constriction of the electoral space. He lamented that a situation in which opposition parties have to cough up N150 million to put up a billboard in the Federal Capital Territory

and as much as N250 million in the states does not augur well for democracy.

He observed that while the government had the money to erect billboards, citizens resorted to destroying them. Questioning the gains from the quagmire, he added: "These are ominous signs that we are heading towards a dangerous, very difficult and unimaginable situation."

While expressing optimism that things would pick up by December, Okorie maintained that January would be frenetic and decisive. He, however, regretted that INEC, which should have offered a saving grace, had long lost the confidence of Nigerians.

Candidates' accessibility emerges as campaign issue

PRESIDENTIAL electioneering places considerable demands on candidates, requiring frequent travel, long hours at rallies, meetings with political stakeholders, media interviews and appearances across different regions.

At 74, Tinubu is seeking another term, while Atiku, who turns 80 in November, is preparing for another presidential contest. Their ages

have consequently featured in discussions about the physical demands of campaigning, although age alone does not establish an inability to sustain an intensive election schedule.

Similarly, limited public appearances cannot, without credible evidence, be treated as proof of ill health. A more objective assessment would consider the frequency of state visits, interviews, rallies and direct engagements with voters, compared with previous election cycles.

The APC's explanation suggests that the perceived lull may partly reflect the distinction between preliminary political mobilisation and formal campaigning. Nevertheless, the extent to which candidates personally engage voters, rather than rely on their political structures, is likely to influence perceptions of their accessibility and commitment.

Tinubu's campaign council, headed by former Zamfara State Governor Abdullaziz Yari, is scheduled for inauguration tomorrow, ahead of a campaign flag-off in Kaduna on October 24. The ADC has

also inaugurated its presidential campaign council as it prepares to challenge the incumbent.

These preparations indicate that neither camp has abandoned conventional campaigning. The critical question is how effectively the candidates will combine personal appearances with their parties' mobilisation capacity as the election approaches.

Yilwatda dismissed suggestions that health concerns were affecting Tinubu's readiness to campaign, pointing to the President's October 1 national broadcast as evidence of his fitness.

"President Tinubu, whom you saw on October 1 during the national broadcast, did not look ill. He told journalists himself that he is hale and healthy," he said.

The APC chairman's response reflects the party's determination to counter speculation about the President's health. However, the broader electoral issue extends beyond assurances about physical fitness to whether candidates can sustain public engagement,

explain their programmes and respond directly to questions about their records.

For Tinubu, the challenge is to demonstrate accessibility while defending his administration's performance and seeking another term. Atiku, meanwhile, must demonstrate that he can sustain a nationwide campaign and present a convincing alternative to the incumbent.

These questions have gained political significance following Tinubu's recent absence from Nigeria. While the Presidency maintained that he was well and continued to direct government business from abroad, the ADC used the episode to promise a more physically present and accessible presidency under Atiku.

The exchange has made presidential availability part of the emerging contest. Nevertheless, voters will ultimately assess the candidates based on their programmes, records, capacity to govern and willingness to engage the electorate.

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

GMI: Opposition division, regional vote split guarantee Tinubu's victory

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

governance challenges.

Oibe, however, stressed that the initiative was not intended to compel any candidate to withdraw from the race or surrender his or her constitutional right to contest the presidency. He urged the candidates to approach the proposed consultations with open minds, present their visions for the country and consider areas where their political platforms and support bases could be harmonised.

The organisation said the process required patience, mutual respect, credible criteria and a willingness to negotiate, noting that only one candidate could emerge as president after the election.

Explaining its political assessment of the emerging electoral landscape, GMI's National Coordinator, Samaila Musa, in a statement, argued that Tinubu's political alliances across the country could give the ruling party an advantage in the contest.

The group's analysis focused on the South-West, South-East, North-West, North-East and North-Central regions, highlighting potential competition among opposition figures, including former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar; former Anambra State Governor, Peter Obi, as well as former Kano State Governor, Rabiu Kwankwaso.

Musa said: "Following a nationwide evaluation of political dynamics across all six geopolitical zones, GMI highlights that political realities on the ground coupled with a divided opposition make an opposition victory mathematically impossible.

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Bandits kill four soldiers, 18 others in Zamfara

From **Ifeanyichukwu Nwannah** (Gusau), **Sodiq Omolayo** (Abuja) and **Njadvava Musa** (Maiduguri)

NO fewer than 22 persons, including four soldiers, have been reported killed by bandits along the Gwashi-Nassarawa axis of Bukkuyum Local Council Area of Zamfara State. The Guardian also learnt that three communities in the Dansadau axis of Maru Local Council Area of the state have been displaced after notorious bandits unleashed several terror attacks on them. It was gathered that over 400 community members of the affected communities have deserted the area following separate attacks on the three villages, during which over 12 vehicles were

• Military neutralises ISWAP commander, 40 fighters in Borno airstrike

set ablaze. The bandits were also said to have imposed a N50 million levy on the communities, irrespective of the destruction already wrought there. Meanwhile, the military said the Nigerian Air Force killed over 40 Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) fighters, including a prominent commander, in an airstrike on a terrorist enclave in Borno State. Military Information Officer at the Headquarters of the Joint Task Force (North East), Operation Hadin Kai, Capt. Mohammed Goni, disclosed this in a statement yesterday, adding that the strike also destroyed two vehicles and

about 20 motorcycles used by the terrorists for mobility, logistics and offensive operations. According to Goni, the Air Component of Operation Hadin Kai conducted aerial surveillance, identified terrorist movements around suspected hideouts and logistics facilities, and preliminary human intelligence and battle damage assessment indicate that over 40 terrorists, including a prominent ISWAP Qaid (commander), were neutralised in the strike. Confirming the Zamfara killings, the lawmaker representing Bukkuyum in the House of Assembly, Hamisu Faru, said the terrorists

ambushed the victims on Sunday while the soldiers were on duty in the area. He added that the bodies of some of the victims were yet to be recovered as of the time of filing this report. Also, the Media Information Officer of Operation Fansan Yamma (OPFY), Lt-Col. Aliyu Danja, confirmed the report to newsmen in Gusau yesterday. Meanwhile, the Zamfara State chapter of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) has condemned the attacks, lamenting the further deterioration of security in the state. In a statement by State Publicity Secretary, Kassim Kayatawa, the party called on

the federal and Zamfara governments to urgently deploy more security personnel to vulnerable communities in Dansadau, Bukkuyum and other flashpoints in the state. The airstrike, conducted on October 10, targeted the terrorists' hideout at Badu Village, south of Gudumbali in Guzamala Local Council Area, following intelligence that the insurgents were preparing coordinated attacks on troops in the North-East. According to the report, the fighters belonged to ISWAP's Murabitun element - a specialised mobile fighting unit responsible for patrols, coordinating attacks and sustaining the group's activities in the area.

ASUU strike grounds Taraba varsity over salary dispute

From **Charles Akpeji**, Jalingo

ACADEMIC activities at the Taraba State University (TSU) were suspended yesterday as the university's Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) declared an indefinite strike over the state's alleged failure to implement an agreed remuneration package and pay salary arrears. The strike followed months of discussions without agreement. The ASUU-TSU demands include the immediate implementation of the 2025 Federal Government-ASUU remuneration agreement and payment of all accrued salary arrears from January 2026 to date.

In a statement announcing the strike, the Chairman of ASUU-TSU, Dr Joshua Mbave, said the union had pursued dialogue with the government since February, leading to the formation of a verification committee to review the existing salary structure and assess the implementation of the remuneration agreement across the North-East region.

5,990 FCT education officers begin promotion exam • NLC rejects Wike's 'No Work, No Pay' threat

From **Azimazi Momoh Jimoh**, Abuja

ABOUT 5,990 education officers in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have begun sitting their rescheduled promotion examinations after the intervention of the FCT Minister, Nyesom Wike. Nevertheless, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has rejected the minister's 'No Work, No Pay' directive over the ongoing strike by teachers. The examinations, which cover promotions from Grade Level 13 to Grade Level 17, began on October 5 and entered their sixth day yesterday. However, the development has done little to ease the industrial dispute between the FCT Administration (FCTA) and the organised labour, with the NLC insisting that the indefinite strike declared by its FCT Council remained lawful.



Associate Director, Corporate Accountability and Public Participation Africa (CAPPA), Olamide Martins (left); National President, Precision, Electrical and Related Equipment Senior Staff Association, Rufus Olusesan; Assistant Executive Director, CAPPA, Zikora Ibeh; Geoffrey Occansey of Water Citizens Network, Ghana, and Programme Officer, Water Campaign, CAPPA, Holiness Segun-Olufemi, at the OWORAC Africa Week of Action Against Water Privatisation 2026 briefing in Lagos yesterday.

CDS warns fake AI videos could endanger troops, trigger panic

From **Sodiq Omolayo**, Abuja

THE Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Olufemi Oluyede, has warned that artificial intelligence (AI)-generated videos, manipulated images and cloned voices are increasingly being used to mislead the public, incite fear and undermine confidence in the Armed Forces. Consequently, he called on journalists to strengthen their verification processes and work with the military to expose fabricated content, warning that deepfakes could undermine operational gains, endanger troops and trigger panic in communities. Represented by the Director of Defence Information, Maj.

• Buratai clarifies role in \$1b arms procurement controversy

Gen. Samaila Uba, Oluyede spoke yesterday at the 2026 conference of the Defence Correspondents Association of Nigeria (DECAN) in Abuja. He explained that modern warfare was no longer determined by firepower alone but also by superior intelligence, technological capabilities, cyber resilience and control of the information environment. Also, the Minister of Defence, Gen. Christopher Musa (rtd), represented by his Special Adviser, Air Commodore Stephen Ogunmodede (rtd), said the theme addressed an operational reality that the Armed Forces and other secu-

rity agencies must continually confront. He noted that public understanding of security operations has been shaped largely by visible military action: troops deployed, engagements conducted, territory recovered, and arrests made. According to him, current threats are increasingly complex, adaptive and interconnected as terrorist groups, criminal networks and other adversaries exploit information, technology, financial systems and gaps in coordination to pursue their objectives. However, a former Chief of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. Tukur

Buratai, has clarified that the \$1 billion approved by the National Economic Council (NEC) for the procurement of arms under late President Muhammadu Buhari in 2019 was released to the Federal Ministry of Defence, and not the Armed Forces. Clarifying this yesterday in a keynote address titled: "Beyond Kinetic Warfare: Harnessing Technology and Intelligence-led Operations for Nigeria's National Security" at the DECAN conference, Buratai said, "not a single dollar of that fund passed through my hands or through the accounts of the Nigerian Army, Navy or Air Force."

Mahama urges accessible financing for youths, quality graduates

From **Mansur Aramide**, Ilorin

PRESIDENT of Ghana, John Mahama, has warned that progressive youthful business ideas would not translate to national development without affordable and accessible finance. He said it behooves the governments, financial institutions, universities and the private sector to help create the enabling environment for those youthful ideas to survive, grow and scale. In his speech themed "From Certificate to Enterprise: Africa's Graduates as Architects of the Continent's Economic Future,"

at the maiden convocation ceremony of the University of Offa in Kwara State, Mahama stressed that businesses need affordable finance. Mahama, who was represented by Ghana's High Commissioner-designate to Nigeria, Baba Abdulai Abu, noted that innovators need patient capital, adding that "enterprises need efficient payment systems and market access. "It will be paradoxical for us to tell young Africans to become entrepreneurs but deny them access to finance, infrastructure and opportunity. We

would have offered them an aspiration without the tools to realise it." He emphasised that the responsibility for creating the enabling environment for national growth and development lies not only with tertiary schools but also with the government. According to him, young people must bring their ideas, energy and courage, while governments, financial institutions, universities and the private sector must help create the enabling environment in which those ideas can survive, grow and scale.

Therefore, he urged the University of Offa, where eight students bagged First Class among the 140 first degree graduates, to make enterprise, research, and innovation integral to its identity. Mahama further cautioned against the unchecked number of graduates with theories but lacking in practical knowledge, regretting that "modern African universities cannot be satisfied merely with producing graduates who can pass examinations. It must help students learn how to solve problems."

EWAN summit to address sustainable framework for school protection

By **Princess Olaleye**

DISCUSSIONS at the seventh yearly summit of the Education Writers' Association of Nigeria (EWAN), taking place tomorrow in Lagos, will focus on developing long-term strategies to secure schools, safeguard learners and teachers, and preserve school infrastructure amid rising security threats. In a statement to this end, EWAN Chairman, Mojeed Alabi, said the Inspector-General of Police, Tunji Disu, will deliver the keynote address at the summit themed: 'Schools Under Threat: From Reactive Responses to Sustainable Protection'.

Alabi added that the Chairman, Governing Board of the National Universities Commission (NUC), Prof. Oluwatoyin Ogundipe, will chair the occasion. He explained that the programme was conceived to shift the national conversation on school safety from ad hoc reactions to attacks to a structured, adequately funded protection system driven by early warning and preparedness. According to Alabi, the impact of attacks on schools extends far beyond the immediate security breach, as such incidents create fear among teachers, anxiety among parents, and prolonged disruption of children's learning.

Tompolo donates 25 vehicles as Kogi group backs Tinubu, Karimi

By **Helen Oji** (Lagos) and **Ralph Omololu Agbana** (Lokoja)

PRIVATE security chief, Ekpeemupolo, popularly known as Tompolo, has called on voters in Kogi State to support the re-election of President Bola Tinubu to sustain what he described as ongoing reforms. Ekpeemupolo spoke as he donated 25 vehicles to the PBAT Door-to-Door Movement for grassroots mobilisation in the state. As the grand patron of the movement, Tompolo announced the donation yesterday in Lokoja through the Managing Director of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited, Kestin Pondi, at the inauguration of the movement's Kogi structure. He said the vehicles would support the movement's campaign to mobilise voters for Tinubu's second term, stating that the president has demonstrated courage by removing the petrol subsidy, supporting direct allocation of funds to local councils, and allowing states to regulate electricity within their jurisdictions. Also, a group of politicians and professionals from various fields, called Team Kogi West (TKW), has declared its total support for Tinubu and the Senator representing Kogi West, Sunday Karimi.

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Delay in inking new \$75,000 deal 'frustrates' Chelle

SUPER Eagles coach Eric Chelle is frustrated that despite reaching an agreement on a new deal with Nigeria's football leadership, the contract for the \$75,000-a-month deal is yet to be signed.

The NFF and the National Sports Commission (NSC) recently met with the coach and agreed to increase the gaffer's pay to \$75,000, but with the added responsibility of guiding the national U-23 team to qualify for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics.

According to a report, the Franco-Malian is, however, worried that the NSC is yet to invite him to make the deal official in the absence of the NFF board, whose members resigned *en masse* last month.

Chelle, who led Nigeria

to a bronze medal at the last Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco, wants to ink the new contract before the 2027 AFCON qualifiers double-header against Tanzania, the report said.

Nigeria will host Tanzania in Uyo on November 11, with the return leg in the East African country four days later.

Chelle wants to get the Super Eagles qualification campaign back on track after the 3-0 defeat that the team suffered in Guinea-Bissau. The report said that Chelle is uncomfortable that despite a gentleman's agreement over a new contract, he has yet to sign the dotted line.

"He hopes he can finally sign the new contract before the matches against Tanzania."



UEFA Champions League

Osimhen returns as Garcia warns Barcelona to be ready for war

• Injury-ravaged Arsenal sweat on Hincapie, Rubimendi fitness

GALATASARAY assistant coach Ismael García says that Victor Osimhen will be fit to face Barcelona in the Champions League and feels the striker is the "perfect" player to hurt Hansi Flick's defence, reports *barcablaugrantes.com*.

Osimhen returned from injury at the weekend for the Turkish side and is now expected to face Barca. Garcia says the striker can cause the visitors all sorts of problems.

"Yes, yes. I'm not going to tell you clichés or lies: he's ready to play, and he's a completely different

player for us. Obviously, he's there to play," he told *Diario Sport*. "And I'll tell you more: the top players do well in every game, but perhaps, because of Barcelona's way of defending, so aggressive and with the defensive line in the middle of the field, Osimhen is the striker who, due to his characteristics, is perfect against that

type of defence. "Beyond the fact that he is an extraordinary striker, we hope that he can do a lot of damage to Barcelona with the way he plays."

Despite his confidence in Osimhen, Garcia does admit that taking on Barcelona is a very difficult proposition. "Yes, of course. In the end, playing against Barça is like going to the dentist: you know it's going to hurt, but you have to go and take it as well as possible," he added. "Hopefully things go well. We know that they are possibly the most in-form team in Europe, but we are confident that we can put them in trouble."

Barcelona warmed up for the match with a 3-0 win over Getafe in La Liga, while Galatasaray beat Kasimpasa

3-1 to stay top of the Turkish Super Lig.

Barcelona travel to Istanbul today, looking to recover from their 3-1 defeat to Sporting CP in Lisbon in their Champions League opener. Meanwhile, Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta has confirmed that Piero Hincapie and Martin Zubimendi are doubtful for their clash with Lille, as they sustained freak knocks during a warm-down session on the pitch following Saturday afternoon's win over Leeds United. "Well, it happened, we had a training session planned, and there were two very unfortunate actions, and we lost two players," said Arteta. "We need to assess them; they're having further scans to assess where they are."

Third Elevate Basketball Clinic holds October 17

By Daniel Akinola

THE third edition of the Elevate Basketball Clinic will hold on October at the Rowe Park Sports Centre in Yaba, Lagos, the organisers have said. What began as a vision in 2024 has quickly grown into a movement, they said.

Organised by Elevate Basketball Academy in partnership with the Lagos State Basketball Association, the clinic is more than a sporting event—it is a platform for mentorship, leadership, and community empowerment.

Coordinator Gbade Olatona speaks of its steady rise, noting

how each year more young people are eager to join. This time, he said, hundreds of participants under the age of sixteen are expected to participate in the one-day programme, a testament to the clinic's growing influence. Founder and Sponsor of the initiative, Akinwande Oshodi, said that the project is deeply personal.

Oshodi, a Lagosian but based in the United States, understands the challenges facing young people in Nigeria.

Basketball, he says, was never just a game—it was a teacher. Through it, he learned discipline, perseverance, teamwork, and the importance of believing in something greater than himself.

Team Nigeria depart for inaugural African Boxing Elite Championships

From Ernest Nzor, Abuja

TEAM Nigeria's contingent to the inaugural African Boxing Elite Championships departed Abuja yesterday for the event scheduled to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, from October 15 to 28, 2026.

The Nigerian boxers, according to the National Sports Commission (NSC), will compete in 10 weight categories, comprising five male and five female athletes, as the country seeks to make a strong impression at the continental

championship.

The delegation comprises 19 personnel, including technical crew and support staff, reflecting the country's commitment to promoting elite boxing and strengthening its presence on the African boxing stage.

The competition will provide an important platform for Nigeria's elite boxers to test their abilities against some of the continent's best, gain valuable international experience and demonstrate the depth of Nigerian boxing talent.

AJ-Fury bout, beer, complimentary meal tickets hit £20,000 mark

FANS interested in watching the all-British heavyweight boxing showdown between Tyson Fury and Anthony Joshua should be ready to part with as much as £20,000, according to reports.

In fact, tickets for the blockbuster boxing bout in Cardiff are being sold for more than £20,000 each, writes *cityam.com*.

Hospitality firm Seat Unique is offering "front row, inner ringside with offsite hospitality" for the December fight for £19,995, plus a £999 booking fee.

It reflects demand for a fight that has been in the making for over a decade, with the so-called Battle of Britain show being staged in the Welsh capital despite promoter preferences for New York's Madison Square Garden to host the spectacle.

For £20,000, guests will get a "commemorative" lanyard and ticket, access to the arena "from doors open to close," complimentary beer and wine and a three-course set menu at a site away from the 74,000-capacity Principality Stadium.

Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games

Super Falcons set to seal ticket to third round

NIGERIA'S Super Falcons expect to seal a place in the third of the five-round African qualification series for the 2028 Olympics Women's Football Tournament when they confront Comoros senior women national team for the second time in four days today.

Goals by defender Michelle Alozie and forward Uchenna Kanu earned the 10-time African champions a 2-0 win on Friday, leaving them with an advantage as they push for a second successive appearance at the Olympics, after participating at the Paris 2024 Games – their first in 16 years.

The Indian Ocean islanders lack a CAF-approved venue for international matches. Consequently, Nigeria is serv-

ing as both the home and away venue for both games of the fixture, at the Remo Stars Stadium in Ikenne-Remo.

On Friday, interim Head Coach Augustine Eguavoen and his assistants opted to deploy Chiamaka Nnadozie in goal, with Glory Ogbonna and Michelle Alozie as wing-backs, and Christy Ucheibe and Shukurat Oladipo as centre-backs. Debutant Joy Igboke, Toni Payne and Jennifer Echegini were in midfield and captain Rasheedat Ajibade, Gift Monday and Uchenna Kanu were at the fore.

Today, the coaching crew may decide to try youngster Christiana Uzoma in goal, with the likes of Farida Abdulwahab and Tumininu Adeshina also available for defensive duties. Suliati Abideen was impressive

when she came on in the second period on Friday, and could be given a starting role this time.

Former U-17 team captain Shakirat Moshood and Folasade Ijamilusi are options at the fore, as well as Blessing Nkor and Blessing Okpe who both play in Belarus, and Sweden-based Joy Omewa.

The third-round fixture against Morocco will hold in March 2027.



Super Falcons in training ahead of today's LA 2028 Olympics qualifier against Comoros in Ikenne.

Young II FA retain top spot as Nathaniel Idowu U-16 League enters seventh week

By Daniel Akinola

YOUNG II FA, at the weekend, strengthened their position at the top of the table as the race for honours in the 2026 Nathaniel Idowu Under-16 Football League gathers momentum.

The latest round of matches at the New Maracana Sports Complex, Tolu, and the Nathaniel Idowu Football Pitch, Oregie, offered another reminder of the quality, passion and excitement that have become hallmarks of the competition.

With 23 goals scored across five matches, Week Six provided plenty of entertainment for spectators while reinforcing the league's reputation as a platform for developing young

football talents. Sponsored by the Nathaniel Idowu Foundation and organised by Peakline Sports World Limited under the leadership of Director-General McAnthony Anaelechukwu, the competition continues to nurture promising players and promote grassroots football development.

At the centre of the title race is Young II FA, whose disciplined approach and defensive solidity have set them apart from the rest of the field. Their 1-0 victory over Moore Wins Foundation FA may not have been the most dramatic result of the week, but it was another demonstration of the consistency that has carried them to the summit.

Guest Writer

Chidi Anselm Odinkalu



Osimhen returns as Garcia warns Barcelona to be ready for war

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Nigeria: Outsourcing the presidency, one infirmity at a time

NEARLY 20 years ago, while stumping for his party, the Peoples Democratic Party, outgoing president, Olusegun Obasanjo, decided to confront head-on morbid rumours about the health of his hand-picked successor. Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, then governor of Katsina State and the president's man for the job, was said to be stricken in a hospital in Germany. From the podium, Obasanjo dialled before bellowing, "Umoru, are you dead?" It was obviously not a question for a dead man.

Yar'Adua was mercifully alive. He returned in time to be announced winner of a presidential election in 2007 widely described as "a charade." His tenure was dogged by concerns about ill-health until his death in May 2010.

Presidential infirmity was not unknown to Nigeria. Ibrahim Babangida was only 46 when he was flown out of the country for medical attention in 1986. The cause, Nigerians were informed, was "Radiculopathy", a multi-syllabic tongue-twister that sent many newsrooms consulting diagnostic standard manuals.

In November 2009, President Yar'Adua required overseas hospitalisation for "Acute Pericarditis."

In the first 46 months of his first term as civilian president from 2015 to 2019, Muhammadu Buhari spent 407 days outside Nigeria, with about 242 days or nearly 60 per cent of that devoted to health tourism overseas. He was 72 when he was inaugurated as civilian president, an age at which infirmity is not unknown in the ordinary course of human events.

Four things emerge from these instances. First, the wellbeing of a president is a legitimate matter of public and civic concern.

Second, like all human beings, presidents can and do from time to time take ill. Babangida and Yar'Adua were much younger than President Tinubu is today, whatever his age may be.

Third, there was a time when presidential handlers believed they owed the country the benefit of some disclosure about the wellbeing of the president or lack of it. That, it seems, is history.

Fourth, irrespective of the health status of the president, the country must always avoid a leadership vacuum.

The twin crises of power and succession that accompanied the final months of the Umaru Musa Yar'Adua presidency brought this last point home with urgency.

In response, the National Assembly enacted a constitutional amendment designed to keep the country running when a president needs to take time off for running repairs. All it requires is for the president to temporarily transfer power to his vice and notify the National Assembly appropriately.

On-going concerns about the health status of the incumbent suggest a presidency deeply enamoured of or, as the *Punch* newspaper says, invested in treating constitutional provisions as an "ornamental" inconvenience.

In office for 41 months so far, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has spent over 270 days (about 22 per cent) outside the country, including over 100 days spent on 13 different trips of varying descriptions to France alone. The reason for the frequency of his visits to France is credibly suspected to be medical.



Tinubu

Rather than a temporary transfer of power as the constitution allows, it seems he may prefer instead to outsource it. To whom is not clear, but examples from other places could help.

In a study published in 1999, Herbert Abrams, writing about the United States, recounts that "Presidential infirmity, accompanied by a failure to fully inform the public, has been stamped indelibly on our history during the past 200 years. Fourteen of the 18 American presidents in the 20th century had significant illnesses while in office....that were either concealed from the American people or underreported."

Take for instance the case of Dr. Woodrow Wilson, the Nobel Prize-winning 28th president, who took the United States through the First World War and inspired the League of Nations. Returning home from Europe in July 1919 from signing the Treaty of Versailles which ended World War 1, Wilson preoccupied himself with the ultimately futile effort to persuade his country into the League.

In the middle of this effort, on October 2, 1919, President Wilson suffered a stroke. According to medical records released only in 1991, the stroke was so massive that it would have been "impossible for him ever to achieve more than a minimal state of recovery."

Yet, as narrated by Christopher Andrew in his 1995 history of U.S. secret intelligence, *For the President's Eyes Only*, Wilson's second wife (the first died in 1914), Edith Galt, helped to "suppress accurate information about his health and to ensure that he continued as president for the remainder of his second term" until 1921.



Shefftima

On the other side of the Atlantic, the health of President Wilson's contemporary and ideological adversary, Vladimir Ilich Lenin, was the subject of equally intense scheming between a shrewd wife and ruthless usurper. In 1922, Lenin elevated Josef Stalin to the position of General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party with sweeping powers over party matters. Shortly thereafter, Stalin drew Lenin's ire when he (and another senior Central Committee member also from Georgia, Sergo Ordzonikidze) annexed Georgia.

Ill-health stayed the hand of an angry Lenin who was struck down by a massive stroke in December 1922. To preserve the life of the party's greatest asset, the Politburo under Stalin's influence restricted Lenin to working for a mere 10 minutes daily. Upon learning that Lenin was doing more, Stalin accosted Lenin's wife, Nadezhda Krupskaya, warning her rather darkly, as recounted by Stalin's

biographer, Simon Sebag Montefiore, that if she did not ensure compliance "the Central Committee would appoint someone else as Lenin's wife."

In France, President Georges Pompidou repeatedly denied that he had anything less worrisome than a common cold until his death in office of cancer in 1974.

In 1981, Pompidou's successor, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, lost in a close election to the inscrutable Francois Mitterrand. In the same year, President Mitterrand learnt that he had prostate cancer that had metastasized to the bones. Mitterrand promptly declared this a State Secret. Hiding it even from his wife, he ran for and won a second seven-year term in 1988, promising France that he was in robust health. In his debate with Jacques Chirac in 1988, Mitterrand infamously faced a more formidable challenge from an overwrought bladder in desperate need of relief.

As the *Washington Post* reported in January 1996, "Mitterrand's cancer reached such a critical state in late 1994 that he was no longer able to carry out his duties and spent most of his time resting in bed." The week after Mitterrand's death in January 1996, his doctor, Claude Gubler, published a book, *Le Grand Secret*, detailing this grand deception. French authorities promptly banned the book because it allegedly breached medical confidentiality.

Closer home, Tunisia's founding President for 32 years, Habib Bourgiba, chose to stay in office after being diagnosed with arteriosclerosis in 1983. In November 1987, Bourgiba, already enfeebled by dementia, gave his shocked compatriots a prime-time disquisition on the state of his testicles. His once-loyal Prime-Minister, General Zine Abdine Ben-Ali mercifully moved to confine Bourgiba under medical detention in the appropriately-named Monastir, where he died in 2000.

When he went on trial in 1994, shortly after his overthrow at the end of 31 years as Malawi's leader, the court ruled Dr Hastings Banda physically and mentally unfit to attend his own trial. He had in fact been "senile for years." Yet, for 31 years until his ouster earlier in the same year, Dr Banda held Malawians in thrall as the all-knowing Ngwazi. Real power had been outsourced to his "Official Hostess", Mama Cecilia Kadzamira and her uncle, John Tembo.

In Malawi also, a dead president was wilfully mis-represented as merely unwell. After he died on April 5, 2012, Malawi's presidency contrived to export the dead remains of President Bingu wa Mutharika to South Africa to enable them buy time for an unconstitutional succession by his brother and then Foreign Minister, Peter Mutharika. They mis-led Malawians with the announcement that the president "had... taken ill and had been flown to South Africa for specialist treatment."

Whatever the medical dictionaries may say, the lesson of history is quite clear: infirmity can outsource the presidency under cover of "a bodyguard of lies." Nigeria was supposed to have made this history in 2010, but the lessons do not seem to have been learnt.

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