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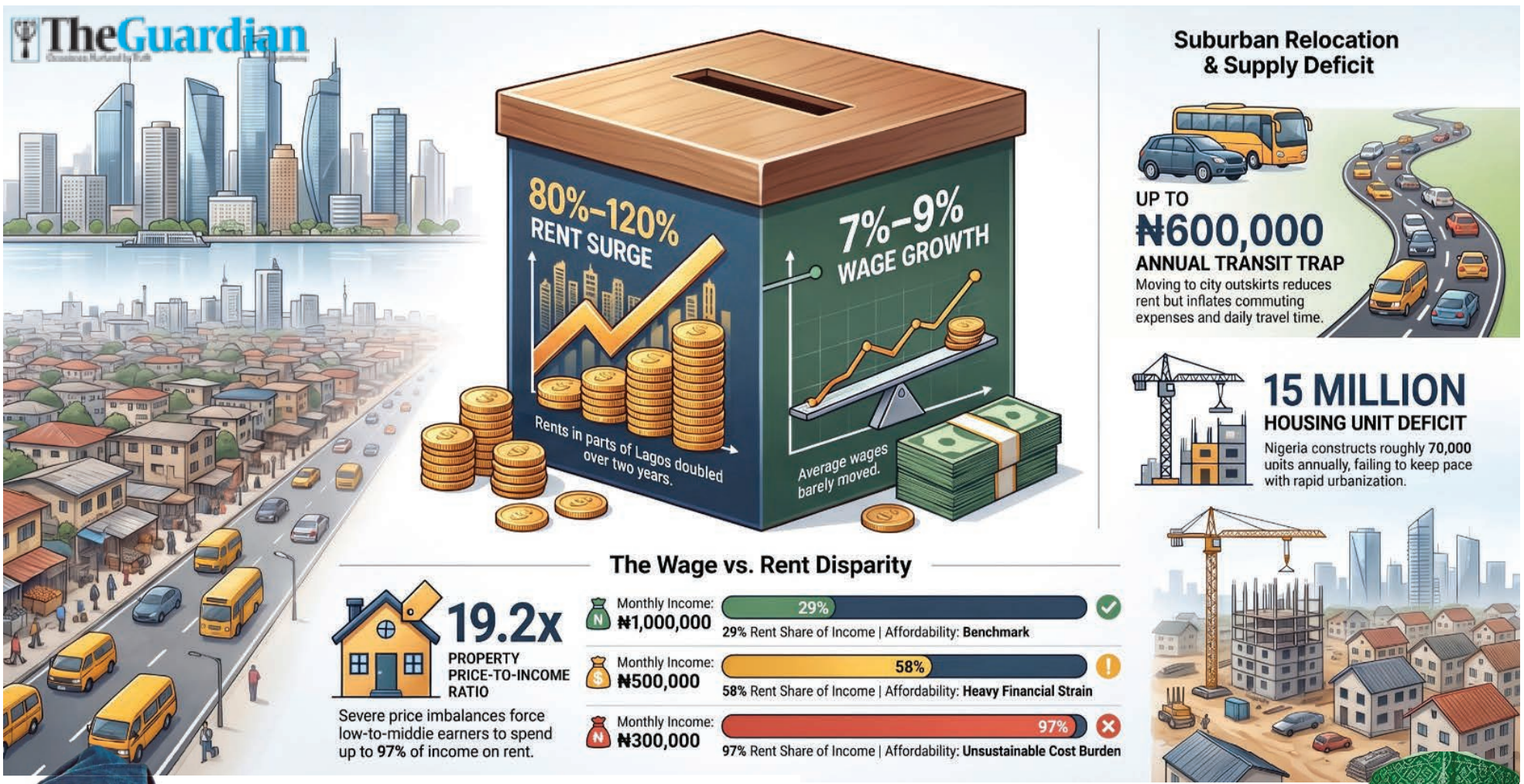
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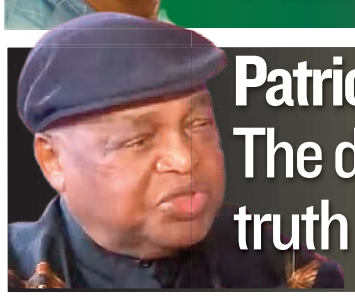
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Patrick Dele Cole: The diplomat who stood firm for truth in newsrooms, public life

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Atiku demands police officers' pay review, status of Police Exit Bill

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Alia chides Wike over FAAC comment as PDP demands facts

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IMF, World Bank commend Oyedele's G-24 leadership at Thailand meeting

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Panorama

SPOTLIGHT

777,907 women in 15 states to benefit from 15.56m Dangote Refinery IPO shares

A TOTAL of 777,907 under privileged Nigerian women across 15 states are set to benefit from 15.56 million shares in Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals IPO under the Aliko Dangote Foundation's (ADF) Women Share Subscription Grant Initiative, a programme designed to empower women through equity ownership in one of Africa's largest industrial enterprises.

The initiative, which forms part of a broader target to empower two million vulnerable Nigerian women across all 36 states and the FCT has already attracted commitments from 15 state governments. Under the arrangement, the Foundation will match each participating state's contribution, enabling beneficiaries to acquire shares in the refinery at no personal cost. The confirmed states are Abia, Anambra, Borno, Ebonyi, Enugu, Gombe, Imo, Kebbi, Kwara, Lagos, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Yobe and Zamfara.

According to the programme's implementation summary, the 777,907 prospective beneficiaries have been earmarked for approximately 15.56 million shares, offering vulnerable women, most of whom may be entering the capital market for the first time, an opportunity to become shareholders in one of Africa's most significant industrial investments. Gombe state has emerged as the first state to make full payment towards the initiative, marking an important milestone in the programme's implementation.

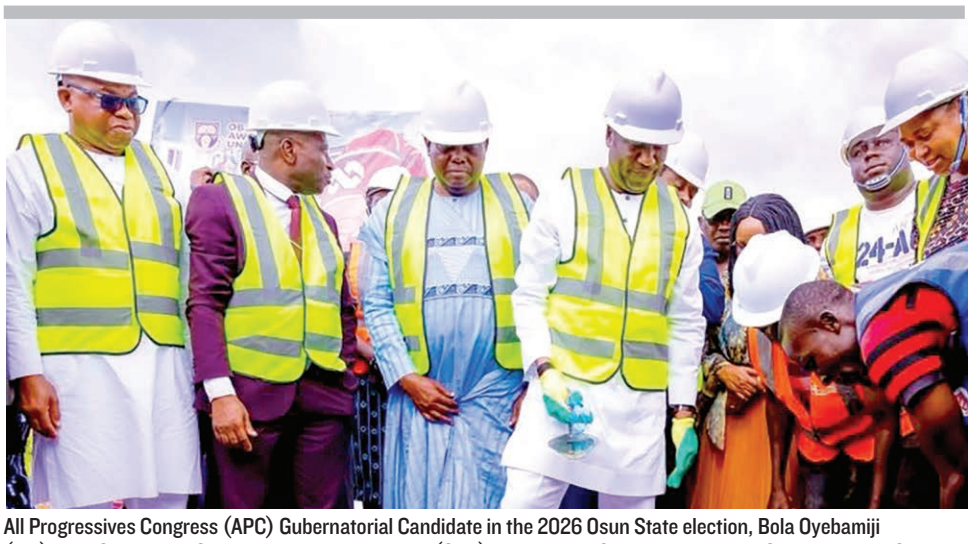
BOI, Sapphital, Youth Ministry partner to empower 500 young Nigerians

THE Bank of Industry (BOI), in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Youth Development (FMYD), has launched the BOI Youth Empowerment Pilot Programme.

The programme will provide free vocational and entrepreneurial training to 500 young Nigerians. The programme will be delivered by Sapphital, a Pan-African digital learning and technology company based in Abuja, Nigeria. Sapphital specialises in AI-powered Learning Management Systems (LMS), e-learning and custom software solutions. Through the programme, participants will gain practical skills and knowledge to support skill development, enterprise development, entrepreneurship, and future employment.

The pilot will be delivered through the Nigerian Youth Academy (NiYA), where they will complete short, instructor-led video courses. The courses were selected based on income-generation potential and market demand. Training will cover creative and artisan skills, production and manufacturing skills as well as digital skills.

In addition to the training, selected participants will have access to mentorship, practical exposure, and enterprise support opportunities.



All Progressives Congress (APC) Gubernatorial Candidate in the 2026 Osun State election, Bola Oyebamiji (left);Vice-Chancellor, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Prof. Simeon Banire; Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Adejare Bello and representative of President Bola Tinubu/Lagos State Deputy Governor, Dr Kadri Obafemi Hamzat, during the Foundation Laying of the President Bola Ahmed Tinubu International Centre for Youth Empowerment and Inter-Cultural Dialogue at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, at the weekend.

Newswatch unveils book on Dele Giwa 40 years after assassination

NEWSWATCH Plus Limited will today unveil a book on Dele Giwa, founding editor-in-chief of Newswatch magazine, to mark the 40th anniversary of his assassination.

The book, titled Dele Giwa's Granite Journalism, will be presented at the Kessington Adebutu Auditorium of the Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ), Ogba, Ikeja, Lagos.

The event, scheduled for noon, will be chaired by Sam Amuka, founder and publisher of *Vanguard* Newspapers.

In a statement announcing the event, Newswatch said the book celebrates Giwa's contributions to journalism through his writings for *Daily Times*, *Sunday Concord* and *Newswatch* magazine.

Edited by Ray Ekpu, the book also features tributes from prominent journalists, particularly Giwa's friends and contemporaries.

Giwa was killed by a parcel bomb at his residence on Talabi street, Ikeja, Lagos, on October 19, 1986. His assassination remains unsolved.

He co-founded *Newswatch* in 1985 alongside Ekpu, Yakubu Mohammed and Dan Agbese. Giwa served as the magazine's editor-in-chief, with Ekpu as his deputy.

Under Giwa's editorship, *Newswatch* became a prominent force in Nigerian journalism, helping to strengthen investigative reporting in the country.

The planned book presentation also comes after the deaths of two other founding editors, Agbese and Mohammed, in November 2025 and January 2026, respectively. Ekpu is now the only surviving member of the magazine's founding quartet.

Don't distract Oyebanji with 2030 guber ambitions, Tinubu warns at gov's thanksgiving service

From **Ayodele Afolabi**

PRESIDENT Bola Ahmed Tinubu, has cautioned members of the political class in Ekiti against constituting unnecessary distraction to the Ekiti State Governor, Mr Biodun Oyebanji through early declaration of interest in the 2030 governorship contest, saying such declaration could cause internal contradictions capable of derailing governance.

The President gave the admonition as Governor Oyebanji promised to undertake more transformative initiatives to rejig the economy and tackle poverty, unemployment and deprivation as his second term begins.

Oyebanji and his Deputy, Chief (Mrs) Monisade Afuye, were inaugurated for a second term at a well attended inauguration ceremony graced by President Tinubu, held at the Ekitiparapo Pavilion, New Iyin Road, Ado Ekiti on Friday.

... DAY 4558

OUR GIRLS STILL MISSING

Tope Templer Olaiya, News Editor
@TopeTempler

RANDOM FACTS

- Charging a power bank to 80% instead of 100% reduces stress on its lithium cells, extending its storage life.
- Nigeria, South Africa and Burkina Faso refused to accept USA's request to accept foreign deportees over security concerns. Uganda, Liberia, Cameroon, Rwanda, DR Congo, Eswatini, South Sudan, Equatorial Guinea and Central African Republic accepted the deal. Ghana and Sierra Leone accepted U.S. deportees from West Africa.
- The shortest war in history was between Zanzibar and England in 1896. Zanzibar surrendered after 38 minutes.

TODAY'S QUOTE

"No victor, no vanquished.

Money isn't Nigeria's problem, but how to spend it.

YAKUBU GOWON

No evil deed will go unpunished; any evil done by man to man will be redressed; if not now then certainly later; if not by man, then by God for the victory of evil over good is temporary.

Nigeria is on fire and the citizens are amused.

DELE GIWA"

TODAY IN HISTORY

• 2025 - France
Pieces of the French Crown Jewels valued at €88 million were stolen during a heist on the Louvre Museum in Paris. The robbery took less than eight minutes. The location of the jewels remains unknown.

• 2020 - Nigeria
As #EndSARS protest rage on, Lagos State Government ordered closure of all public and private schools indefinitely as more police stations were attacked. Hoodlums in Edo State invaded Benin prison and freed inmates while a group of hackers known as Anonymous brought down several government websites. Bola Tinubu, national leader of the All Progressives Congress backed the protest calling for an end to police brutality in Nigeria. In a statement by his media aide, Tunde Rahman, Tinubu denied sponsoring the protest rocking most state across Nigeria.

• 2019 - UK
The House of Commons of the United Kingdom held a Saturday sitting for the first time since April 3, 1982 during the Falklands War because of the Brexit deal.

•2018 - Saudi Arabia
Saudi Arabia admitted that the missing journalist Jamal Khashoggi died in its consulate in Istanbul, Turkey.

• 2016 - Nigeria
Prince Eheneden Erediauwa was crowned the 39th Oba of Benin in Benin City, Edo, with Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo leading federal government's delegation.

• 2015 - Nigeria
Nigerian footballer Emmanuel Emenike publicly announced his retirement from the Super Eagles

• 2005 - Iraq
Saddam Hussein went on trial in Baghdad for crimes against humanity.

• 2003 - Italy
Mother Teresa was beatified by Pope John Paul II.

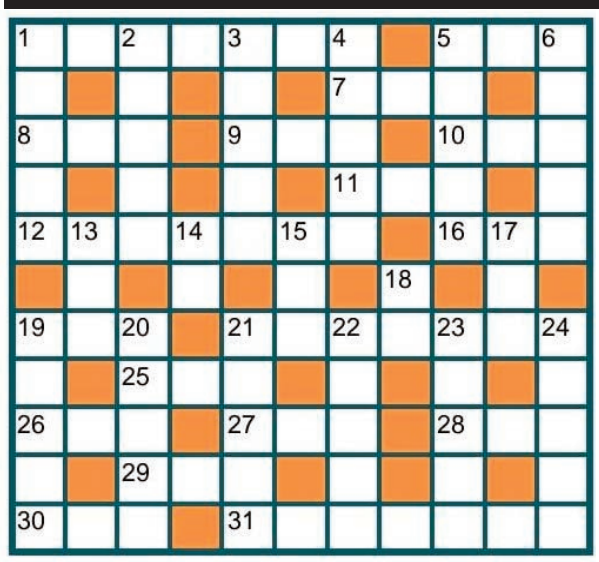
• 1991 - India
An earthquake in northern India, of magnitude 7, killed 2,000 people.

•1986 - Mozambique
Samora Machel, President of Mozambique and a prominent leader of FRELIMO, and 33 others died when their Tupolev 134 plane crashed into the Lebombo Mountains.

• 1986 - Nigeria
Dele Giwa (born 1947), prominent journalist and co-founder of News-watch magazine was murdered when he opened a package containing a bomb at his Ikeja, Lagos residence

• 1934 - Nigeria
Yakubu Gowon, Nigeria's 3rd Head of State from 1966 to 1975 and during the Nigerian Civil War, was born.

CROSS WORD PUZZLE



• ACROSS
1. LGA in Kwara State, (7).
5. Audio receive only, abbr., (3).
7. Combine things, (3).
8. Salt in pharmacy, (3).
9. Nielsen Television Index, abbr., (3).
10. Stop living, (3).
11. Fish eggs, (3).
12. LGA in Kebbi State, (7).
16. Female mammal, (3).
19. Stage of life, (3).
21. Unskilled person, (7).
25. Internet, (3).
26. Alcoholic drink, (3).
27. Irritate somebody, (3).
28. Sexually transmitted infection, abbr.
29. Unruly crowd of people, (3).
30. A city located in Abia State, (3).
31. LGA in Nasarawa State, (7).

• DOWN
1. LGA in Kogi State, (5).
2. Religion, abbr., (5).
3. Wood projection for joint, (5).
4. Non-accelerating inflation rate of unemployment, (5).
5. United, (5).
6. LGA in Kogi State, (5).
13. Small tattered piece, (3).
14. United Nations, abbr., (2).
15. Adhesive, (3).
17. Warri King's title, (3).
18. Saint, abbr., (2).
19. LGA in Lagos State, (5).
20. Insert liquid into rectum, (5).
21. LGA in Oyo State, (5).
22. Off center, (5).
23. Industrial city in Germany, (5).
24. Asian yogurt dish, (5).

Check page 39 for solution to the puzzle

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News

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Poverty deepening economic exclusion nationwide, forum warns

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

• EU says most of world's poor in Nigeria, commits €45m aid
• Stop campaigning for Tinubu, tackle hardship, HURIWA tells Oyedele

NIGERIA'S deepening poverty crisis is shutting millions of citizens out of economic opportunities, shrinking businesses and exposing vulnerable households to insecurity, displacement and worsening living conditions.

The Federal Government, European Union (EU) and ActionAid Nigeria have warned that tackling the crisis requires more than emergency relief, demanding sustainable livelihoods, secure housing, accountable public spending and stronger social protection.

The EU Ambassador to Nigeria and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Gautier Mignot, said Nigeria probably had the highest number of people living below the poverty threshold globally, describing poverty as one of the country's biggest challenges.

He disclosed that the EU had committed nearly €45 million in humanitarian assistance to Nigeria in 2026, particularly to support conflict-affected and crisis-prone areas.

Meanwhile, the Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has criticised the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Taiwo Oyedele, over his comments on President Bola Tinubu's re-election prospects, urging him to focus on addressing the economic hardship facing Nigerians.

The concerns on poverty were raised on Saturday in Abuja at the 2026 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, held under the theme, 'United for Peace and Human Rights: Safe Homes for All'.

The speakers included the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction, Dr Bernard Doro; Mignot and Country Director of ActionAid Nigeria, Dr Andrew Mamedu.

Mamedu cited World Bank figures estimating that 123 million Nigerians, representing 50.8 per cent of the population, lived in extreme poverty in 2025.

Separately, Doro and Mignot referenced Nigeria's 2022 National Multidimensional Poverty Index, which estimated that about 133 million people (or 63 per cent of the population) experienced multi-dimensional poverty.

Although the figures measure different dimensions of deprivation and cover different periods, they underscore the scale of Nigeria's poverty challenge.

For Doro, the crisis is not merely a humanitarian concern but an economic threat that limits productivity, purchasing power and business growth. He warned that widespread poverty was excluding millions of Nigerians from meaningful economic activity, depriving businesses of potential customers and workers.

"When you have 63 per cent of your population living in multi-dimensional poverty, what you're doing is excluding 63 per cent from economic activation," he said.

The minister urged the private sector to see poverty reduction as an investment in economic growth rather than a responsibility reserved for government and humanitarian organisations.

The housing challenge also featured prominently in Mamedu's intervention, with the ActionAid director arguing that a safe home should be regarded as a foundation for human dignity and economic opportunity, not a privilege for the wealthy.

The EU, meanwhile, called for urgent and sustained action, with Mignot warning that neither humanitarian needs nor poverty could be postponed.

He disclosed that the nearly €45 million the EU committed in humanitarian assistance to Nigeria targeted conflict-affected and crisis-prone areas through its European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Tinubu nominated APC gov's brother as INEC Commissioner, ADC cries out

Sokoto govt insists appointment on merit

From **Andrew Oota**, Abuja

AFRICAN Democratic Congress (ADC) has raised concerns over the nomination of Prof. Mustapha Aliu as a commissioner of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), alleging that he is a maternal brother of Sokoto State Governor, Ahmed Aliyu.

But the Sokoto State Government dismissed the concerns raised by the ADC governorship candidate, Manir Dan'iya, insisting that the appointment was based on merit.

ADC spokesperson, Bolaji Abdullahi, shared on his official *X* handle yesterday, said the alleged relationship between the nominee and the governor, who is seeking re-election on the APC platform "raises serious questions about impartiality, public confidence and the credibility of the electoral process."

The party called on the Senate to thoroughly scrutinise the nominees, citing Section 156(1)(a) of the Constitution, which it said prohibits membership of a political party by an INEC member.

"The principle is clear: electoral referees must not only be impartial, they must be seen to be impartial. We join all well-meaning Nigerians in calling on the Senate to subject this nomination to rigorous scrutiny and reject the nomination based on partiality," it stated.

MEANWHILE, Sokoto government challenged Dan'iya to provide evidence of alleged political affiliations that could undermine the nominee's impartiality, arguing that his family relationship with Governor Aliyu was not sufficient grounds for disqualification.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng



Oyedele



Mignot



Ojulari

Subsidy removal, retention meaningless without accountability, says Lamido

From **Adamu Abuh**, Abuja

APC pitches subsidy, others for Tinubu's re-election, launches portal for support groups

CHIEFTAIN of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Sule Lamido, has argued that removing or retaining fuel subsidy would make little difference to Nigerians without effective law enforcement and prudent management of public resources.

This was as the All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Campaign Council (PCC) identified fuel subsidy removal, tax reforms and local government autonomy as among key policy achievements it intends to showcase in its drive to secure support for President Bola Tinubu's re-election.

The PCC said it would mobilise support groups and volunteer networks nationwide to communicate the administration's policies, explain its achievements and engage Nigerians ahead of the 2027 general elections.

So, it launched an online registration portal to coordinate groups and volunteer networks mobilising support for Tinubu's re-election.

Lamido spoke with journalists after the party's campaign council was inaugurated in Jigawa State, where he maintained that subsidy policy alone could not resolve the country's economic challenges.

The former governor of Jigawa recalled supporting the proposed removal of fuel subsidy during the administration of former President Goodluck Jonathan, saying the policy should be assessed based on its implications for individual states and their residents.

He explained that fuel consumption varied across states, arguing that areas with fewer vehicles could benefit less from a subsidy regime that favoured high fuel consumption in major urban centres.

Lamido, however, maintained that neither removing nor retaining the subsidy would adequately address the country's economic challenges without proper management of public funds.

"Either way, the money will not amount to anything because there is no enforcement of law and order," he said.

DIRECTOR of the 2027 APC Presidential Campaign Council Support Groups Mobilisation Directorate, Silas Agara, disclosed the party's campaign strategy in Abuja, yesterday, while announcing the launch of an online registration portal for groups and volunteers supporting Tinubu's second-term bid.

The registration portal opened on October 17 and will close on October 22, 2026. The directorate urged all groups working for the President's re-election to register within the five-day window, irrespective of whether they had previously registered with the party or another campaign structure.

Speaking during a briefing at the TSG office in Abuja, Agara described the exercise as a strategic move to build a stronger, better-coordinated and nationwide support network for the campaign.

He said the registration process would enable the directorate to verify participating groups, determine their geographical spread and assess their organisational capacity to facilitate effective coordination and engagement with voters.

According to him, support groups serve as an important link between the party, the campaign organisation and Nigerians by bringing together communities, professional associations, interest groups and volunteers to communicate government policies and engage citizens on issues affecting their lives.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

Alliance seeks probe into NNPCL's N11.2tr receivables

ALLIANCE for Economic Research and Ethics (AERE) yesterday urged the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) to explain the N11.2 trillion owed to it by the federation, raising fresh concerns over the transparency of the company's oil revenue accounting.

In a policy analysis, the group said the broad accounting classification made it difficult for Nigerians to establish precisely how much was attributable to physical asset protection, petrol price support arrangements and other advances.

The analysis came as NNPCL reported a profit after tax (PAT) of N7.183 trillion for 2025, up from N5.414 trillion in the preceding year, declaring a dividend of N5.8 trillion and recorded peak crude oil and condensate production of 1.77 million barrels per day.

But while acknowledging the reported improvements, the Dele Oye-led AERE argued that the figures should be accompanied by a clearer account of how revenue was generated, how obligations were settled and how much cash was actually remitted to the federation.

AERE said despite attempts at transparency, the disclosures did not invalidate the reported profit but made it necessary to distinguish earnings generated by core operations from other income and accounting adjustments.

"When a company's profit grows while core revenue and gross profit retreat, citizens deserve to know which cash-generating operations did the lifting, which accounting estimates moved, and which one-off items may not return," the report stated.

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SERAP sues INEC over N126b election appropriation

By **Silver Nwokoro**

SOCIO-ECONOMIC Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) has sued the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) at the Federal High Court, Abuja, over alleged failure to account for more than N126.46 billion in public funds appropriated for electoral operations.

SERAP, in the suit filed, alleged that the funds were diverted, lost, mismanaged or otherwise unaccounted for.

The organisation said the funds were appropriated for the procurement of ballot boxes, electoral devices and materials, sensitive materials and result sheets, vehicles and accreditation devices, as well as audit and consultancy services, digital archiving and other goods and services required for the conduct and administration of elections.

According to SERAP, the allegations were contained in the 2023 audited report of the Auditor-General of the Federation, published on August 7, 2026, covering various periods between January and December 2022 and, in some cases, extending to December 31, 2023.

Dangote Refinery IPO attracts investors from 51 African countries

By **Waliat Musa**

DANGOTE Petroleum Refinery & Petrochemicals has announced that its ongoing Initial Public Offering (IPO) has attracted participation from investors across Africa and around the world, with subscriptions received from more than 90 countries, including investors from 51 of Africa's 54 nations.

The unprecedented level of participation positions the transaction as Africa's first truly pan-African public offering, reflecting strong investor confidence in African-led industrialisation and a growing desire among Africans to own strategic assets built on the continent.

The company noted that the IPO has already set new benchmarks in the capital markets, breaking the Nigerian market record on its opening day and surpassing the previous African record within its first ten days, driven by robust demand from retail investors, pension funds, institutional investors, asset managers, and members of the investing public.

Commenting on the milestone, the Chief Financial Officer of Dangote Group, Murat Erden, said: "This offering represents far more than a capital-raising exercise.

Makinde, FG bicker over 'withheld' N250b NLNG allocation

Lagos APC dismisses gov's 12-state target

From **Terhemba Daka** (Abuja), **Rotimi Agboluaje** (Ibadan) and **Tunde Bodunrin**

PRESIDENCY has accused Oyo State Governor, Seyi Makinde, of misleading the public over federal revenue allocations, recalling his description of increased Federation Account inflows to states as "voodoo".

It also dismissed his claim that the Federal Government was withholding N250 billion in NLNG dividends for each state until after the 2027 elections.

The Special Adviser to the President on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, said Makinde's latest allegation was inconsistent with the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) revenue-sharing formula and NLNG's historical dividend payments.

In a statement yesterday, Onanuga said the governor made the allegation at the 2027 Budget Stakeholders' Consultative Engagement held at the Olola Ogunlana Hall, International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan, on Friday.

Makinde had alleged that the Federal Government was delaying the release of the funds until after the elections, claiming that the money had already been spent.

The Presidency dismissed the claim, arguing that the figures did not add up under the established revenue-sharing framework.

Onanuga said a one-off payment of N250 billion to each of the 36 states would amount to N9 trillion, excluding the Federal Government, the Federal Capital Territory and the 774 local government areas.

He explained that states receive 26.72 per cent of distributable Federation Account revenue under the FAAC formula. For their combined share to reach N9 trillion, he said, total NLNG dividends paid into the Federation Account would have to exceed N33.68 trillion, equivalent to about $25 billion, in a single declaration.

"NLNG has never paid $25 billion in dividends to the Federation Account in a single payout," he said.

While acknowledging Makinde's constitutional right to contest for the presidency, the presidential spokesman urged him to substantiate his claims with verifiable facts rather than make allegations he described as false and misleading.

He urged Nigerians to disregard the governor's claims, arguing that they could misinform the public and fuel unnecessary disaffection against the Federal Government.

But reacting to the Presidency's defence, Makinde, through his aides, insisted on the claim.

He said: "We have read the Presidency's response to Governor Seyi Makinde's statement on the Federal Government's withholding of NLNG dividends due to states and local governments.



Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), George Akume (left); Deputy Senate President, Barau Jibrin; Vice President Kashim Shettima; former Governor of Kogi State, Yahaya Bello; National Chairman, All Progressives Congress (APC), Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda; Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Mohammed Ali Pate; Kano State Governor, Abba Kabir Yusuf; former Kano State Governor, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau; and Special Adviser to the President on Policy and Coordination, Hadiza Bala Usman, during the unveiling of the Arewa 4 Asiwaju (A4A), Campaign Head Office in Abuja at the weekend.

Crashed military jet's black box yet to be recovered two weeks after

By **Olusegun Koiki**

TWO weeks after the military jet crash, *The Guardian* can report that the black box has not been located.

The Nigerian Air Force (NAF) aircraft ATR-42 with the registration number NGR 931 had crashed into a swampy area in Igbokoda, Ondo State on Monday, October 5, 2026, killing all 25 persons on board.

A few days after the crash, the government set up an investigative committee to unravel the immediate and remote causes of the crash.

However, two weeks after the crash, the black box had yet to be found, while its fuselage had been found in pieces.

The black box consists of two devices: the Flight Data Recorder (FDR) and Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR).

The essence of a black box is to record critical flight data and cockpit audio so investigators can reconstruct the sequence of events after an aviation accident and prevent future tragedies.

Without the recovery of the device, it would be impossible to know the cause of the accident.

A source close to the committee, who didn't want his name in print, told *The Guardian* yesterday that the black boxes of the aircraft are yet to be found.

The source, however, exuded confidence that the device would be located, as professionals had been engaged to search for the equipment in the swampy area where the aircraft crashed.

No fewer than 25 persons, including the crew, had perished in the air crash.

The aircraft had lost contact with Air Traffic Controllers (ATCs) at about 9:13 a.m. before crashing near a naval base in Igbokoda.

AfCFTA: Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon Customs seek Afreximbank's support on border

By **Adaku Onyenucheya**

NIGERIA Customs Service (NCS), in collaboration with the Customs administrations of the Republic of Benin and the Republic of Cameroon, has intensified discussions with the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) on a regional border-modernisation programme aimed at strengthening trade facilitation, improving cross-border efficiency and advancing the objectives of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Discussions focused on combining improvements in digital infrastructure, harmonised customs procedures, secure data exchange and institutional capacity development with investments in cargo scanners, weighbridges, access roads, reliable electricity, connectivity, traffic management and modern border-processing facilities.

According to a statement yesterday by the NCS National Public Relations Officer, Dr Abdullahi Maiwada, the high-level working engagement, held at Afreximbank's headquarters in Cairo, Egypt, on October 12, 2026, followed a joint benchmarking mission to Beitbridge Border Post in Zimbabwe and subsequent technical assessments of the Mfum–Ekok and Sèmè–Kraké border corridors.

Maiwada noted that the engagement, led by the Comptroller-General of Customs, Dr Bashir Adeniyi, brought together representatives of the three customs administrations, Afreximbank and technical partners to review findings from the assessment missions, identify priority interventions and explore practical pathways towards an integrated regional border-modernisation programme.

The meeting also considered Afreximbank's potential participation in the next Customs Partnership for African Cooperation in Trade (C-PACT) and progress towards regional and continental transit-guarantee arrangements.

According to the statement, a major component of the engagement was the Customs Declaration Exchange System (CDES), designed to facilitate secure information exchange among Nigeria's B'Odogwu platform, Benin's Customs Webb and Cameroon's CAMCIS.

NDC withdraws recognition of diaspora chapters over court judgment

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

NIGERIA Democratic Congress (NDC) has withdrawn recognition of its diaspora chapters in deference to a court judgment which reportedly barred Nigerian political parties from establishing or operating chapters outside the country.

The party said the decision followed a review of its relationship with foreign chapters and its awareness of a subsisting judgment of the FCT High Court in Maitama concerning the legality of diaspora chapters of Nigerian political parties.

In a statement issued yesterday and signed by its National Publicity Secretary, Osa Director, the NDC said all previous recognitions granted to its foreign chapters had been withdrawn.

The party, however, expressed appreciation to Nigerians in the diaspora for their support, loyalty and contributions to its activities.

It said the decision was guided by its commitment to accountability, transparency and due process, adding that it would not disregard a subsisting court judgment.

The NDC cited the case of Prof. Ali Alao v. All Progressives Congress (APC) & Anor, Suit No. CV/187/2025, reportedly decided by Justice Peter Kekemeke of the FCT High Court, Maitama.

According to the party, the court held that Nigerian political parties lacked the legal authority to establish, operate or supervise chapters outside the country's territorial boundaries.

The party said it was studying the judgment and had referred the matter to its Legal Department for further advice and guidance.

It also disclosed that it had initiated a harmonisation process in jurisdictions where multiple groups were operating under the party's name, with a view to bringing them under a common structure.

AGF tasks lawyers on ethics, innovation, constitutional governance

- Seeks stronger collaboration to protect judicial independence
- Commissions NBA Ikare-Akoko new Bar, Library Centre
- Afam calls for level playing field ahead of 2027

From **Adewale Momoh**, Akure

THE Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Lateef Fagbemi, has reaffirmed the supremacy of the constitution, urging legal practitioners across the country to uphold justice, protect citizens' rights and promote the rule of law.

He said that no individual or institution should be considered above the law.

Fagbemi said this during the commissioning of the Kofo Salam-Alada Bar and Library Centre of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Ikare-Akoko branch, Akoko North East Local Council of Ondo State, describing the facility as a crucial addition to the legal profession.

According to the minister, the Centre will provide opportunities for intellectual exchange, professional collaboration, mentorship and continuing legal education, stressing that lawyers bear responsibilities beyond their professional expertise.

He listed such responsibilities to include protecting individual rights, strengthening peaceful coexistence and ensuring that justice remains fair, inclusive and accessible to all, irrespective of social status, financial circumstances, ethnic origin, religious beliefs or political affiliation.

The AGF urged the NBA Ikare-Akoko branch to make the Centre a hub for legal discourse, professional development, community engagement and ethical legal practice.

He further called for stronger collaboration among the Federal Ministry of Justice, the judiciary, the NBA and other stakeholders to strengthen justice institutions, protect judicial independence and uphold constitutional governance.

The minister also urged lawyers to embrace technological innovation, continuous learning and high professional standards, as well as use the Centre to promote access to justice, particularly for vulnerable and underserved communities.

On his part, a former President of the NBA, Osigwe Afam (SAN), said disagreement and criticisms were essential elements of democracy, provided they did not incite violence or advocate the violent overthrow of government.

Afam also called for a level playing field ahead of the 2027 general elections, urging the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to ensure transparency and fairness to guarantee credible elections and public acceptance of the results.

He also called on political actors to shun electoral violence and allow candidates to campaign freely and voters to exercise their rights without fear.

Chairman of the NBA Ikare-Akoko branch, Omotan Ogunmodede, said the Centre would help young lawyers overcome some of the financial challenges associated with legal practice.

Salam-Alada, in his response, said his commitment to Akoko land was motivated by his love for his community and his desire to give back to his place of origin.



Project Lead for the CAF Awards and CAF General Assembly, Dr Christian Emeruwa (left) and Lagos Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, during a courtesy visit and presentation of a souvenir to the former by the latter ahead of the 2026 CAF Awards in Lagos at the Government House, Marina, yesterday.

World Food Day: LASG to host S'West bi-yearly food systems review

- Abiodun distributes agricultural equipment to farmers
- Expert advocates reforms in Nigeria's food supply chain

By **Chris Irekamba, Kehinde Olatunji** and **Divine Yusuf**

LAGOS State Government has planned to host the South-West Zone bi-yearly review of the Food Systems Transformation Pathways (FSTP) Strategy and Validation of the Draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) from tomorrow.

According to a statement yesterday by Director, Economic Planning Department, Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget, Bakare Olaolu, the three-day engagement will bring together government representatives, policymakers, technical experts and development partners to review implementation progress, among others.

HOWEVER, an agricultural development expert, Olakunlehin John Oladapo, has called for reforms in Nigeria's food supply chain, saying increased production alone would not make food affordable to struggling families.

MEANWHILE, Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun, in collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), through the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones (SAPZ) Programme and other stakeholders, has distributed agricultural equipment, inputs and deployed 1,240 digital devices to farmer organisations.

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

PAU's School of Media and Communication marks 20th anniversary

Ufot to deliver keynote address on future of strategic communications education

THE School of Media and Communication (SMC) at Pan-Atlantic University (PAU) will celebrate its 20th anniversary from October 21, 2026 to November 6, 2026, with a series of events designed to bring together academics, media professionals, students, alumni, industry partners, and members of the wider community.

According to the Dean of the School of Media and Communication, Dr Ikechukwu Obiaya, the anniversary is both a celebration of the school's achievements and an opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to the future of media education and professional practice.

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

2027: Fanimo dismisses assumptions Tinubu will lose election

By **Seye Olumide**

A FORMER Chief Executive Officer of Leadership Newspapers, Dele Fanimo, has said that President Bola Tinubu and the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) should not be presumed to be heading for defeat in the 2027 presidential election, insisting that political realities across the country matter more than narratives on social media.

Fanimo, a former News Editor of *The Guardian* and political analyst, said his assessment of the political landscape did not support the assumption that the opposition would dislodge Tinubu in the next general elections.

He said that the President had made significant inroads in the North through early political calculations and alliances, adding that the extent of Tinubu's support in the region was being underestimated in online discussions.

According to Fanimo, social media conversations are not a reliable measure of electoral strength because they may not accurately reflect voters' preferences across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones.

He also questioned the ability of the presidential candidate of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), Peter Obi, to secure sufficient support in the North, saying that Obi had not undertaken the level of political engagement in the region that a successful presidential campaign would require.

Fanimo further contended that historical grievances and regional sentiments could complicate efforts to persuade some northern voters to support an Igbo presidential candidate.

His position, however, represents his assessment of northern political attitudes and should not be taken as evidence that voters across the region hold a uniform view of Obi or his presidential ambition.

The political analyst maintained that a candidate's popularity in one part of the country was insufficient to guarantee victory, adding that presidential success depends on building a broad electoral coalition across regional and political divides.

Fanimo dismissed suggestions that other presidential hopefuls in the South-West would weaken Tinubu's support in the region.

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

Obasanjo pays tribute to Dele Cole, recalls role in Nigeria's debt relief

From **Azeez Olorunlomeru**, Abeokuta

- PANDEF declares seven-day mourning for Cole

FORMER President Olusegun Obasanjo has paid tribute to former Nigerian ambassador, Dr Patrick Dele Cole, describing him as a patriot and an influential figure whose diplomatic expertise helped to shape Nigeria's foreign policy during his administration.

In a tribute to mourn Cole's death at the age of 86, Obasanjo said Nigeria had lost one of its finest intellectuals and a trusted ally whose counsel influenced key moments in the country's history.

The former President described the late diplomat as a trusted adviser who helped to restore Nigeria's international relations.

Obasanjo said his relationship with Cole dated back several decades when the diplomat served in the cabinet office during his tenure as military head of state.

He said Cole's understanding of global affairs made him an indispensable member of his foreign policy team, adding that the diplomat travelled extensively with him and worked behind the scenes to strengthen Nigeria's relations with other countries.

He also credited Cole with contributing to the diplomatic and economic efforts that culminated in Nigeria's Paris Club debt relief, describing his approach as a combination of tact, economic insight and patriotism.

MEANWHILE, the Pan-Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) has declared seven days of mourning in honour of its leader and elder statesman, Cole.

PANDEF National Chairman, Dr Godknows Igali, announced the mourning period in a statement issued on behalf of the organisation's Board of Trustees and National Executive Committee.

The Forum described Cole's death as a painful and irreplaceable loss, noting that he played significant roles in the socio-cultural and political development of the Niger Delta, particularly during the formation and growth of PANDEF.

According to the statement, Cole was a distinguished national leader whose contributions spanned several sectors of public life.

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

Oyebanji makes first appointment, re-appoints SSG, CoS, CPS

By **Opeyemi Babalola**

EKITI State Governor, Biodun Oyebanji, has approved the re-appointment of Prof. Habibat Adubiaro as Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Oyeniyi Adebayo as Chief of Staff, and Olayinka Oyebode as Chief Press Secretary (CPS), following his inauguration for a second term in office last Friday.

The appointments, which take immediate effect, are the first made by the governor since his inauguration.

Adubiaro, a professor of Chemistry, holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from the University of Ibadan (UI). She obtained her master's degree and PhD from the University of Ado-Ekiti, now Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti.

Adebayo, who hails from Usi-Ekiti, holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Forest Resources Management and a Master of Science degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Ibadan.

Oyebode has extensive experience in journalism, media management and strategic communication.

A graduate of English and Literary Studies from the then Ondo State University, Ado-Ekiti (now Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti), Oyebode holds a master's degree in Peace and Security Studies from the same institution.

Motorists lament failed Akure/Ado-Ekiti dualisation project

- Say one month after Umahi's order, contractors yet to resume work
- Fear failing road could reignite kidnapping, criminal gangs

From **Adewale Momoh**, Akure

ONE month after the Minister of Works, David Umahi, directed contractors handling the 50-kilometre Akure–Ado-Ekiti Highway dualisation project to resume work and complete the abandoned lane of the dual carriageway, there is still no visible sign that construction will resume any time soon.

A visit by *The Guardian* to the Akure end and the Ikere-Ekiti end of the highway showed a completely deserted site, with no contractors, workers, or equipment present.

Thick bushes have already taken over the abandoned lane and the bridges constructed for the second carriageway swallowing the earthworks and structures that once signalled an active project.

Also, the section of the highway completed about a year ago is already failing, with sizeable potholes dotting various spots on the newly constructed lane.

Rising rents outpace incomes, force tenants into hard trade-offs

By Chinedum Uwaegbulam

- Property owners adopt strategies to eject tenants, raise rents
- Landlords lament economic hardship, cost of maintenance
- Tenants opt for outskirts as transport costs erode savings
- Transportation becoming extension of housing burden
- Experts urge serviced public land, waivers for affordable housing projects

FOR millions of Nigerians living in fast-growing cities, the challenge is no longer simply finding a roof over their heads but determining how much of their income remains after paying rent.

The Guardian gathered that some landlords, grappling with inflation and rising living costs, are increasing rents to cover higher maintenance and household expenses. A retired civil servant and property owner, for instance, said he built houses as a retirement investment but now has to raise rents as his costs increase.

Market reports in 2026 indicate that rents in major Nigerian cities have risen by 15 to 75 per cent year-on-year across residential segments, driven by housing shortages, urban migration, inflation and speculative pricing. Building costs have also surged, with cement rising from N2,500-N3,000 a bag in 2020 to N12,000-N15,000 in 2026, while housing supply has remained stagnant and Lagos' deficit grew from 2.95 million to 3.4 million units.

Earlier findings also showed rents and property prices rising faster than wages, with some locations recording increases of more than 100 per cent over relatively short periods. For workers whose salaries have remained largely stagnant or risen only modestly, the result is a sharp decline in disposable income.

In Ejigbo, Lagos, some landlords have reportedly issued tenants notices to renovate their properties before re-letting them at substantially higher rates. Houses previously rented for N500,000 to N700,000 yearly are now being re-let for N2.5 million, N3 million and as much as N5 million, excluding agency fees, agreement charges and caution deposits.

In Mushin, rents for houses previously ranging from N300,000 to N2.5 million have risen to between N1 million and N3.7 million, while a self-contained apartment now attracts about N1 million annually. In Surulere, a two-bedroom flat costs about N5 million a year, compared with N1.5 million to N2.5 million for similar accommodation in Abule Egba.

With such steep increases, tenants unable to afford new rents are increasingly moving to cheaper, farther locations. Rent is taking a larger share of household earnings, leaving less for food, transport, healthcare, education and savings. However, relocating to the outskirts does not necessarily resolve the problem, as lower rents can be offset by higher commuting costs.

Recent data from GTI Investment Group illustrates the depth of the crisis in Lagos. Its report, *Beyond Rent: Mapping Lagos' Housing-Led Capital Expansion*, found that rents in parts of Lagos had risen by 80 to 120 per cent in two years, compared with wage growth of only seven to nine per cent. Based on more than 3,200 rental listings across 15 zones, the research put Lagos' property price-to-income ratio at 19.2 times.

According to the GTI analysis, a two-bedroom apartment could consume about 29 per cent of the income of someone earning N1 million monthly, 58 per cent for a worker earning N500,000 and as much as 97 per cent for someone earning N300,000. In some cases, housing costs consume 60 to 70 per cent of household income.

The conventional affordability benchmark is that households should spend no more than about 30 per cent of their income on housing. But as rents rise faster than salaries, many urban households are being forced to move into smaller apartments, share accommodation, relocate to distant communities or cut spending on other essentials.

For many Lagos residents, the outskirts have become the most practical alternative. Communities in Ikorodu, Ibeju-Lekki, Badagry and other peripheral areas now attract workers unable to afford accommodation closer to employment centres. Abuja residents are experiencing a similar trend.

The Guardian data shows that cheaper rent does not necessarily mean cheaper living. A worker employed in central Lagos who relocates from Victoria Island, Yaba or Surulere to Ikorodu, Ayobo, Ipaja, Berger or another distant suburb must add commuting costs to the real cost of housing.

With daily return fares potentially reaching N2,000 or more on longer routes, a worker commuting 22 days a month could spend N44,000 to N55,000 on transportation, excluding additional fares for connecting from home to major transport corridors.

For example, a worker who saves N700,000 annually by moving to cheaper accommodation could spend an additional N35,000 to N50,000 monthly on transport, or N420,000 to N600,000 a year. The apparent housing saving would therefore shrink to between N100,000 and N280,000, while longer journeys would also take a toll on productivity and family time.

According to the Lagos State Government, residents lose an average of four hours daily to traffic congestion, resulting in estimated annual economic losses of N4 trillion. These additional costs have discouraged some residents from relocating, leaving them caught between high rents in employment centres and expensive commuting from the outskirts.

The pressure is compounded by the wider cost-of-living crisis. Nigeria's headline inflation eased to 14.63 per cent in September 2026 from 15.39 per cent in August, according to the National Bureau of Statistics. However, food inflation rose to 19.59 per cent year-on-year, underscoring continued pressure on household budgets.

The moderation in headline

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34



Former Governor of Ekiti State, Segun Oni (left); wife of former Governor of Ekiti State, Erelu Bisi Fayemi; Ekiti State Deputy Governor, Monisade Afuye; Ekiti State Governor, Biodun Oyebanji; wife of the Governor, Prof. Olayemi Oyebanji; Senate Leader, Senator Opeyemi Bamidele; past Governor, Niyi Adebayo and ex-Governor, Ayodele Fayose, at the thanksgiving service marking the second term inauguration of Governor Oyebanji at the Cathedral Church of Emmanuel, at Ado-Ekiti, yesterday.

2027: Atiku, Obi camps clash as opposition considers single ticket

From Leo Sobechi, Andrew Oota (Abuja) and Murtala Adewale (Kano)

- G100 considers five parties for consensus candidate
- Makinde, Adebayo defend presidential ambitions
- Amaechi backs Atiku, Utomi insists on Obi-Kwankwaso ticket
- Kwankwaso rules out stepping down for Atiku
- ADC tells NDC chieftain to focus criticism on APC
- Lukman identifies trust deficit as obstacle to unity
- Adebayo's aide says coalition talks started too late

AS the G100 coalition weighs five political parties for a common presidential ticket against President Bola Tinubu in 2027, the Atiku and Obi camps are locked in a contest that threatens to complicate opposition unity.

Checks by *The Guardian* revealed that the group had adopted an incremental strategy in its task of selecting a single opposition candidate, following the insistence of some presidential aspirants that they should be allowed to test their popularity among voters.

An influential member of the enlarged body, which has Salihu Lukman as its convener, told *The Guardian* that the presidential candidates of the Allied Peoples Movement (APM), Governor Seyi Makinde, and the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Prince Adewole Adebayo, consider themselves better alternatives to President Tinubu.

The source disclosed that both Makinde and Adebayo believe that any calculation that excludes them from the presidential ballot would ultimately benefit Tinubu and the All Progressives Congress (APC) by handing them the bloc votes of the South-West.

"Some of us believe that the best way to overcome the roadblock posed by the presidential candidates to the emergence of a single opposition candidate is to prune the number down to at least five. You have heard former Cross River governor, Donald Duke, express frustration over the egotistical tendencies of the presidential candidates, which may hand Tinubu a second term.

"We are not relenting; we want to watch the five parties and their candidates sustain their campaigns. When it is between 45 and 30 days to the election, the picture would begin to emerge of how Nigerians see the candidates and who they are most likely to vote for," he stated.

Makinde had urged the APC standard-bearer to consider withdrawing from the presidential race and taking a deserved rest. He also argued that Tinubu's inability to groom a successor makes it imperative for the South-West to produce a credible candidate for the election.

For his part, the SDP presidential standard-bearer, Adebayo, said Nigerians' right to elect their president should not be abridged. While maintaining that Tinubu did not deserve a second term in office, he argued that any political alliance that failed to offer Nigerians a better quality of life would amount to replacing one evil with another.

He told *The Guardian* that opposition leaders should first look inwards, saying: "Politics is a game where condemnation is easy. It's easy to criticise Tinubu, criticise other people. You can see how many people that have made comments about Tinubu because of freedom of speech. But what will take you far in politics is not how you focus on others. Focus on yourself and say, am I an honest political dealer? Am I an honest player?"

He maintained that the search for Nigeria's next leader must involve not only politicians but also citizens. He added that the election offered the country a valuable opportunity for introspection and for citizens to make the right choices by asking relevant questions.

"For example, have I even shown interest in the affairs of my country to the point where I can dictate where the country goes? Or I just watch news and make comedy and forget about it? And if I join, am I in the right party for the right reasons? Have I joined a political party for the right reason?

"Do I support the right candidate for the right reason? Do I do political activities in order to make personal gain? If you're one of those who sell your vote, are you not worse than an armed robber?" Adebayo remarked.

"Are you not worse than the person? If the only thing Nigeria gave you, the right to vote, you sold it. Are you fit to be a governor? If you're a governor, would you sell the state?

"If you work in INEC, are you working there because you love democracy? Or is it an opportunity for you to collect a bribe and do mischief?"

Meanwhile, addressing a town hall meeting in Calabar, Cross River State, the vice-presidential candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi, declared that the Atiku-Amaechi ticket was the strongest option for victory within the opposition coalition.

Amaechi, a former Minister of Transportation and Rivers State governor, argued that, in terms of geographical spread and electoral arithmetic, the ADC presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar, had the clearest pathway to victory in the January 16, 2027 presidential election.

While Amaechi argued that the G100 should urge other parties to rally behind the ADC, the convener of the Big Tent Coalition, Prof Pat Utomi, maintained that he would not support any consensus arrangement that did not revolve around the Peter Obi-Rabiu Kwankwaso pairing under the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC).

However, without referring directly to the proposed shortlist of five political parties — the ADC, NDC, APM, SDP and Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) — the G100 convener, Lukman, said the group remained optimistic about fielding a single challenger against Tinubu in next year's election.

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

Loyalists demand issue-based campaign, fault 'attack' on Obi

From **Terhemba Daka** and **John Akubo** (Abuja)

• Presidential aide rallies South-East for Tinubu, Shettima

THE Peter Obi Media Office (POMR) has faulted Vice-President Kashim Shettima over his description of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) opposition figure, Peter Obi, as "diminished," accusing him of showing selective respect for opposition leaders.

In a statement issued yesterday and signed by its spokesman, Idris Zekeri Jnr, the media office said Shettima's remark was inconsistent with the standards of political decency expected of a public office holder.

POMR was reacting to comments attributed to the Vice-President in which he reportedly urged Northerners to respect former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar while describing Obi as diminished.

The office questioned why Shettima would call for respect for one opposition leader while dismissing another, arguing that political disagreements should not become a justification for personal attacks.

It said Obi, the presidential candidate of the NDC, had maintained an issue-based approach to political engagement and avoided abusive language against his opponents.

The statement also challenged Shettima to compare records of governance rather than resort to name-calling, noting that both men served as governors during the same period.

According to POMR, Obi's administration in Anambra State recorded achievements in fiscal management, education and healthcare, which it said earned him recognition and awards.

MEANWHILE, the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Media and Communications in the Office of the Vice President, Stanley Nkwocha, has called on the South-East to support President Bola Tinubu and Vice President Kashim Shettima in the 2027 general elections, urging the region to embrace strategic political alliances to strengthen its influence in national affairs.

Nkwocha made the appeal on Saturday at a sensitisation meeting of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Imerienwe Ward 5, Ngor Okpala Local Council Area of Imo State, where community leaders and political stakeholders pledged to consolidate their political structures under the ruling party.

He argued that the South-East needed to reassess its political calculations in the light of its electoral strength, prevailing national realities and opportunities for development through constructive engagement with the Federal Government.

According to him, the Tinubu administration has demonstrated its commitment to the region through infrastructure projects, institutional reforms and economic investments, despite the South-East's voting pattern in the 2023 presidential election.

Nkwocha cited the establishment of the South-East Development Commission, the reconstruction of major federal highways and investments in transport infrastructure as evidence of the administration's commitment to inclusive national development.

He maintained that the region's comparatively smaller registered voter population made strategic partnerships with other geopolitical zones important to its quest for greater political influence and national leadership.

Don seeks restructuring of LG allocation

From **Lawrence Njoku**, Enugu

A PROFESSOR of Public Administration at the Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Prof. Frederick Odo Eze has canvassed strategic restructuring of the monthly local government statutory allocation of 40 per cent for salaries and overhead transferred directly to local governments and 60 per cent for capital projects diverted into a newly proposed federal grants board.

He stated that while the 40 per cent directly transferred to local governments would strictly be used for personnel and operational needs to maintain administrative stability, the 60 per cent for capital projects would be directed to projects in health, education, water supply and rural infrastructure.

Eze, who delivered the 60th inaugural lecture of ESUT, stated that the revolutionary policy framework which he named the "Eze Model" of federal revenue utilisation would make for sustainable grassroots development and solve certain challenges plaguing the local council system in Nigeria.

SSANU suspends planned strike after FG releases arrears

THE Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU) has suspended its two-week ultimatum to the Federal Government following the release of eight months' CONTTA arrears owed to its members.

This is contained in a notification letter addressed to members and signed by SSANU National President, Mr Mohammed Ibrahim, yesterday in Abuja.

Ibrahim said the union's National Administrative Committee (NAC), acting on behalf of its National Executive Council (NEC), approved the suspension in recognition of the government's action.

The ultimatum, which commenced on October 5, was issued over outstanding entitlements, while the Federal Government approved and released funds for eight months' arrears on October 7.

Ibrahim said: "Following the Federal Government's prompt release of eight months' arrears of CONTTA owed to our members, the NAC has resolved to suspend the intended industrial action."



Vice Chairperson, Society of Women Accountants of Nigeria (SWAN), Abuja Chapter, Dr Maryam Danna Mohammed (left); President, Institute of the Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), Queensley Seghosime; and Second Deputy Vice President, ICAN, Tajudeen Adewale Olayinka, during the welcoming ceremony of the 62nd ICAN President for the yearly conference at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja, yesterday.

IMF, World Bank commend Oyedele's G-24 leadership at Thailand meeting

NIGERIA'S Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Taiwo Oyedele, has received commendation from the leadership of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank for his leadership of the Group of 24 (G-24), highlighting Nigeria's growing voice in global economic discussions.

The commendation came during the 2026 IMF and World Bank Group Annual Meetings in Bangkok, Thailand, where Oyedele chaired the G-24 Board of Governors meeting and led calls for a fairer global financial system, affordable development financing and faster resolution of sovereign debt crises.

IMF Managing Director, Kristalina Georgieva, and World Bank Senior Managing Director, Axel van Trotsenburg, representing World Bank President, Ajay Banga, joined other G-24 governors in commending Oyedele's leadership of discussions on the financing challenges facing developing economies.

The recognition was reinforced by Banga's meeting with Oyedele and Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Olayemi Cardoso, during which he acknowledged Nigeria's reform progress, pointing to private capital inflows that reportedly increased from about $300 million in 2023 to nearly $6 billion in 2026.

Oyedele's performance at the meetings extended beyond diplomatic engagements. As G-24 chairman, he drew attention to the burden of rising debt-servicing costs on developing countries, warning that they were undermining investment, job creation and inclusive growth.

A Reuters report quoted him as saying that developing economies were paying approximately $500 billion more in debt servicing than developed countries.

He urged international financial institutions to provide more accessible and affordable concessional financing to vulnerable economies.

The minister also argued against imposing additional tax burdens on vulnerable households and productive sectors amid global economic uncertainty, advocating improved revenue mobilisation, reduced waste and a careful balance between taxation and borrowing.

At Africa's Golden Future Forum in Bangkok, he also presented Nigeria's experience with fuel subsidy removal, foreign exchange liberalisation and tax reform as lessons for African countries pursuing sustainable growth.

NAPE charts path to hydrocarbon reserve growth, investment

By **Waliat Musa**

THE Nigerian Association of Petroleum Explorationists (NAPE) will focus on boosting Nigeria's hydrocarbon reserves, strengthening local capabilities and deploying adaptive technologies at its 44th Annual International Conference and Exhibition scheduled for November 8 to 12, 2026, in Lagos.

Speaking at a press briefing in Lagos at the weekend, the association's President, Olajumoke Cecelia Ajayi, said the conference would address the need to increase reserves and production, strengthen energy security, attract investment and maximise the value of the country's petroleum resources.

With the theme "Unlocking More Barrels: Driving Reserves Growth through Exploration, Local Capabilities & Adaptive Technologies," Ajayi said Nigeria's hydrocarbon potential could not be translated into increased reserves and sustainable production through existing discoveries alone, but required renewed exploration, appropriate technology, stronger local capabilities and an operating environment capable of attracting and retaining investment.

She identified local capacity development as another priority, noting that stronger indigenous technical, professional and entrepreneurial capabilities would enable Nigerian companies and professionals to participate more effectively across the petroleum value chain while retaining greater value within the economy.

On technology, she said solutions must be adapted to Nigeria's geological, operational and economic conditions to improve exploration success, reduce costs, increase operational efficiency and unlock resources that may previously have been considered uneconomic or technically challenging.

"The future will not be determined simply by how much oil and gas we have underground, but by our ability to find it, develop it efficiently and competitively, and create the capabilities and technologies required to bring it to market," she said.

She added that the conference will feature nine subthemes covering energy security and affordability, modern technologies for sustainable energy development, geoscience, reservoir characterisation, exploration and production technologies, energy business management and financing, geoscience education, health, safety and environmental management, host community relations, and the synergy between the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) and local content.

Cancer: Foundation, Lagos govt push for early detection, health insurance

By **Silver Nwokoro**

TOYIN Oni Foundation has called for stronger cancer prevention measures, expanded screening programmes and affordable health insurance, as it marked 15 years of cancer awareness campaigns with a renewed push to reduce deaths and protect families from the financial burden of treatment.

The call came amid the Lagos State Government's renewed commitment to health financing reforms aimed at expanding insurance coverage and reducing Nigerians' dependence on out-of-pocket payments for medical care.

Speaking at the foundation's 15th anniversary ceremony in Lagos, themed "Beyond Awareness: Understanding Cancer From Prevention to Survivorship," its Chairperson, Bukola Smith, stressed that early detection remained critical to improving survival rates for breast, cervical and prostate cancers, noting that more Nigerians needed access to reliable information, screening and appropriate treatment.

Oba of Benin opens chess classic as 126 players battle for glory

From **Joseph Kanjo**, Benin

OBA of Benin, Ewuare II, has performed a ceremonial chess move to officially open the Royal Rapid Chess Classic 2026.

The tournament is part of activities marking his 10th Coronation Anniversary, with 126 players competing for honours and cash prizes.

The Benin monarch made the symbolic opening move against eight-year-old player Emmanuella Omoragbon on Saturday morning at his palace in Benin City, winning the brief exhibition match after capturing her bishop.

Following the game, the traditional ruler pledged to sponsor the Primary 3 pupil's education and welfare.

Giving a brief historical background on the game of chess during the event, Oba Ewuare promised to add royal prizes for the winners.

Oba Ewuare said: "This child is now a child of the palace. From now on, I want the palace to monitor the progress of the little girl: how she is doing with chess, her education, and her welfare."

Patrick Dele Cole:

The diplomat who stood firm for

By **Our Reporters**

NIGERIA continues to reel from the loss of one of its most enduring public intellectuals.

Ambassador Patrick Dele Cole, elder statesman, diplomat, historian and longtime consultant to *The Guardian*, died in London at the weekend after a brief illness aged 86.

His death has drawn an extraordinary outpouring of tributes from colleagues, diplomats, editors, scholars and friends. They remember a man of immense learning, sharp memory, generous spirit and uncommon courage; a man who believed that journalism, diplomacy and public service must all answer to truth.

Cole was Nigeria's Ambassador to Brazil and Argentina. He was also a former Managing Director of the old *Daily Times*, an adviser on international relations, and a central figure in the intellectual formation of *The Guardian*.

Until three weeks before his death, he still attended the newspaper's weekly Editorial Board meetings. He was its oldest and longest-serving consultant, having been associated with *The Guardian* since its founding in 1982.

A bridge builder of ideas and power

COLE occupied a rare space in Nigerian public life. He was equally at home in the university, the newsroom, the foreign service and the corridors of government. Yet he never treated ideas as mere decoration for power. For him, ideas were tools for building a better country.

His association with *The Guardian* most clearly expressed that belief. As a close friend and adviser to the newspaper's founder, the late Alex Ibru, Cole helped shape the publication's ambition to become one of Africa's most serious newspapers.

Drawing on his experience at *Daily Times*, he encouraged the recruitment of the late Dr Stanley Macebuh as *Guardian's* executive editor and later its first managing director. Macebuh, in turn, brought in intellectual and academic associates who helped establish the robust editorial tradition for which the newspaper became known.

Cole's contribution was not simply administrative. He helped define a philosophy: that a newspaper should be intellectually serious, historically informed, independent-minded and morally courageous.

He fused diplomacy and intellectualism into newspapering. He brought to editorial discussions the finesse of a diplomat, the depth of a scholar, the scepticism of a journalist and the conviction of a statesman.

***The Guardian* mourns a foundational voice**

CHAIRMAN and Publisher of *The Guardian*, Lady Maiden Ibru, received the news of Cole's death as "a big shock", noting that "he sits next to me (on the editorial board). He looked good and well and contributed to our Editorial Board meeting. May he travel well."

She recalled that Cole, a product of Cambridge University, "was highly cerebral and a godfather to my son Toke… In all things we must give thanks." She prayed for the repose of his soul: "You now rest in the bosom of God that created you. Shalom."

Her tribute reflected both the institutional and personal dimensions of Cole's life. To *The Guardian*, he was a consultant, adviser and editorial conscience. To many individuals, he was a mentor, godfather, friend and benefactor.



The first editor and former Managing Director of *The Guardian*, Mr Lade Bonuola, reacted to the death with the disbelief of a man losing a longtime colleague and friend.

"When the news first came to me in a flash early today and in less than a split second it was taken down, I knew some relief believing it was a cruel hoax. As it has now turned out with confirmation of the exit several hours later, it means I was in a dream world wishing that the devastating exit did not happen after all.

"Hymmm! I knew he was travelling to London, but there was nothing to trigger my suspicion that he would breathe his last there.

"A colossus has departed our midst. Think of his majestic carriage, his robustness of thoughts, the profundity of ideas and the delivery which made him a delight and a teacher—to listen to in a debate and in intellectual exchanges.

"*Oga*, now I humbly address you: Do not look back. Turn your gaze upwards to On-High.

"I send my loving and prayerful thoughts that he may receive help and his path be blessed in the Grace of the Lord's Omnipotence."



Bonuola's words capture the qualities that made Cole unforgettable in conversation: his commanding presence, depth of thought, eloquence and ability to teach through debate.

An institution in journalism

FORMER Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief of *The Guardian*, Mr Emeka Eluem Izeze, described Cole as "an institution" who, though not originally a media person, wielded great influence and power in the media industry.

Izeze recalled that the late Cole set a tone for the media and, as MD of *Daily Times*, went all over the world in search of intellectuals drawn from professions other than the media, bringing intellect to *Daily Times*, later replicated in *The Guardian* through Dr Macebuh, whom he brought from the United States.

As a friend and adviser of the late Alex Ibru, Cole had a great influence on what later became *The Guardian* and in pursuit of Ibru's aspiration to make the newspaper one of the very best in Africa and the world. Recalling Cole's wide experiences in diplomacy, politics—he once ran for the presidency—and in academia, Izeze noted that Cole's influence on *The Guardian* was "mind-boggling" and a "marvel".

"He was a humanist to the core, philanthropic and very kind, considerate and very happy when a friend or junior colleague was making progress professionally or academically," Izeze said.

"He was a wonderful man who kept his sense of reason even under the most provocative circumstances."

That last quality—reason under provocation—was central to Cole's character. In editorial meetings, where opinions could be forceful and disagreements sharp, he brought calm, rigour and perspective. He could challenge an argument firmly without diminishing the person making it.

Former Chairman of the Editorial Board, Professor G.G. Darah, said: "Dr Dele Cole's death strikes a major blow at *The Guardian's* heritage of courage and excellence."

It was a fitting summary of Cole's contribution. His courage was not noise; it was the refusal to abandon truth for convenience. His excellence was not showmanship; it was the discipline of thought, evidence and moral clarity.

Former Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief of *The Guardian*, Mr Martins Oloja, described Ambassador Cole as a good man. "He had a heart of gold. A man who was always hungry for knowledge of the world system. Always with a bag of books! His originality, unquestionable till the end. Announcing his passing is like breaking the news of a burning library. It is quite hard to say 'Goodbye', Sir.

"We will celebrate your good life. We won't forget what you always told us to be as journalists: You told us to always be cynical and fastidious in our inquiries. You always enjoined us to question the actions and attitude of those in authority at editorial board deliberations… You bought for many of us a book titled "Thieves of State" so that we could deconstruct the profile of leaders who come to power just to enrich themselves. Awww! Sir, really hard to say goodbye!"

Editor of *The Guardian*, Dr Femi Adekoya, recalled the Ambassador's wish to ensure that a national value system is upheld by organising essays to encourage younger Nigerians to debate a value system worthy of emulation to bring about desired change in society.

"He was never shy of telling the truth to everyone around him and constantly talked about how to improve *The Guardian*, its social impact, especially from the point of view of editorials. He was a good man from whom we learnt so much. We'll miss decades of experience shared with us to make our editorials richer. Good night, Ambassador."

A man of history and memory

COLE'S diplomatic career gave him a distinctive understanding of Nigeria's place in the world. He served as Ambassador to Brazil and Argentina, and later advised on

truth in newsrooms, public life

international relations at the highest levels of government.

But he remained, above all, a student and custodian of history. In editorial debates, he could place present crises within longer national and global patterns. He remembered precedents, mistakes, promises and turning points that others might overlook.

Former Minister of External Affairs and member of *The Guardian* Editorial Board, Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, eulogised his friend and associate of 51 years.

"The news of the death of the Ambassador, Dr Dele Cole, struck me like thunder.

"I first met him in 1975 when I transferred from the University of Ibadan to the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs. He walked into my office and invited me to lunch by just saying, 'I was your elder brother's classmate at the Ibadan Grammar School; let us go for lunch.' Thus started 51 years of relationship and friendship between Ambassador Cole and me.

"This relationship saw him piloting me through the NIIA (Nigerian Institute of International Affairs) and saw me appointing him as Ambassador to Brazil.

"We both ended up as members of the editorial board of *The Guardian* Newspapers. The Wednesday meeting was the highlight of my week. Ambassador Cole was the remembrance of the history of Nigeria. He remembered so much and we will remember him. "Rest well."

Akinyemi's tribute presents Cole as a connector of people, institutions and generations. A friendship that began with a simple lunch invitation grew into five decades of shared work in scholarship, diplomacy and journalism.

It also highlights Cole's extraordinary memory. He was, in Akinyemi's words, "the remembrance of the history of Nigeria." That historical consciousness made his contributions to public debate especially valuable. He did not see issues in isolation; he saw them as part of a continuing national story.

The man who gave the last word

WITHIN *The Guardian's* Editorial Board, Cole's experience and judgement often earned him the final word in discussions. It was not merely a mark of seniority. It reflected confidence in his ability to weigh competing views and return the conversation to first principles.

Former editor of *The Guardian*, Alabi Williams, who is also on the editorial board, noted: "Ambassador Patrick Dele Cole (PDC), very often, was offered the last say on *The Guardian* Editorial Board. That's a testament to a robust wealth of experience traversing the Media, Diplomacy and Public Service.

"Chairman of the Board, Prof. Wale Omole, would ask the Ambassador to cap a discourse. And he did so eloquently and meticulously.

"PDC was measured; he took his time. But he didn't abdicate the task we set for ourselves—healing an open wound with truth. His deliveries were scholarly and always memorable.

"On a social level, he made sure that we were lavishly 'spoilt' on his birthdays. Always a delight. "You will be missed, Sir."

Williams's phrase—"healing an open wound with truth"—may be the clearest expression of Cole's editorial philosophy. He did not regard truth as a weapon for sensationalism. He saw it as medicine: sometimes painful, but necessary for national healing.

His interventions were scholarly, yet never detached from Nigeria's realities. He combined intellectual depth with practical concern for governance, justice and the welfare of citizens.



Mentor, friend, humanist

BEYOND his public achievements, Cole was remembered for his generosity. He celebrated the progress of younger colleagues, supported friends and used his influence quietly to open doors.

Editorial Page Editor of *The Guardian*, Mr Kunle Sanyaolu, noted: "Having survived the untimely death of his dear wife for three years, Dr Cole appeared larger than life. One can then imagine the shock of the announcement of his death, even at 86. For all that he represented, the Ambassador has left a void that will be difficult to fill. He was an historian, intellectual, writer, statesman, politician, thinker, journalist, administrator and humanist rolled into one. Dr Cole managed to impact everyone who came his way with his whole being, and in a way that made a huge difference to the people. All of us will miss him for these qualities and more, including his immense sense of humour. May he rest in peace."

Sanyaolu's description captures the breadth of Cole's life. He was not easily confined to one title. Historian, diplomat, journalist, administrator, politician and humanist: each description was true, yet none was sufficient on its own.

A member of the board, Professor Ndubisi Nwokoma, described Cole's death as a big shock, noting that he had been "a great pillar of intellect, knowledge and accommodation to the Editorial Board."

"The first time I met you at the Board meeting, not long after I was invited to join the Board, I was fascinated by your depth of knowledge and in-depth analysis of issues from many perspectives such that I found it difficult to fault your conclusion on the issue at hand. That has been one of the strengths of the Editorial Board of *The Guardian* in being able to evaluate critical national and global issues and proffer solutions and practicable advice to government and other concerned entities.

"I always delight in hearing from you when you engage on every issue and I guess that applies to other members of the Board. I can recall your friendliness and joviality when I request, during Board discussions, to add (or chip in) some perspectives to issues that you jokingly refer to me as 'Mr Chip in', and we all laugh.

"It is so sad to know that we will not have the privilege of having you around anymore. This is a big loss to us all on the Board. Rest in peace, Ambassador. I pray that God will grant us all, especially members of your immediate family, the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss."

Other members of *The Guardian's* editorial family also mourned a man they regarded as irreplaceable.

Dr Kabir Alabi Garba, Editor of *Weekend Guardian*, described the death as "the exit of a titan!" Mrs Eki Durojaiye, Legal Adviser, said: "What a great loss! You will be sorely missed, Ambassador. Farewell, Your Excellency."

Professor Sylvester Odion-Akhaine said: "An Iroko has fallen. May his soul rest in the bosom of our Lord." Francis Abayomi said: "A rare gem has departed. May the soul of the Ambassador rest in peace."

Francis Onaiyekan wrote: "*Haaaa! Ìgí nlá wó!! já nlá l l'ómí*!!! (The big tree has fallen; the big fish has departed the water!)

"There goes Dr Cole, intensely intellectual, my big '*oga*', my kindred spirit, above all, one helluva good man.

"When come such another? *rún ré o*."

Deputy Editor, Dr Wole Oyebade, added: "The ambassador has gone to join the collective soul stuff of the universe, the world of the living dead, the ancestors. He was truly a legend here. Dr Cole was there for *The Guardian* from the beginning until he breathed his last. His regular presence and brilliant perspectives at the weekly editorial board meeting were the stuff of legends, typical of the most eloquent of men.

"A towering figure in courage and finesse, he was never shy about reminding the media of its role as a moral bully pulpit in the state. Indeed, most men are born; some are made. Dr Cole straddles the two.

"Thank you for the gift of you, Ambassador. It was really a pleasure while it lasted. My condolences to the family and *The Guardian* Editorial Board."

Oyebade's tribute returns to the idea that defined Cole's view of journalism: the media as "a moral bully pulpit in the state." For Cole, journalism was not merely a business or a route to influence. It was a public trust, obliged to defend accountability, justice and the common good.

A legacy that endures

PATRICK Dele Cole's passing removes from Nigeria's public life a rare combination of diplomat, journalist, scholar, administrator and moral voice. But his legacy remains embedded in the institutions he helped shape.

At *Daily Times*, he worked to broaden Nigerian journalism by bringing intellectual rigour into the newsroom. At *The Guardian*, he helped build an editorial culture grounded in courage, scholarship and independence. In diplomacy, he represented Nigeria with the seriousness of a man who understood that national reputation is built through competence, principle and integrity.

He also leaves a deeply personal legacy: friendships that lasted for decades, younger professionals he encouraged, and colleagues who remember not only his brilliance but his kindness.

Nigeria has lost an elder statesman. *The Guardian* has lost its longest-serving consultant and one of its foundational intellectual voices. The diplomatic community has lost a seasoned representative of the country. But perhaps the greatest loss is to a public culture that urgently needs people who can be firm with truth.

Cole was firm because he was prepared. He was courageous because he understood history. And he was humane because achievement never hardened him into arrogance.

As the tributes make clear, an Iroko has fallen. Yet the values he planted—intellectual courage, editorial independence, public service and fidelity to truth—will continue to speak.



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Kano in Focus

Presidential Campaign Council Inauguration: How Gov Yusuf Shines Amid Hundreds

CLAD in his usual white attire but wearing a maroon cap, and displaying his characteristic calmness and composure, Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf's political strength came to the fore yesterday at the Banquet Hall, Presidential Villa, Abuja.

The occasion was the inauguration of the Presidential Campaign Council for the re-election of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in 2027.

The gathering attracted political heavyweights, influential chieftains and leaders of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), setting the stage for a nationwide campaign to mobilise support for the President's re-election bid.

Amid the glamour, with 31 APC governors occupying the front row of the hall, Governor Yusuf stood out, earning special presidential recognition for wearing a cap bearing the broken-shackle emblem associated with President Tinubu.

During his speech, President Tinubu singled out Governor Yusuf's distinctive maroon cap, adorned with the broken-shackle emblem, commending the governor for embracing a symbol that represents freedom from poverty, illiteracy, insecurity and other barriers to national development.

While expressing admiration for Governor Yusuf's loyalty, President Tinubu said the emblem conveyed a powerful message of liberation from the challenges that have continued to hinder societal progress and development.

According to him, the broken shackle represents the determination to break the longstanding cycle of poverty and liberate Nigerians from the social and economic difficulties that have held them back.

He explained that poverty, illiteracy and insecurity remain major challenges confronting the country, stressing the need for deliberate and sustained efforts to overcome them and secure a better future for Nigerians.

The President noted that the broken-shackle emblem was more than a mere symbol, representing hope, freedom and the possibility of a new beginning for the people.

Yusuf's special recognition, which attracted considerable attention among his peers during the inauguration, was perhaps no coincidence.

Tinubu undoubtedly recognises Kano's strategic importance as a major political stronghold and a critical battleground in Nigeria's presidential elections.

For a governor navigating the complexities of Kano's political landscape, the occasion provided another opportunity for President Tinubu to demonstrate his strong interest in Kano politics and the state's strategic relevance within the national political structure.

According to recent voter registration data from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Kano ranked second nationally, with 6,570,276 registered voters out of a total of 103,428,715 nationwide.

Beyond the ceremonial glamour, Governor Yusuf's adoption of Tinubu's infinity-symbol cap was not merely a matter of political fashion at this defining moment in history. Rather, it reflected his commitment to the President's Renewed Hope Agenda and his determination to align Kano with the administration's vision for infrastructural and socio-economic development.

The transition from his familiar red cap to the maroon cap also sent a clear political message of loyalty, solidarity and commitment to mobilising massive support and votes for President Tinubu in the 2027 presidential election.

For those who doubted the sincerity of his political realignment, Governor Yusuf has continued to demonstrate loyalty to President Tinubu since his defection to the ruling APC.

His decision to replace the iconic red cap, long associated with the Kwankwasiyya political movement, with the maroon cap bearing Tinubu's emblem represents a remarkable political transformation that many had previously considered almost impossible.

Indeed, the symbolism extends beyond a change in colour or political identity. It reflects a significant shift in Kano's political dynamics, particularly against the backdrop of Governor Yusuf's longstanding association with Senator Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso and the Kwankwasiyya Movement.



President Bola Ahmad Tinubu and Vice President Sen. Kashim Shettima during the APC Presidential Campaign Council Inauguration in Abuja.

Kano Assures Tinubu of Northern Support for 2027 Re-election

KANO State Governor, Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf, has assured President Bola Ahmed Tinubu of Northern Nigeria's support for his re-election in the 2027 general elections.

The governor gave the assurance on Saturday in Abuja while speaking at the inauguration of the Arewa for Asiwaju (A4A) campaign office.

Yusuf expressed confidence that the North would stand behind President Tinubu in the forthcoming election, reaffirming his commitment to the President's second-term ambition.

He said the A4A movement would serve as a platform for mobilising support across the Northern states and strengthening political engagement ahead of the 2027 general elections.

He said Kano, as the state with the highest number of registered voters in Northern Nigeria, would, in sha Allah, lead other states to secure victory for President Tinubu, with a massive turnout in favour of the APC.

Speaking at the event, Vice-President Kashim Shettima said the North had demonstrated its support for President Tinubu, stressing that political support must go hand in hand with accountability, good governance and tangible results that improve the lives of Nigerians.

The Vice-President acknowledged the economic challenges facing citizens and emphasised the need for the administration to remain responsive to their concerns while prioritising security, education, poverty reduction and economic opportunities.

The A4A movement aims to coordinate support for President Tinubu and Vice-President Shettima across the 19 Northern states and the Federal Capital Territory, with former Minister of Defence, H.E. Badaru Abubakar, serving as its national coordinator.

Gov. Yusuf Attends 2026 SAN Swearing-In Ceremony at Supreme Court

Congratulates 68 New SANs, Kano's Candidate Sagir Gezawa

KANO State Governor, Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf, has attended the 2026 swearing-in ceremony of 68 newly conferred Senior Advocates of Nigeria (SANs) at the Supreme Court of Nigeria in Abuja, where he congratulated Kano State's candidate, Barrister Sagir Gezawa Suleiman, on his elevation to the prestigious rank alongside 67 other lawyers.

The 68 recipients comprise 67 legal practitioners and one academic, Professor Nnamdi Onyeka Obiaraeri. The ceremony also marked the commencement of the 2026/2027 Legal Year.

Governor Yusuf described Gezawa as a competent and incorruptible legal practitioner whose achievement had brought honour to Kano State.

He urged him to remain a worthy ambassador of the state by upholding the highest standards of professional ethics, integrity and justice in the discharge of his responsibilities.

The governor noted that Gezawa's elevation was a source of pride and encouragement to Kano's legal community, urging young lawyers to draw inspiration from his achievement through hard work, discipline and commitment to the rule of law.

He recalled that Kano State had continued to produce distinguished legal practitioners, citing Barrister Abdulkarim Kabiru Maude and Barrister Aminu Gadanya, who attained the SAN rank in 2025, as well as Barrister Sunusi Musa and Barrister Abdul Adamu Fagge, who were elevated in 2024.

Governor Yusuf reaffirmed his administration's commitment to supporting institutions and initiatives that promote professional excellence, justice and human capital development in Kano State.

Gov. Yusuf Congratulates Ekiti Counterpart, Oyebanji on Second-Term Inauguration

Celebrates Senator Basheer Lado at 60

KANO State Governor, Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf, has congratulated his Ekiti State counterpart, Biodun Oyebanji, on his inauguration for a second term in office.

Governor Yusuf described the occasion as a significant milestone in Oyebanji's political career and a testament to the confidence reposed in his leadership by the people of Ekiti State.

The governor expressed optimism that Oyebanji's second term would provide another opportunity to consolidate his achievements, strengthen democratic governance and accelerate development across Ekiti State.

He urged the Ekiti State governor to remain committed to people-oriented policies, inclusive governance and programmes aimed at improving citizens' living conditions.

Governor Yusuf, who was represented by his deputy, Murtala Garo, at the inauguration, also emphasised the importance of cooperation among state governments in promoting national unity, economic growth and sustainable development.

He wished Governor Oyebanji and his deputy, Monisade Afuye, a successful and productive second term in office.

Meanwhile, Governor Yusuf also congratulated Senator Basheer Lado, Special Adviser to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on National Assembly Matters (Senate), on his 60th birthday.

The governor described Senator Lado as an experienced politician, accomplished legislator and committed public servant whose contributions to democratic governance, humanitarian services and national development remain commendable.

Yusuf acknowledged Lado's role in strengthening relations between the Executive and the Senate, noting that his political experience and maturity had continued to contribute to effective governance and national cohesion.

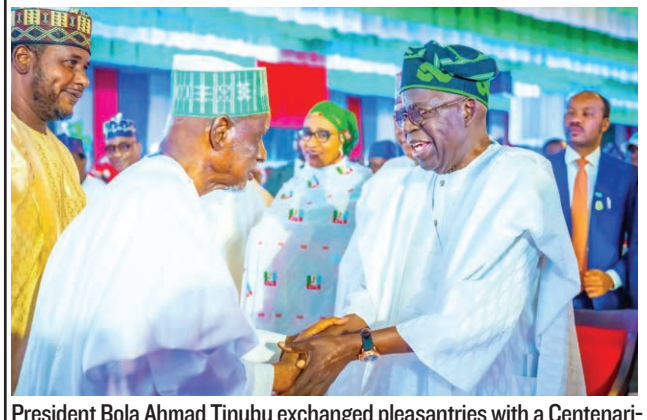
He recalled that Senator Lado represented Kano Central Senatorial District in the Seventh National Assembly from 2011 to 2015, where he served as Vice-Chairman of the Senate Committee on Works and facilitated important constituency projects, including the Kundila Bridge, popularly known as Gadar Lado, in Kano State.

The governor also commended Lado's contributions to humanitarian services through his previous positions as Federal Commissioner of the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons, and Director-General of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP).

Yusuf further praised the senator's interventions through the Ladon Alheri Foundation in education, healthcare, women's empowerment, rural water supply and support for disadvantaged communities.

He said Senator Lado's record of public service reflected his commitment to improving the welfare of Nigerians and advancing the country's development.

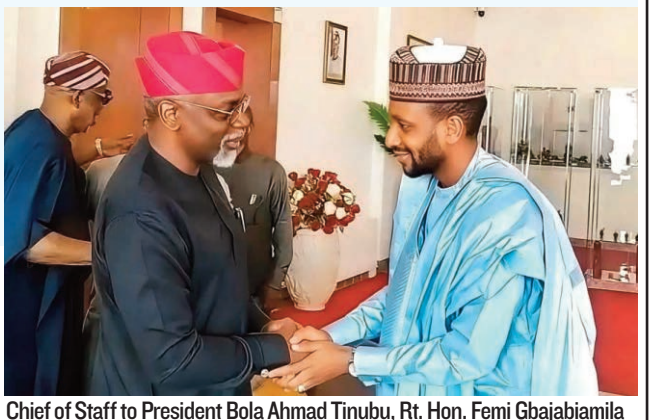
The governor prayed that Almighty Allah would grant Senator Lado good health, wisdom and more years of fruitful service to the nation.



President Bola Ahmad Tinubu exchanged pleasantries with a Centenarian and elder stateman Alh. Tanko Yakasai during the Presidential campaign council Inauguration in Abuja.



Member Representing Pankshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency of Plateau state Yusuf Adamu Gagdi on courtesy visit to Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf in Abuja.



Chief of Staff to President Bola Ahmad Tinubu, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila exchanged pleasantries with Kano state Deputy Governor, Alh. Murtala Sule Garo during the inauguration of Gov. Oyebanji of Ekiti state, in Ado Ekiti.

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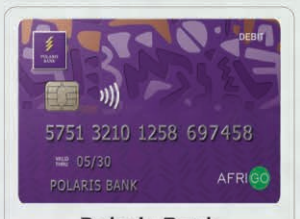

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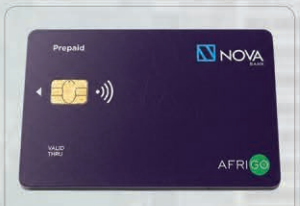

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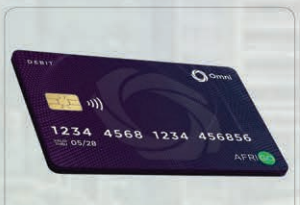

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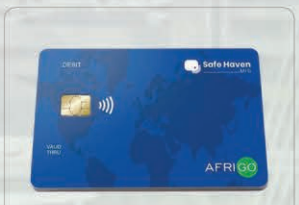

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Tanker tragedies in Delta, Edo, Oyo raise safety concerns, renew calls for road repairs

From **Gloria Nwafor** (Lagos), **Monday Osayande** (Asaba) and **Rotimi Agboluaje**, Ibadan

FEAR has gripped residents of Agbor, Delta State, following a petrol tanker explosion along the Old Lagos–Asaba Road yesterday, barely three days after a deadly tanker explosion at Oluku Market near Benin City, Edo State.

In yet another accident, five people were feared dead and 10 others rescued on Saturday after a tanker conveying 45,000 litres of Automotive Gas Oil (diesel) reportedly suffered brake failure and crashed into four vehicles along the Ojoo-Iwo Road Expressway in Ibadan, Oyo State.

The Agbor incident reportedly followed a collision involving a petrol-laden tanker shortly before Okoh Junction, triggering a fire that engulfed nearby vehicles and destroyed properties worth millions of naira.

The extent of the damage and the number of casualties had yet to be officially confirmed as of the time of filing this report.

The cause of the collision and the circumstances that led to the explosion were also unclear.

The incident sparked panic among residents, traders, motorists and other road users, renewing concerns about the dangers posed by petroleum tanker accidents along busy highways and in communities.

The explosion came amid public outrage over the deadly incident at Oluku Market, along the Benin–Lagos Highway in Ovia North-East Local Council of Edo State, last Thursday, which reportedly claimed several lives and left others injured.

Against this backdrop, the Nigeria Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) has called for the urgent rehabilitation of deteriorating roads across the country, warning that poor road conditions pose serious risks to motorists and petroleum tanker operators.



Burning tanker along the Old Lagos–Asaba Road, yesterday.

In a statement mourning the victims of the Oluku explosion, the union said the tragedy underscored the need for sustained measures to improve road safety, particularly in Edo State and other parts of the country where deteriorating roads create hazards for road users.

NUPENG expressed condolences to the Edo State Governor, Monday Okpebholo, and residents of the affected community over the loss of lives, injuries and destruction of property.

The union also expressed concern over the recurrence of fatal incidents despite collaborative efforts with relevant safety agencies to educate the public on the dangers of scooping spilled fuel and other flammable substances at accident scenes.

It reaffirmed its commitment to working with the Edo State Government and other stakeholders to strengthen preventive measures and reduce the risk of similar tragedies.

Residents and road users in Agbor were similarly advised to keep away from the affected area and avoid approaching the burning tanker or any location where petroleum products might have spilled.

Two killed, two injured in Lagos auto crash

TWO people have died and two others sustained injuries in a road crash involving a commercial bus and a pickup van along the Adekunle corridor, inward Iyana Oworo, Lagos.

The Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) said the accident involved a Suzuki commercial bus with registration number KTU 333 YF and a pickup van.

According to the agency, its operatives arrived promptly at the scene to coordinate rescue efforts, secure the area and evacuate the victims.

The bodies of the deceased were recovered and handed over to the Lagos State Environmental Health Monitoring Unit (SEHMU), also known as SHEMU, while the injured man and woman were taken to the General Hospital, Odan, for urgent medical attention.

NDLEA intercepts Saudi-bound cannabis, seizes N7b tramadol at Lagos port

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

THE National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has intercepted a consignment of cannabis concealed in a gallon of palm oil at the Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport, Kano, bound for Saudi Arabia, while uncovering 8,725 kilogrammes of powdered tramadol valued at more than N6.98 billion at the Apapa Port in Lagos.

The operations, conducted across several states, also led to the seizure of large quantities of cannabis, tramadol and other controlled substances, with dozens of suspects arrested, including an 85-year-old grandmother in Edo State.

At the Kano airport on Friday, October 16, NDLEA operatives intercepted Fatimah Ahmad during the outward clearance of an Ethiopian Airlines flight to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, via Addis Ababa. A search of the gallon of palm oil in her possession revealed 511.75 grammes of cannabis.

Ahmad reportedly told investigators that her cousin, Abubakar Yahaya, had given her the container. Yahaya was subsequently arrested at the airport car park.

At the Apapa Port, a joint examination with the Nigeria Customs Service and other agencies on October 2 uncovered a shipment of powdered tramadol from India, falsely declared as maize starch.



Suspect with seized illicit drugs.

Police arrest officers, seven suspects over assault, rape, robbery, vandalism

From **Segun Ayinde** (Abeokuta), **Tina Agosi Todo** (Calabar) and **Monday Osayande** (Asaba)

POLICE commands in Ogun, Cross River and Delta states have arrested four officers and seven suspects in separate cases involving alleged assault, rape, armed robbery and vandalism of public infrastructure.

In Ogun State, four police officers have been arrested over the alleged assault of a young man in Ijagba, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Council, after a viral video showed them pinning him to the ground and attempting to force him into a commercial minibus over his camouflage shorts.

The footage, first posted on TikTok by HairbyArik and later shared on X by @Godsboy441, showed the man struggling against the officers and crying for help, prompting residents to gather and challenge the policemen.

A woman was heard questioning the officers' conduct, while others demanded that the handcuffs be removed from the young man. The confrontation reportedly ended with his release.

The woman who recorded the incident also alleged that the officers threatened her for filming the encounter.

Reacting to the video, the Commissioner of Police, Bode Ojajuni, ordered the immediate identification and arrest of the officers and directed a thorough investigation into the incident.

Eleme pipeline explosion: Victims demand compensation, probe of ignored warnings

From **Ann Godwin**, Port Harcourt

SURVIVORS of a gas pipeline explosion in Aleto community, Eleme Local Council of Rivers State, have demanded compensation for their losses, alleging that warnings about a suspected leak were ignored before the blast destroyed homes and businesses and injured several residents.

The explosion occurred last Thursday along Old Bori Road following a reported gas leak from a pipeline belonging to NNPC Gas Infrastructure Company Limited, a subsidiary of NNPC Limited.

More than 50 houses and shops were reportedly damaged, while about 20 people sustained injuries.

A shop owner and victim, identified simply as Esther, said she was attending to customers when she heard a loud explosion. As she and others rushed outside to find out what had happened, another blast followed, scattering goods and forcing her to flee.

"I could not wait to take anything. The only things I managed to escape with were my Point-of-Sale (PoS) machine and phones," she said.

Esther, who sustained injuries while escaping, said she fell and lost a bag containing about N100,000. A woman who recognised her at a nearby junction took her to a pharmacy, where she received first aid and medication.



Scene of the gas explosion.

Lagos youths take drug abuse campaign to Mile 2 community

By **Ayonote Clement**

YOUNG people in Mile 2 Estate, Amuwo-Odofin Local Council of Lagos State, are stepping up efforts to discourage drug abuse, cultism and other social vices through community outreach programmes aimed at promoting healthier and more responsible lifestyles.

The initiative, led by Abete Community Youths, combines health interventions with education, environmental sanitation and youth engagement to encourage residents, particularly young people, to contribute positively to their community.

At its second yearly medical outreach, the group reaffirmed its commitment to tackling social problems while improving access to basic healthcare and creating opportunities for young people to become agents of change.

The group's president, Adepoju Samuel, said the initiative was established to encourage youths who grew up in the community to give back to society and challenge negative perceptions about young people.

He said the medical outreach began in 2025, with the latest edition marking the group's second consecutive year of providing healthcare support to residents.

According to Samuel, the initiative covers the wider Mile 2 Estate community, including the extension and Zones A, B, D, E and F, to ensure that more residents benefit from its activities.

LAWMA deploys over 25 compactors for waste evacuation in Oshodi

By **Bertram Nwannekanma**

THE Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) has deployed more than 25 compactor trucks and sanitation personnel to clear accumulated waste across several streets in Oshodi-Isolo Local Council.

The week-long intervention is aimed at clearing waste backlogs, improving environmental sanitation and strengthening waste collection arrangements in the affected communities.

The exercise, coordinated by LAWMA management staff, is being supported by the Supervisor for Health in Oshodi-Isolo Local Council.

Advocacy activities are also being conducted alongside the evacuation to encourage residents to adopt responsible waste disposal practices and participate actively in keeping their communities clean.



LAWMA officials clearing waste in Oshodi, yesterday.

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The Metro Section

Bauchi health agency chief, four children die in road crash

From **Rauf Oyewole** (Bauchi) and **Rotimi Agboluaje** (Ibadan)

• Three burnt to death in Oyo road crash

THE Executive Secretary of the Bauchi State Health Contributory Management Agency (BASHCMA), Ibrahim Ladan Duguri, and four of his children, have died in a road crash along Duguri Road in Alkaleri Local Council of the state.

However, another son of the deceased was injured in the crash and is receiving treatment in hospital.

The incident reportedly occurred at the weekend while the family was travelling to their village, throwing their loved ones into mourning.

Also, three people were burnt to death while five others were rescued with minor injuries after a bus carrying bakery machines rammed into a stationary trailer at Jobele, headquarters of Afijio Local Council of Oyo State.

The accident occurred in the early hours of Sunday in front of the Afijio Local Government Secretariat, according to the Oyo State Fire Services Agency.



Bauchi accident scene.



Rescuers at Oyo crash scene.

In a statement, the agency said it received a distress call at about 12:20 a.m. reporting that vehicles were on fire at the scene.

Firefighters led by Makinde Kunle were immediately deployed and found that a J5 bus with an unknown registration number had crashed into the rear of a stationary DAF trailer, also without a known registration number.

The bus was reportedly conveying bakery machines, while the trailer was loaded with synthetic materials. Both vehicles were engulfed in flames when the firefighters arrived.

The agency said its personnel launched a coordinated firefighting operation, using chemical compounds to contain the blaze and prevent it from spreading to nearby properties.

Three people were recovered dead from the wreckage, their bodies burnt beyond recognition, while five others were rescued with minor injuries. The operation lasted several hours before the fire was completely extinguished.

The agency attributed the crash to the bus driver's loss of control, which caused the vehicle to ram into the trailer parked by the roadside.

Personnel of the Federal Fire Service, Oyo Command; the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps; the *Amotekun Corps*, Jobele Unit; and the police from the Jobele Divisional Headquarters also participated in the rescue and firefighting operation.

Gridlock strands motorists on Benin-Lagos expressway

From **Joseph Kanjo**, Benin

HUNDREDS of motorists and commuters were stranded for more than three hours yesterday morning following a gridlock between Ovia Bridge and Okada Junction along the Benin-Lagos Expressway.

The traffic congestion was blamed on indiscriminate roadside parking, impatience among motorists, broken-down vehicles and an accident along the route.

The Guardian gathered that some heavy-duty truck drivers parked by the roadside and continued sleeping into the early hours of the morning, obstructing the movement of other vehicles.

Many of the stranded motorists were drivers of articulated vehicles who had hoped to leave Benin early enough to reach their destinations on time.

The Okada axis of the expressway was also said to have become notorious for traffic congestion because of a damaged section of the road near the tipper garage. One of the drivers, who identified himself as Akanni, lamented the failure of some of his colleagues to observe basic road safety rules.



Stranded motorists along Benin-Lagos expressway.

"Imagine drivers parking by the roadside, sleeping and failing to wake up on time to continue their journeys, thereby contributing to the gridlock," he said.

Another driver, identified simply as Chukwu, said he had been informed of traffic congestion around Ovia Bridge at about 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, prompting him to rest at a bypass near Oluku. He, however, expressed surprise at encountering another gridlock after passing through the traffic around Ovia Bridge without difficulty.

Chukwu blamed the situation on poor enforcement of traffic regulations, urging government agencies, particularly the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), to ensure that motorists obey road safety rules.

Police probe attack on Aba station as two officers die

THE Abia State Police Command has launched an investigation into an attack on the Urratta-Eziukwu Divisional Police Headquarters in Aba, which claimed the lives of two senior officers and left three inspectors injured.

The attack occurred at about 2:26 a.m. on Saturday, October 17, 2026 when unidentified armed hoodlums reportedly stormed the station with explosives, triggering a fire that damaged part of the building and a divisional patrol van.

The Command said the injured inspectors are receiving medical attention, adding that no firearms or ammunition were carted away by the attackers.

However, following the incident, the Commissioner of Police, Wilfred Afolabi, personally led tactical units to the area to assess the situation and coordinate security operations.

The team combed the surrounding neighbourhood as part of efforts to track down the assailants, while intensified security operations and monitoring were launched to identify and apprehend those responsible.

Afolabi condemned the attack and vowed that the perpetrators would be brought to justice, assuring residents that the Command would deploy all necessary operational and intelligence resources to ensure their arrest.

The police said calm had been restored to the affected area, while efforts to apprehend the attackers continued.

The commissioner also expressed condolences to the families of the two officers killed and the wider police community over the loss.

Customs hands over drugs, codeine syrup worth N511m to NAFDAC, NDLEA

By **Adaku Onyenucheya**

THE Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) has handed over illicit drugs and 57 cartons of codeine syrup, valued at N511.4 million, alongside two suspects and two vehicles, to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) for further investigation and possible prosecution.

The seized drugs included 121 parcels of cannabis sativa weighing 65.9 kilogrammes, 100 grammes of crystal methamphetamine, 400 grammes of cocaine, 900 grammes of ground synthetic cannabis and 4.3 kilogrammes of hybrid cannabis.

Customs officers also recovered 86 packs of polythene bags allegedly used to conceal the drugs.

The two vehicles, a Toyota Hiace bus and a Toyota Sienna, were intercepted in separate operations, with one male suspect arrested in connection with each incident.



Arrested suspect

Deputy Comptroller in charge of Enforcement, Oluwaseun Oguntuase, while speaking during the handover ceremony at the Federal Operations Unit (FOU), Zone A Headquarters in Ikeja, Lagos, said the seizures resulted from intelligence-led operations along border routes, highways and other strategic locations.

Oguntuase represented the Acting Comptroller of FOU Zone A, Oladapo Afeni.

He said the first interception occurred at about 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 10, 2026 when a patrol team, acting on intelligence, stopped a Toyota Hiace bus along the Lagos-Benin Expressway, around Ore, Ondo State.

The vehicle was conveying suspected illicit drugs concealed in polythene bags.

According to the Customs, subsequent examination and analysis by the NDLEA officials confirmed the substances.

In another separate operation at about 2.07 p.m. on October 7, 2026, officers intercepted another vehicle along the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway and discovered 57 cartons of assorted brands of codeine syrup.

Oguntuase, however, said that the handover reflected the Service's commitment to working with relevant agencies to combat drug trafficking, smuggling of controlled substances and the circulation of unsafe pharmaceutical products.

Lagos communities grapple with irregular water supply as prepaid meters spark privatisation fears

By **Glory Sunday**

FOR Ahmed Barua and other residents of Baruwa in the Alimosho area of Lagos State, getting enough water to drink, cook and maintain proper hygiene remains a daily struggle.

Despite being connected to the state's water network, the community continues to grapple with irregular supply, leaving households searching for alternatives.

Barua said water was supplied about three times a week, but the quantity was insufficient to meet residents' needs. Electricity shortages sometimes disrupted pumping because the generator needed to operate the facility was not always running.

He said he had been unable to obtain water through his prepaid meter for several days, despite contacting the relevant authorities and sending a message to a manager who promised to investigate.

However, for families already struggling with the cost of food, transport and electricity, unreliable water supply means additional stress and expense.

When water does not flow, residents must find other sources, often without knowing whether the water is safe.

Community members have also raised concerns about the condition of natural water sources, which they believe have been contaminated by petrol leaking from buried pipelines transporting fuel from the Mosinmi oil depot to the Ejigbo oil facility.

The alleged contamination, according to the community, requires independent environmental testing to establish its extent and cause.

Barua said residents had attended meetings and approached government officials over the years in search of a lasting solution, saying that though previous interventions reportedly improved access to some extent, the supply remained inadequate.

His experience was among the concerns raised at a symposium organised by Corporate Accountability and Public Participation Africa (CAPPA) in Lagos on Friday, October 16, 2026 during the 2026 Africa Week of Action Against Water Privatisation.

FRSC mourns Ogun Sector Commander, Ogunjobi

From **Segun Ayinde**, Abeokuta

THE Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has announced the death of its Ogun State Sector Commander, Corps Commander Oludare Ogunjobi, following a brief illness.

The Command described Ogunjobi's death as a significant loss to the Corps, his colleagues and the wider road safety community, noting that he would be remembered for his leadership, dedication to road safety administration and commitment to the Corps' mandate.

FRSC Spokesperson in Ogun State, Afolabi Odunsi, confirmed his death in a statement in Abeokuta yesterday.

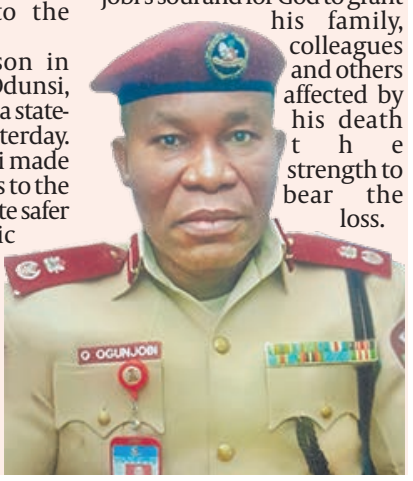
Odunsi said Ogunjobi made valuable contributions to the Corps' efforts to promote safer roads, improve public enlightenment, strengthen stakeholders' engagement and encourage compliance with traffic regulations.

He said the late Sector Commander's commitment to duty and service to the nation would remain part of his legacy.

The Command expressed deep sorrow over his death and extended its condolences to his family, loved ones, colleagues and associates, urging them to find strength during the difficult period.

Odunsi, a chief route commander, added that details of the funeral arrangements would be communicated in due course.

The Command, however, prayed for the repose of Ogunjobi's soul and for God to grant his family, colleagues and others affected by his death the strength to bear the loss.



Office of the Executive Governor,
Kano State



HAPPY 52ND BIRTHDAY

TO HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY,
OBA ADEYEYE ENITAN OGUNWUSI,
OJAJA II, OONI OF IFE

On behalf of myself, the government and the good people of Kano State, I warmly congratulate His Imperial Majesty, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, Ojaja II, the revered Ooni of Ife, on the joyous occasion of his 52nd birthday.

Your Majesty's unwavering commitment to the preservation of our rich cultural heritage, promotion of peaceful coexistence and strengthening of traditional institutions continue to inspire Nigerians across ethnic and religious divides.

As a respected traditional ruler, your contributions to peacebuilding, national unity and mutual understanding underscore the vital role of traditional institutions in fostering harmony and sustainable development in our country.

On this special occasion, I pray that Almighty grant Your Majesty good health, wisdom, long life and continued strength to serve your people, the traditional institution and humanity.

May your reign continue to bring peace, progress and prosperity to the people of Ife and Nigeria at large.

Once again, I wish Your Imperial Majesty a happy 52nd birthday and many more years of fruitful and impactful service to humanity.



Signed:
His Excellency,
Gov Abba K. Yusuf of Kano State

Congratulations
Happy birthday!

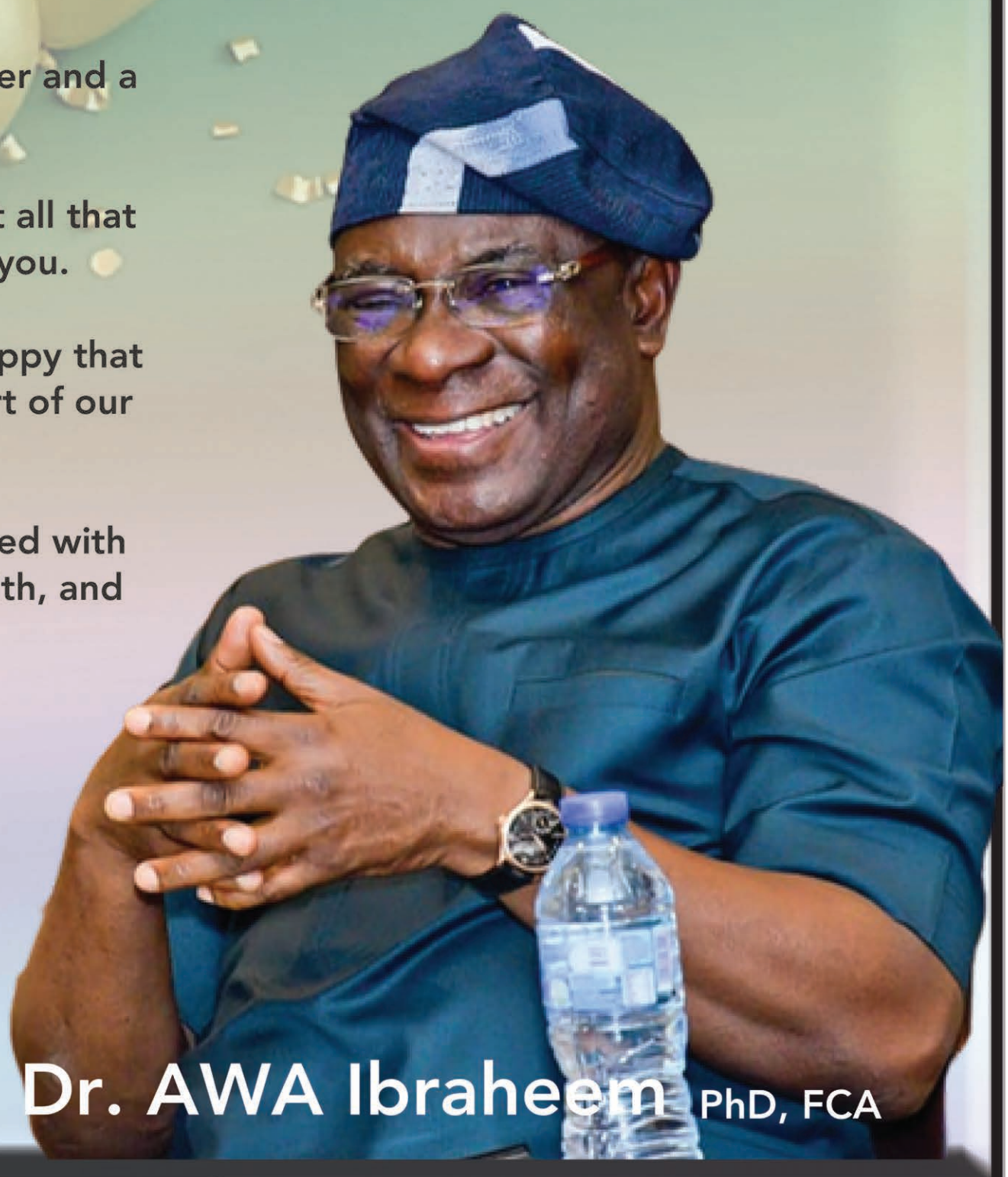
Happy Birthday Sir!

You are a silent achiever and a great philanthropist.

You inspire and impact all that comes in contact with you.

We are so glad and happy that you are an integral part of our success story.

We wish you a year filled with bliss, sound mind, health, and continued success.



Dr. AWA Ibraheem PhD, FCA

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

Editorial

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Time to stop recurrent military aircraft crashes

WITH about 16 military aircraft crashes recorded in the country between 2016 and now, including the latest one that occurred in Ondo State on October 5, 2026, there is an urgent need to unravel the cause to end the avoidable and traumatising loss of life of gallant officers and keep intact the love and confidence of the armed forces personnel in the noble military profession.

We are aware of the risks associated with the military profession, which may lead to loss of life, but that loss of life should occur either in the course of fighting to defend the country's territorial integrity while quelling insurrection, or during any similar operation. It is not expected to occur during training, in the course of transporting personnel from one location to another, even for special operations, or during post-inspection or post-maintenance flight, as we have seen so far in the unfortunate accidents involving military aircraft.

The government has a responsibility to prevent the military profession from being perceived as a death sentence and scaring Nigerians away from joining it. The number of aircraft lost in unfortunate crashes should also be of great concern. The military authorities are not happy with the situation. It has become imperative that a diligent investigation be conducted, as already directed by President Bola Tinubu, to identify the responsible parties and take appropriate action to prevent a recurrence.

It was another national tragedy on October 5 when an ATR-42 belonging to the Nigeria Air Force (NAF) crashed in Igbokoda, the headquarters of Ilaje Local Government Area of Ondo State. All 25 passengers and seven crew members aboard the twin-engine turboprop aircraft died in the accident. The aircraft, used for regional operations, was on a routine mission from Benin in Edo State to Lagos.

In one of the immediate reactions to the crash, Minister of Aviation, Festus Keyamo, said the aircraft lost radio contact at about 9:13 a.m., before its wreckage was found near the Naval Base in Igbokoda, submerged in the swamp. Residents made frantic efforts to rescue the victims, paddling canoes around the area, while clothes, shoes and other personal effects believed to belong to the victims floated in the river. Ordering an investigation into the crash, President Tinubu prayed for the repose of the souls of the gallant officers, and for God to grant their families the fortitude to bear the unfortunate loss.

For the frightening record, the accident in Igbokoda brought to 16 the number of military aircraft crashes that have been recorded in the country since 2016, particularly during combat operation, training flights, routine missions and other operations.

A chronicle of the accidents shows that a NAF Agusta 109 Light Utility Helicopter went down in the Borno River on July 6, 2017, as a result of a technical fault while on a liaison mission, forcing the pilot to bring down the helicopter in the river with no lives lost. In September 2018, one person died when two NAF F-7N fighter aircraft collided around Katampe Hills, Abuja, during rehearsals for the Independence Anniversary celebration.

The military recorded three crashes in 2019. An M-35 helicopter crashed near Damasak in Borno State on January 2 while supporting a ground operation. The five-man crew died. On August 17, a VCV-6A Air Beetle crashed near Kaduna, killing its pilot, while a trainer helicopter crashed at the NAF Base in Enugu on November 14 while returning from a routine training exercise. No life was lost.

In separate incidents in 2021, a Beechcraft King Air 350i crashed on February 22 shortly after takeoff from Abuja and heading toward Minna in Niger State. All seven military personnel on board died. It was another disaster when, on March 31, an Apha Jet conducting an operation in Borno State disappeared from the radar and later crashed. The wreckage was found in the Sambisa Forest, but the two pilots could not be found. Then came what was considered the most tragic of the crashes in 2021 when, on May 21, a NAF King Air 350 crashed near the Kaduna International Airport, killing all 11 people on board, including the Chief of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. Ibrahim Attahiru, who had just been appointed to the position by the then President Muhammadu Buhari. Another NAF Alpha Jet was lost on July 18 after it was shot down in Zamfara.

The following year, a NAF Super Mushshak trainer aircraft crashed in Kaduna on April 19, killing two pilots. In 2023, an FT-7NI trainer aircraft crashed in Makurdi, Benue State, but the pilots survived. A month later, a NAF military helicopter carrying out a casual evacuation mission crashed at Chukuba village in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State, killing 11 people. The third crash that year involved a NAF MI35P helicopter which was lost shortly after takeoff from the NAF Base in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, in December. Fortunately, no one was lost.

The sad narrative continued in 2025 when a NAF aircraft was lost during a post-inspection check flight. In January this year, the military lost a CH-48 unmanned aircraft during a surveillance operation in Niger State. It was the last of the accidents before the October 5, 2026, accident in Ondo State, which has renewed questions about the safety of military aviation operations in the country.

What concerns Nigerians is the maintenance, airworthiness, and operational deployment of aircraft used for combat operations, surveillance, transportation, and other missions. Another worry is that the recurrent crashes involve different aircraft categories rather than a single platform. Why is it that as fighter jets are crashing, attack helicopters, transport aircraft, training aircraft, and even unmanned systems are also falling? The situation has become too alarming, at a period when the military is almost becoming overstretched fighting terrorism, banditry, kidnapping and other heinous crimes at the same time across the country. The human and material losses from the crashes are too great.

The investigation into the Ondo crash ordered by President Tinubu must be thorough so the government knows how to end the recurring sorrow in the military and the country at large. In scrutinising the aircraft's airworthiness, we advise that other relevant stakeholders, including the Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB), which has already indicated its readiness to assist, should be involved. The government must be ready to act swiftly on the investigators' recommendations.

The tragedy must not be allowed to continue. Our military personnel should not fall victim to avoidable death; their families should not suffer avoidable and everlasting sorrow.

LETTER

Buhari not Tinubu removed fuel subsidy

SIR: President Bola Tinubu has himself to blame for all the unintended consequences of fuel subsidy removal. And I so aver with a high sense of responsibility. Lest we forget, Tinubu didn't remove the fuel subsidy, no, he didn't. His predecessor, President Muhammadu Buhari (of blessed memory), did.

Recall that fuel subsidy had not been included in the national budget from the month Tinubu was scheduled to assume office, June 2023. In reality then, fuel subsidy was gone before Tinubu.

The methodical army general-turned-politician had been very clear-headed about the crucial need to exorcise fuel subsidy. First, he as Minister of Petroleum, directed NNPC to issue Turn-Around-Maintenance (TAM) contracts on the four government owned refineries, Port Harcourt I &II, Warri and Kaduna.

Available information showed that the completions of Port Harcourt I &II and Warri TAMs were scheduled to precede Buhari's exit from power. The combined capacity of those refineries is approximately 330,000 barrels per day. Of course, had those plants come onstream before mid-2023, there wouldn't have been any talk of providing hundreds of billions of naira in the national budget from Q3/2023 in the name of fuel subsidy.

Regrettably, shoddy execution among other issues, frustrated that goal even as NNPC talked tantalisingly about imminent restreaming of the PH refineries. In the end, however, and expectedly much to the heartbreak of the outgoing president, none of the TAMs was completed at the end of Buhari's second term in May 2023. Indeed, that shortfall must have been particularly painful for Buhari who, as military federal commissioner (minister) of petroleum, had supervised the building of Warri and PH refineries.

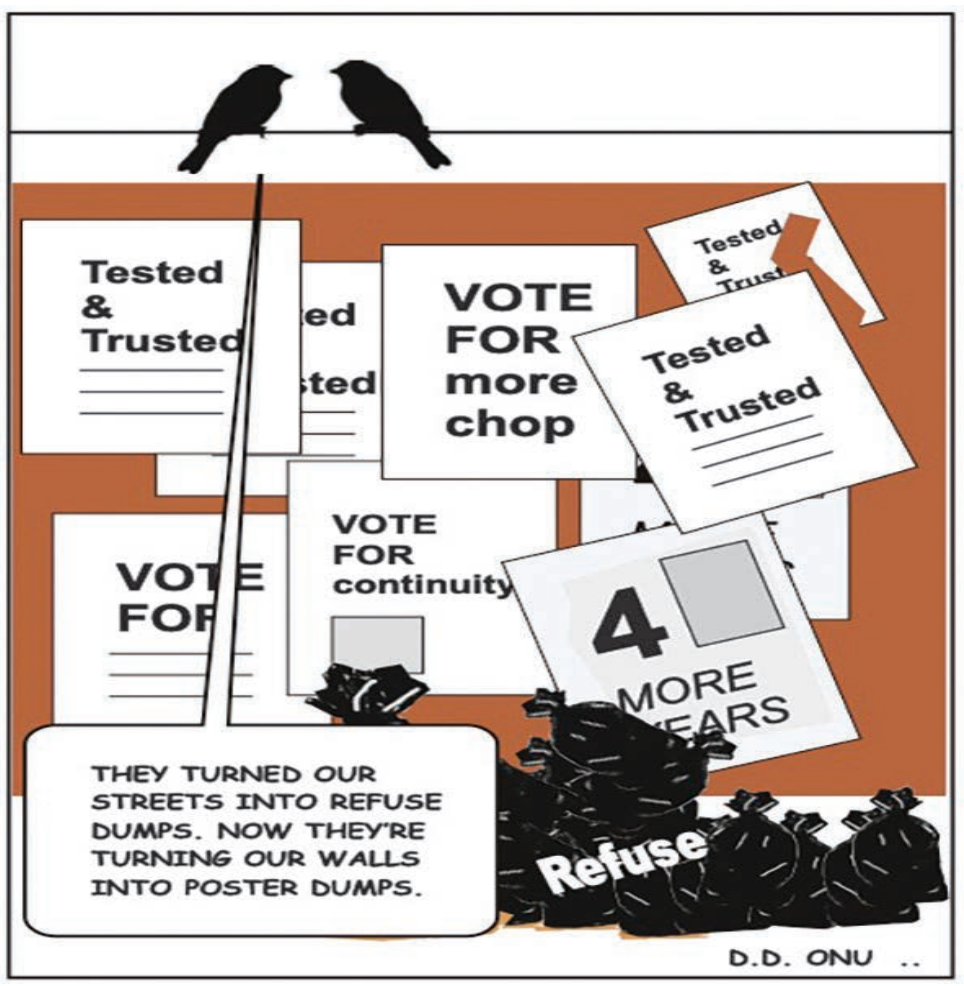
From his early engagements with the Trade Unions in 2023 to the present, Tinubu has not left anyone in doubt about his determination to get the government refineries back to efficient operations – a measure of unwavering loyalty, perhaps.

But barely seven months to the end of his first term, those refineries are still not available; so, what went so terribly wrong? Has the president, as the substantive minister of petroleum, in conjunction with his junior ministers not provided adequate administrative supervision over the ongoing TAMs?

These questions are crucial in unravelling why fuel subsidy removal most regrettably led to protracted hardship for the citizenry, and palpable embarrassment to the federal government in general, and to the NNPC in particular.

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

Godwin Afam Nkemdiche is an Engineering Consultant based in Abuja.



Opinion

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However bad things get, may the military never return!

By **Godwin Sogolo**

UNDER difficult circumstances, we continue to give thanks to God in the recognition that things could have been much worse. Although this belief cannot be empirically verified, it remains both logically conceivable and practically meaningful. Indeed, the recognition that our circumstances could have been worse constitutes one of the fundamental premises underlying human faith and religious belief.

At the individual level, the thought that "things could have been worse" offers consolation rather than satisfaction with our present circumstances. It invites us to envisage a possible world in which our situation is less favourable than it is in reality—a world that is logically conceivable, even if it does not exist. This perspective helps us appreciate that, however unpleasant our present condition may be, circumstances could have been even less favourable. While we pray that our situation does not deteriorate further, our ultimate aspiration remains to overcome the challenges we face and improve our lot in life.

At the broader socio-political level, however, this way of thinking can serve purposes that go beyond personal consolation. Politicians frequently appeal to the fear of a worse alternative to persuade citizens that their policies, decisions, or continued stay in power are preferable to the consequences of choosing otherwise.

The argument is simple but powerful: whatever the shortcomings of the present administartion, changing it might produce something even worse. The possibility of a greater disaster thus becomes an instrument of political persuasion, and sometimes a convenient means of defending an otherwise indefensible situation.

The crucial question, however, is whether the possibility that things could have been worse is sufficient justification for accepting things as they are. More importantly, does the fact that one situation might have been worse establish that the alternative is necessarily better? These questions are particularly relevant to the debate over military intervention in African politics and, indeed, beyond.

Examples of political leaders invoking the prospect of a greater disaster to justify controversial decisions abound in contemporary international politics. President Donald Trump of the United States, for instance, has justified military action against the Islamic Republic of Iran on the grounds that it was necessary to protect America and the wider Western world from the potentially catastrophic consequences of Iran acquiring and using nuclear weapons. The underlying argument is that the costs and dangers of military action must be weighed against the potentially catastrophic consequences of failing to act. In such reasoning, war is presented not necessarily as a desirable outcome in itself, but as a means of preventing something worse.

Military apologists in Africa employ similar reasoning to justify the intervention of the armed forces in the political systems of African states. Their arguments rest, broadly, on two principal claims. The first is that democratic institutions, largely inherited or adapted from Western political traditions, are structurally ill-suited to the socio-cultural realities of African societies.

According to this view, liberal democracy does not adequately reflect Africa's indigenous political traditions, communal values, historical experiences, and patterns of social organisation. It is argued that the transplantation of such institutions onto African soil has contributed to political instability, electoral manipulation, corruption, and ineffective governance.

The second argument, which follows from the first, is that the military – by virtue of its hierarchical structure, discipline, organisational coherence, and capacity for decisive action – is better equipped to govern than civilian politicians. Advocates of military rule often invoke the failures of civilian administrations – particularly corruption, abuse of power, ethnic and religious divisions, electoral fraud, and economic mismanagement – to suggest that military intervention, however undesirable in principle, may be necessary to rescue a nation from political and economic collapse. The underlying reasoning is familiar: if civilian democracy has brought a country to the brink of disaster, military rule may be justified as the lesser evil, preventing circumstances from becoming much worse.

Both arguments, however, rest on assumptions that require critical examination. The first argument requires us to distinguish between the historical origins of democratic institutions and their suitability for African societies. The fact that certain democratic institutions were developed in the West does not, in itself, establish that they are incompatible with African values or political traditions. Nor does it follow that Africa must choose between an uncritical adoption of Western models and a wholesale rejection of democratic governance.

The more pertinent question is how democratic institutions can be adapted to the historical, cultural, and socio-political circumstances of individual African states while preserving the principles of accountability, popular participation, and the rule of law.

The second argument – that military governments are inherently better equipped to govern – also rests on questionable assumptions. Military organisations may be highly effective in maintaining internal discipline and executing commands, but the qualities required to command an army are not identical to those required to govern a complex, pluralistic society. A country is not a military barracks, and its citizens are not soldiers expected to obey orders without question.

Similarly, the claim that military governments have performed better than civilian administrations cannot be sustained merely by pointing to the shortcomings of particular civilian governments. Military regimes are not immune to corruption, authoritarianism, economic mismanagement, or the abuse of public power. Indeed, the concentration of political authority in the hands of military rulers may weaken the very mechanisms of accountability needed to prevent such abuses. The suspension of constitutional government may therefore replace one set of political problems with another, sometimes more serious, rather than resolve the difficulties that originally prompted intervention.

The crucial issue, therefore, is not whether military rule might – under particular circumstances – appear preferable to a failing civilian administration. It is whether military intervention provides a sustainable solution to the underlying problems of governance or merely postpones, compounds, or reproduces them. Here, the familiar argument that things could have been much worse becomes a convenient instrument of justification: the military presents itself as the force that has saved, or must save, the nation from a greater disaster. Yet the possibility that civilian rule might have deteriorated further does not, by itself, establish that military intervention was necessary, legitimate, or beneficial. A convincing defence of intervention must demonstrate not merely the failures it claims to prevent, but also the legitimacy, effectiveness, and long-term consequences of the alternative it proposes.

In assessing previous administrations, whether military or civilian, we must also recognise a psychological tendency that can distort our judgement of the past. Every generation is susceptible to the belief that things were better in earlier times and that the present is inferior to what came before. Accompanying this tendency is often an uncertainty about, and fear of, the future. The past becomes a refuge from the anxieties of the present, while the future is perceived less as an opportunity for improvement than as a source of impending danger. The growing global concern over the actual and potential dangers posed by the uncontrolled development of artificial intelligence (AI) provides a good example.

Psychologists have several concepts that help explain this tendency, including rosy retrospection, the inclination to remember past experiences more favourably than they were, and *nostalgia*, the sentimental longing for an earlier period. A related phenomenon is *status quo bias*, the tendency to prefer a familiar arrangement to an uncertain alternative. These concepts may help explain why some Nigerians, particularly among the older generations, increasingly look back with nostalgia at the years of military rule.

Ultimately, nostalgia for military rule may be understood, at least in part, as an expression of popular disappointment with the performance of democratic institutions. When citizens perceive that democracy has become an instrument for the enrichment of the political elite rather than a mechanism for promoting public welfare, they may begin to romanticise an authoritarian past. Yet such nostalgia can be misleading if it encourages people to confuse the visible execution of developmental projects with good governance in its broader sense. Roads, bridges, and public buildings are important, but so too are accountability, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and the freedom of citizens to choose and remove their leaders.

The lesson, therefore, is not that Nigeria should return to military rule, but that democratic governance must demonstrate its capacity to deliver tangible improvements in the lives of ordinary citizens. A democracy that fails to translate public resources into public welfare risks undermining its own legitimacy and creating conditions in which authoritarian alternatives begin to appear attractive. What Nigerians should yearn for is not the return of the military, but the return of purposeful leadership, fiscal discipline, accountability, institutional integrity and a genuine commitment to national development.

However bad things may get, we must not allow disappointment with civilian government to blind us to the dangers of military rule. Our objective should not be to find comfort in the thought that things could have been worse, but to build a political system in which they can genuinely become better.

Sogolo is an Emeritus Professor who has taught and conducted research in Philosophy for over five decades – at the University of Ibadan, Cardiff University of Wales and currently at the National Open University of Nigeria. He also served as a member of the Editorial Board of The Guardian Newspapers in the 1980s and 1990s.

Who will pay to preserve tropical forests?

By **Carlos Nobre** and **Lee White**

THE enormous climate, water, and biodiversity benefits generated by tropical forests accrue to the entire world. But hardly any of the economic value created is captured by the countries and communities that safeguard them. The Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) was launched at last year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belém to start correcting this imbalance.

For too long, it has been more profitable to destroy tropical forests than to conserve them, even though they provide services essential for the survival of many countries and for the welfare of us all.

The Amazon recycles nearly half of its rainfall and exports moisture that shapes precipitation patterns across South America and beyond. The Congo Basin, with its peatlands that store roughly 30 billion tons of carbon, is one of the planet's great carbon reservoirs, while many of the plant and animal species in Borneo are found nowhere else on Earth.

Moreover, across the tropics, forests support the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people—including Indigenous communities whose stewardship is often essential for maintaining them—while also sustaining local cultures and bolstering food and water security.

But market prices do not adequately reflect these benefits, creating an economic barrier that all tropical regions bump up against: in the short term, clearing a hectare of forest can generate more income than protecting it, even when the long-term costs of forest loss are much greater. As a result, cattle ranching and agricultural expansion exert enormous pressure on the Amazon, small- and large-scale agriculture contribute to forest conversion in the Congo Basin, and industrial plantations have transformed sylvan landscapes in Southeast Asia.

Worryingly, a recent brief by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network emphasises that international public finance remains far below the estimated investment required for conserving tropical forests, and that competition for declining official development aid is intensifying.

Grants and concessional loans remain indispensable for strengthening institutions, protecting rights, restoring degraded landscapes, and supporting activities with large social and ecological returns but limited commercial returns.Yet, traditional development finance alone cannot close the gap. Nor should scarce public resources be used simply to absorb risks for private investors.

This is where the TFFF comes in. It is designed to provide eligible tropical-forest countries with predictable, long-term payments for maintaining forest cover and meeting agreed performance criteria. This changes the economic incentives: according to the TFFF's current model, countries will forgo around $400 per deforested hectare.

Because each hectare of standing tropical forest increases a country's payment, policymakers may be more willing to implement robust national strategies that complement the TFFF, like Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

The TFFF's proposed architecture includes a commitment to direct at least 20 per cent of payments to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, who play an outsize role in protecting forests but have historically received only a small share of international climate and nature finance. The real test will be whether this commitment results in predictable funding that reaches those managing forests on the ground and, in the process, reinforces local governance.

Of course, the TFFF is not a silver bullet. No single solution can close the financing gap for tropical-forest conservation. Public and private funding, domestic expenditure, concessional loans, grants, results-based payments, and new investment mechanisms must all play a role. Perhaps more importantly, no financial mechanismcan compensate indefinitely for incentives that continue to encourage deforestation. To change them, policymakers must intervene.

The TFFF has a role to play here, too. To succeed, it must not only mobilise enough capital to translate global commitments into predictable payments on the ground, but also support governments in implementing policies that protect forests and complement existing forest-finance instruments. These include strengthening land rights and environmental governance, repurposing harmful subsidies, supporting restoration, and expanding viable economic opportunities compatible with standing forests.

For decades, the international community has acknowledged the extraordinary value of tropical forests whilefailing to invest adequately in their conservation. Ensuring that they remain standing is in everyone's interests.The challenge now is to use all tools at our disposal, not least the TFFF, to turn talk into action.

Nobre, a senior scientist at the University of São Paulo's Institute of Advanced Studies, is co-chair of the Science Panel for the Amazon. White, a former Minister of Water, Forests, the Sea, and Environment of Gabon, is an honorary professor at the University of Stirling and Special Envoy of the Science Panel for the Congo Basin.

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Opinion

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Imperative of Tantita's support for oil asset protection, higher production

By **Michael Maduka**

THE Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) is leading the push to hit the three million barrels per day (mbpd) goal. The Commission's officials plan to conduct 2026 oil licensing round that offer 40 blocks across land, shallow water and deepwater terrains in push for fresh investment into the upstream sector. The sustenance of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Ltd (TSSNL) operations in the protection of national assets, especially oil pipelines in the Niger Delta region equally come handy in the quest to achieve these targets.

It was over two decades ago that Nigeria's crude oil production peaked at about 2.5 million barrels per day (bpd).

That was in November 2005, according to historical production data, making the country a major force within OPEC and the international oil market. However, despite post-Petroleum Industry Act (PIA), investment efforts, national output, including condensate, has not gone beyond 1.7 million bpd.

But Nigeria is now working hard to ensure that the over two decades milestone is exceeded through new investments and protection of oil assets. The federal government projects three million barrels per day and 12 billion cubic feet of gas by 2030.

A member of the governing board of Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission, NUPRC, Sunday Adebayo, said: "We have already started in a good direction. One of them is the bid rounds which were successfully done.

New ones will be done that will be bringing in more players. Already the Commission Chief Executive (CCE) of the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) Mrs Oritsemeyiwa Eyesan has announced the commencement of the 2026 Licensing Round and offered 40 oil and gas blocks to investors. "The rig counts have increased tremendously and I see more rigs coming in.

"The host communities that are integrated into the petroleum Industry Act (PIA) are co-operating favourably with the companies operating in their environment.. We also need to look at new horizons because there are some horizons that have not being taken advantage of. The abandoned hosts now want activities to continue in the area, like the Ogoni area. Fortunately, our own chairman of the governing board of NUPRC, Senator Magnus Abe is from there. A lot of activities are happening. And I see more companies; they have more indirect investments.

"The Commission's Chief Executive Officer, Oritsemeyiwa Eyesan said the announcement followed the approval of President Bola Tinubu and the Minister of Petroleum Resources, adding that the blocks would be open to investors with the required technical competence, financial capacity and commitment to develop Nigeria's petroleum resources.

"This round offers 40 blocks across land, shallow water and deepwater terrains. I can see my IOC is already permutating. They are open to investors with the technical competence, financial capability and, above all, the commitment to develop Nigeria's petroleum resources."

"We will not rest on our oars. Competition for upstream capital is fierce, and it grows fiercer by the day. Investors have choices. They go where the rules are clear, where the process is predictable and where data can be trusted," she said.

It is equally important to develop a comprehensive framework for increasing production, expanding reserves and enhancing the sector's contribution to national economic development.

Achieving these feats requires sustaining ongoing oil assets protection and security, infrastructure repairs as well as consistent industry reforms. The operations of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Ltd (TSSNL) in the Niger Delta region is also key.

For many stakeholders, the Federal Government of Nigeria's appointment of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Ltd (TSSNL) to protect oil assets and ensure peace and stability in the Niger Delta comes to play.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu had appointed Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited (TSSNL) led by High Chief, Dr. Government Oweizide Ekpemupolo, alias Tompolo, to protect Nigeria's oil assets in the Niger Delta region. The apointment was to enable TSSNL, through its security operations, support the national economy in getting the full benefits of oil resources.

The TSSNL works in collaboration with other security outfits to achieve its goals of securing oil assets and ensuring peace and stability in the Niger Delta region.

Tantita's operations had ensured the security of oil pipelines, ensuring the uninterrupted flow of petroleum resources, and ensuring that Nigeria migrated from a position of constant loss management to stability, planning, growth and development.

The TSSNL operations have transformed the oil and gas landscape and allowed Nigeria to expand oil production quota and significantly cut rampant oil theft.

Its track record in mitigating risks associated with oil pipelines has positioned it as a reliable partner in preserving Nigeria's economic backbone.

As stakeholders advocate for the continued collaboration with TSSNL, the imperative of securing oil infrastructure remains at the forefront of efforts to ensure the nation's sustainable development.

In the development process of any society, certain assets contribute to the advancement of society and its people. These assets ensure economic or monetary benefits for the people. These assets could be regarded as operating assets, non-operating assets or leased assets, among others.

The impact of TSSNL's operations was captured in a recent survey, with majority of the respondents attributing the de-escalation of security incidents in the Niger-Delta region to the pipeline surveillance operations executed by TSSNL.

Advisor in the IMF African Department of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Montfort Mlachila, said Nigeria is already benefiting from the improved oil prices, which has raised the the amount of foreign exchange receipts, and and and therefore reserves have also also improved.

Speaking at the 2026 Annual Meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Bangkok, Thailand, he said the improved liquidity in the economy also supported upgrade of the economy growth from 4 per cent last year to 4.2 per cent this year and 4.3 per cent in 2027.

Also speaking, Director of the African Department at IMF, Zeine Zeidane, said Nigeria is full of investment opportunities. "This is a country that has a lot of dynamism, a lot of young entrepreneurs, young tech-savvy population. So there is, and it's a large market, very attractive for for private investment in general."

President General, Niger Delta Progressive Alliance, Nse Victor Udoh, said pipeline protection enabled national institutions to progress from reactive crisis management to strategic foresight, from temporary containment to durable systems-building, and from uncertainty-driven decisions to calculated national ambition.

"It is important to clarify the role of pipeline surveillance within the wider energy landscape. Energy security encompasses the full value chain, from exploration and production to refining, distribution, pricing policy, and subsidy frameworks. Pipeline surveillance does not manage these domains," he said.

He added: "Its mandate is precise: safeguarding critical infrastructure that transports petroleum resources. Yet this single function has proven foundational. Without secure transportation channels, production targets falter, refining plans collapse, exports decline, and fiscal projections become unreliable."

Continuing, he wrote: "Asset protection, in this context, is not a supporting activity. It is a precondition for economic order. In effect, the pipeline is the hinge on which the entire petroleum value chain turns. When that hinge is weak, every other link in the chain carries strain. When it is secure, the entire system gains coherence."

The immediate impact has been operational. Sustained monitoring and rapid response systems have sharply reduced pipeline breaches and illegal tapping. Receipt rates have climbed toward full recovery, with national output rising to levels not seen in recent memory.

This redirection has restored Nigeria's credibility in international oil markets, allowing Nigeria to reclaim market share lost to Angola and Libya.

"Economic stability follows predictability. When crude flows are secure, refineries can plan feedstock intake with assurance. Export commitments can be met without fear of sudden shortfalls. Gas-to-power projects can operate without recurrent shutdown risks".

"Investors can assess Nigeria's petroleum sector with clearer risk profiles. Surveillance therefore does more than stop theft. It reintroduces reliability into national energy planning. And reliability is the bedrock upon which sustainable economic growth is built. With predictable flows, national budgeting becomes more credible, infrastructure planning becomes more precise, and long-term contracts become easier to negotiate. Predictability is the silent currency of modern economies, and pipeline surveillance has begun restoring it," he stated.

Further benefits extend into public finance. Higher accounted-for production translates directly into increased export revenues, improved foreign exchange inflows, and strengthened fiscal capacity. National oil company performance in recent years illustrates this shift toward profitability and efficiency, driven in part by reduced losses and enhanced operational continuity.

Report quoted Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of Brittania-U, Catherine Uju Ifejika, hghlighting the importance of additional investment in mature assets, citing the company's Ajapa field.

She said more than $400 million was invested after Brittania-U acquired the asset from Chevron, including the drilling of additional wells and deployment of a Floating Production, Storage and Offloading, FPSO, facility.

According to her, the investment enabled Ajapa to commence production at about 2,300 bpd in 2010, followed by increased and more stable output.

The new Nigerian incentives for offshore oil and gas projects have the potential to attract $50 billion in new investment in Nigeria's offshore energy sector, the NUPRC said.

Nigeria, however, needs upskilled and additional numbers of skilled workers and employees, including in the digital industries, to take advantage of the new offshore opportunities, Eyesan, said at a human resources conference.

According to her, annual investments in Nigeria's oil and gas industry have slumped to just $2 billion, from $26 billion back in 2014.

Nigeria has shown sustained growth in its crude and condensate output so far this year. Total oil output rose from 1.48 million bpd in February to 1.735 million bpd in June, according to the NUPRC.

Nigeria is actively increasing its crude oil production in response to major global supply disruptions caused by the war in Iran.

"Today we are attracting new investments and so we want to see an upward trajectory. It stands to reason that you must go back to the basics. First of all, we need the right competencies in sub-surface," she said.

As part of the new investment drive, NUPRC has warned 31 companies that emerged winners of 37 oil and gas blocks in the 2025 Licensing Round to pay their signature bonuses within the stipulated period or risk losing their provisional awards.

The commission issued the warning exactly one month after it hosted the commercial bid conference in Abuja, where the successful companies emerged as winners of the available blocks.

The NUPRC said the process of compliance with the payment of signature bonuses had commenced following the issuance of provisional awards to the successful bidders.

Maduka, an industrialist, wrote from Port Harcourt.

Blue finance: Is Nigeria ready?

By **Cedric Ogwu**

SOURCING for innovative finance mechanisms to fuel growth in a country's Blue Economy sector is not a new initiative in Africa. There are several examples of African nations that have taken advantage of creative funding in order to develop their enormous ocean economy potential. Kenya, Seychelles and Cape Verde are a few examples I want to highlight.

In 2018, Seychelles launched the world's first sovereign Blue bond worth $15 million. Today, they have become one of Africa's topmost coastal tourism destinations. Tourists fly in from all over the world into Seychelles, just to experience its wonderful beaches and the beautiful scenery. This alone, directly contributes approximately 25 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Back in June, Kenya announced the process of an issuance of a green-blue bond. A part of the $300 million generated will be focused on funding sustainable Ocean related industries. The main objective is to attract private investments into Kenya's marine and coastal economy, while protecting the environmental resources, creating jobs and strengthening resilience to climate change.

Between 2021 and 2024 Cape Verde launched seven sustainable bonds totaling approximately €40 million. Businesses operating in the Maritime and fishing industries benefited from these bonds. Broadly, the implementation of these bonds have offered Cape Verde the opportunity for further private capital to find its way into their economy.

The 2026 budget for Nigeria's Ministry of Marine & Blue Economy was approximately $8million. This figure is at least four times smaller than what the Kenyan government budgeted for Blue Economy projects alone ($35million), exclusive of recurrent expenditure. Our Blue Economy sector is estimated to have a potential of over $300 billion. Not only does there seem to be a gargantuan budgetary shortfall, there also seems to be a lack of political will and policy prioritisation.

As Africa's third largest economy and with 853 kilometers of coastal line, it is almost guaranteed that whatever well thought out funding of our Ocean economy would yield considerable ROI.

This is where the concept of blended Finance should be introduced. Regardless of whatever potential a sector might have there is an extent to which private capital can be involved. The government has a key role in ensuring that the prerequisites needed for such private capital to thrive are established.

For example, the channels in our inland waterways need to be dredged so as to allow for free movement of badges, small boats and lighter vessels. This creates room for more investments in the ecosystem. Ensuring that this happens can give birth to investments in river ports, warehouses, and economic free zones along that inland waterway, boosting inter and intra trade and facilitating importation and exportation of goods and services.

Conversations around finding a viable alternative to financing should dominate the hallways of government buildings and local development finance institutions. The major stakeholders need to realise that there is a huge knowledge gap in understanding what needs to be done and what it will take to get it done.

Capacity building amongst government agencies, ministries and departments needs to take the front burner. Local development finance institutions need to understand the difference between what constitutes "blue" from already existing green frameworks. Training for regulatory agencies on what falls within the boundaries of sustainability should be prioritised. Subnationals should be ready to de-risk project pipelines in order to invite private capital. There should be tangible political will from elected office holders in diversifying Nigeria's economy and reducing dependence on oil and gas, understanding that the blue economy offers a more sustainable pathway to wealth creation.

Lastly, Nigeria should position itself to receive as much aid from international donors and foreign partners that champion investments in the Ocean economy. As laudable as the West Africa Sustainable Ocean Programme (WASOP) is, there is so much work to be done and so many other areas to highlight, that the programme alone cannot tackle. The EU funded programme has a budget of €59 million for 13 West African countries to be implemented over a period of three years. The volume of work alone that needs to be done in Nigeria will require technical assistance worth almost half that budget.

It is not entirely a bleak situation, recently there have been MoU's put in place where Nigeria's federal government and private investors plan to revitalise and modernise Nigeria's seaports. However, upgrading port infrastructure is a fraction of what needs to be done. It is our collective hope that the other parts of the blue economy will be given as much attention.

Ogwu wrote on the Blue Economy, Political Economy and Technology. He can be reached at ogwucedric@gmail.com

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CRUDE OIL PRICE UPDATE Brent crude: $109.9 | WTI crude: $101.4

FOREX MARKET UPDATE I&E Window: N1,368.33

FG defends debt figures amid high interest payment concerns

From **Collins Olayinka** (Abuja) and **Isaac Chibuife** (Lagos)

NIGERIA's fiscal strain sharpened in the first half of 2026 as interest payments outpaced government revenue by N1.5 trillion, despite a 72 per cent surge in collections. Finance Minister and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Taiwo Oyedele, defended the country's position, countering concerns raised in the World Bank's latest economic assessment.

In a statement, 'Setting the Record Straight: Interest Payments and Revenue in H1 2026' issued by the Ministry of Finance in Abuja yesterday, the government argued that the reported interest-to-revenue ratio of 124 per cent presents an incomplete picture of the government's finances because of differences in the coverage and timing of revenue and debt obligations.

According to the World Bank's October 2026 Nigeria Development Update, federal interest payments rose to N7.7 trillion between January and June 2026, up from N5.6 trillion in the corresponding period of 2025, a 37.5 per cent increase.

Federal revenue, however, rose from N3.6 trillion to N6.2 trillion over the same period, up 72.2 per cent.

Consequently, interest payments fell from approximately 156 per cent of revenue in the first half of 2025 to 124.2 per cent in the corresponding period of 2026.

The figures indicated improved revenue relative to interest costs, but also show that the government's earnings remained insufficient to cover interest payments during the six months.

The World Bank attributed the increase in interest costs partly to high domestic borrowing rates, with interest payments rising from 2.5 per cent of gross domestic product in the first half of 2025 to 3.1 per cent in the first half of 2026.

However, the Ministry maintained that the ratio should not be interpreted in isolation, arguing that the interest figure includes obligations the Federal Government services on behalf of other tiers of government, including external loans to states.

It said comparing such obligations with federal revenue alone exaggerates the burden because the debt and revenue figures do not cover the same level of government.

The Ministry also argued that the reported revenue excludes independent revenue earned by government agencies and enterprises but not yet remitted to the Treasury. It added that statutory payment schedules mean some tax revenues are collected later in the year.

However, the Ministry's explanation does not eliminate the immediate cash-flow pressure reflected in the reported figures. Whether the ratio overstates the underlying burden depends on the precise coverage of the debt and revenue data, including the treatment of intergovernmental obligations and outstanding agency remittances.

Concerns remained as capital spending raises further questions. The debate over debt costs comes amid concerns about the Federal Government's capacity to finance infrastructure and public services while meeting its recurrent obligations.

The World Bank reported that federal capital expenditure in the first half of 2026 fell to about N700 billion, or 0.3 per cent of GDP, down from about one per cent of GDP in the corresponding period of 2025.

At N7.7 trillion, interest payments were roughly 11 times the reported capital expenditure during the period.



Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Nneka Onyeali-Ikpe (left); Chairman, Board of Directors, Amaka Onwughalu and Company Secretary, Ezinwa Unuigboje all of Fidelity Bank Plc at the bank's 38th yearly general meeting held virtually in Lagos recently.

Naira gains 1.86% as dollar slides to N1,328.28 in September

By **Helen Oji**

THE naira strengthened against the dollar in September 2026 as the average spot exchange rate fell by 1.86 per cent to N1,328.28 per dollar, down from N1,353.41 in August.

The lower average exchange rate indicated an improvement in the naira's value against the dollar during the period under review.

September performance also reflected reduced fluctuations in the foreign exchange market, with the local currency trading within a narrower range than the preceding month.

Foreign exchange data showed the naira traded between N1,320 and N1,334 per dollar in September, compared with a wider range of N1,335.50 to N1,365.10 in August.

The narrower trading range suggests that exchange rate movements became less volatile during the month, as the difference between the highest and lowest rates reduced to N14 in September from N29.60 in August. This represents a reduction of N15.60, or approximately 52.70 per cent, in the monthly trading range.

The figures indicated that the naira recorded both an improvement in its average exchange rate and a reduction in the extent of its price movements in September. While the average rate fell by N25.13, the gap between the currency's highest and lowest trading rates also narrowed considerably.

The decline in the average exchange rate means fewer naira were needed, on average, to buy one dollar during the month. In August, the average rate stood at N1,353.41 per dollar, but this fell to N1, 328.28 in September, representing an appreciation of approximately 1.86 per cent.

Similarly, the September trading range remained below the August range throughout the period. The highest rate recorded in September, N1, 334 per dollar, was N1.50 below the lowest reported rate in August, N1, 335.50. The lowest September rate of N1, 320 was N45.10 below the highest August rate of N1, 365.10.

The naira's improved average exchange rate and moderated volatility indicate more stable trading conditions in the foreign exchange market during September.

A stronger naira could reduce the local-currency cost of dollar-denominated purchases for businesses that depend on imported raw materials, machinery, and other foreign inputs, provided the improvement is reflected in the rates at which they can access foreign exchange.

T-Bills sales surge nearly 9% to N2.42tr as investor demand spikes

By **Helen Oji**

THE Debt Management Office (DMO) sold Treasury Bills (T-bills) worth N2.42 trillion in September 2026, up 8.95 per cent from the N2.22 trillion recorded in August, as demand for the Federal Government's short-term debt instruments remained strong.

Data from FMDQ Securities Exchange released at the weekend showed that September sales of N2.42 trillion, valued at N2, 417.48 billion, rose by N198.55 billion from the N2, 218.93 billion recorded in the preceding month.

T-bills were oversubscribed by 386.74 per cent during the period, indicating that investor bids substantially exceeded the amount of securities available for allocation.

The increase in sales highlighted the continued importance of T-bills in the Federal Government's domestic borrowing programme. The instruments provide short-term financing for the government, while offering investors an avenue to invest in securities backed by the sovereign.

T-bills are short-term debt instruments issued at a discount and redeemed at face value on maturity. They are typically offered in 91-day, 182-day and 364-day tenors, allowing investors to choose securities that match their investment horizons and liquidity needs.

The DMO issues the instruments through periodic auctions, during which investors submit bids for the available securities. The amount eventually allotted depends on the outcome of the auction and the government's issuance decisions. Consequently, the value of bids received may be substantially higher than the amount ultimately sold.

The 386.74 per cent oversubscription recorded in September indicates that demand was considerably above the available supply.

Investors, including banks, asset managers, pension-related investment funds and other eligible participants, use the instruments to invest funds over relatively short periods.

The September increase in sales came as investors continued to show substantial interest in T-bills, particularly the 364-day instrument, which attracted the bulk of subscriptions at individual auctions during the month.

At the September 2 auction, investors submitted bids totalling about N3.35 trillion against an offer of N700 billion across the three tenors. The DMO allotted N865.71 billion, while the stop rate on the 364-day bill declined to 16.84 per cent from 17.15 per cent at the previous auction.

The pattern continued at the September 9 auction, when subscriptions reached approximately N2.64 trillion against N750 billion offered. The DMO allotted N1.05 trillion, while the stop rate on the one-year bill fell further to 16.62 per cent.

At the September 23 auction, demand rose to N4.23 trillion against an offer of N500 billion, while the DMO allotted N497.59 billion. The stop rate on the 364-day bill fell to 15.89 per cent after the CBN cut the Monetary Policy Rate by 350 basis points to 23 per cent from 26.5 per cent.

These auction results showed that strong demand persisted even as the government's short-term borrowing rates declined. The figures also highlighted investors' preference for the one-year T-bills over the shorter tenors at the auctions.

Operators have attributed the strong demand at the September auctions partly to improved liquidity in the financial system and the easing of monetary policy.

Nigeria's food import bill jumps 11.4% to $1.19b in H1, spikes FX demand

By **Isaac Chibuife**

NIGERIA spent $1.19 billion on food imports in the first half of 2026, an 11.41 per cent increase from $1.07 billion in the same period of 2025, according to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

The CBN's Quarterly Statistical Bulletin for the second quarter of 2026 showed that spending on food imports rose by $121.52 million, reflecting continued demand for foreign exchange to meet domestic food needs despite the Federal Government's efforts to boost local production.

Foreign exchange used for food imports rose year-on-year in five of the six months. Only February recorded a decline. The second quarter accounted for the overall increase, after spending fell in the first quarter.

The figures underline the difficulty of cutting dependence on foreign food despite government efforts to raise domestic production.

Separate figures from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) put food and beverage imports at N3.30 trillion in the half-year, a 3.1 per cent drop from N3.40 trillion in the first half of 2025.

The NBS data showed the bill rising from N1.39 trillion in the first quarter to N1.91 trillion in the second. Processed food and beverages accounted for N1.72 trillion of the total. The second-quarter increase cut across primary and processed food, with household-oriented products recording particularly strong growth.

The CBN figure tracked forex used for food imports, while the NBS figure measured the naira value of food and beverage imports. The naira value of food imports reflects import volumes, international prices and exchange-rate movements. The yearly bill reached N7.65 trillion in 2025, up from N6.58 trillion in 2024.

The rising bill comes amid concerns over food affordability and supply. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has warned that about 34.7 million Nigerians could face severe food insecurity in the next lean season.

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WARNING

The Company hereby issues this warning to the General Public that, at no time, place or occasion did the company issue any consent and or authority to any person, persons or group of persons, families, individuals and corporate bodies acting under whatever guise to sell, transfer, lease and or dispose of the land in its name or on its behalf. Any such claim, suggestions or presentations, if it exists, is hereby disclaimed by the company.

The general public is hereby further warned not to deal with any person, persons or group of persons, families, individuals and corporate bodies, or to go into any transaction for the sale, transfer or lease of the said land with any individual or person(s), except as may be done and or authorised by the company directly. The general public is advised and warned to be wary of the activities of person(s) who may claim to be acting for the company as its directors in order to sell, lease and or transfer the land to them.

The company is prepared to take whatever step or steps that are lawfully necessary against any person(s) and or individual(s) who carry out or may want to carry out these wrongful and unlawful acts and activities over the land.

Furthermore, should any person, persons, individual(s), family or group of persons go onto the land without the permission or authorisation of the company, then the company will take whatever lawful steps that are permissible under the law to dislodge them from the land and proceed to take civil or criminal action(s)against them.

Caveats have been placed on the respective **Certificates of Occupancy** titles, respectively, at the Lands Registry office, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos state. Any person, persons or group of persons found on the land under whatever guise shall be treated as a trespasser, and the company will invoke the full weight of the law on them.

You have been warned.

HRH ALAIYELUWA OBA ABDUL-LATEEF KOLAWOLE LAWAL-OLUMEGBON
(Oba of Ajah and Okun-Ajah)
For the company

ALH. MONSURU ADEOLA OLUMEGBON
For the company

ALH. ASHRAF AKINYEMI
For the company

IMAM IBRAHIM AGORO
For the company

A. O. LADIPO ESQ
Aderemi Bashua & Co.
Solicitor to the company

NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION NBA ABIOLA OLAIDE LADIPO SCN066078

NIGERIAN MIDSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM PETROLEUM REGULATORY AUTHORITY (NMDPRA)

Plot 1012, Cadastral Zone, Central Business District, FCT, Abuja

INVITATION TO TENDER

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) is saddled with the statutory mandate of regulating the Midstream and Downstream operations of the Petroleum Industry. To achieve its mandate, the NMDPRA is desirous to procure goods, works and services.

1.1 In compliance with Sections (24)(25) of the Public Procurement Act, 2007 the Authority is therefore inviting experienced and reputable Contractor/Suppliers/ for the following.

2.0 SCOPE /SPECIFICATION

LOTS

	DESCRIPTION
Lot 1	Supply, Installation, Configuration and Commissioning of SD-WAN Routers for NMDPRA Network Infrastructure, at seventeen (17) NMDPRA locations across Nigeria.
Lot 2	Upgrade of Information Technology Network Infrastructure (Phase II) in NMDPRA Head Office.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

a) Evidence of Incorporation with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC).

b) Copy of current TAX Clearance Certificate for the last three (3) Years (2023, 2024 and 2025) valid till 31st December 2026.

c) Copy of current PENCOM compliance certificate valid till 31st December 2026.

d) Copy of current Industrial Trust Fund (ITF) compliance Certificate valid till 31st December 2026.

e) Copy of Interim Registration Report (IRR) with the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) valid till 31st December 2026 or valid Certificate issued by BPP.

f) Copy of Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) compliance Certificate valid till 31st December 2026.

g) A sworn affidavit disclosing whether or not any officer of the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) or the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) is a former or present Director, Shareholder or has pecuniary interest in your company and confirm that all information presented in the bid are true and correct in all particular. For Joint Venture (JV's), include the Notarized Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

h) Current Company's audited account duly stamped and signed by ANAN/ICANlicensed Auditors for the last three consecutive years (2023, 2024 and 2025)

I) Verifiable documentary evidence of at least three (3) similar jobs executed in the last five years (i.e. letters of award, certificates of practical job completion, etc.)

j) Company profile with curriculum Vitae of key staff including copies of their Academic and Professional Certificates.

k) In addition, the Federal Government Circular Ref No CS.14/T/2014 dated 25th April 2017 mandates all Companies wishing to transact business with the Federal Government to comply with the following requirements:

i. That the Incorporation Number (RC) as issued to the Company by CAC must appear on their Letter Head, with contact telephone numbers, valid e-mail address and official Company address.

ii. That the Letter Head paper must bear the name and the Nationalities of the Directors of the company at the bottom of the page.

l) The hard copies of these documents should follow the order as listed above, appropriately paged and should have a table of content indicating the pages on which these items are to be found.

4.0 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS Lot 1 and Lot 2

i. Evidence of partnership/Agreement with relevant Original Equipment Manufacture Company Nigeria Limited (OEM), (**Huawei Nigeria).**

ii. Evidence of registration for MDOGISP (Midstream and Downstream Oil and Gas Industry Service Permit).

iii. Evidence of Registration/ License with Relevant Information and Communication Technologies Regulators (NITDA, NCC, CPNI) in Nigeria.

iv. Average Annual Turnover (AAT) not less than N300,000,000.00 Three Hundred Million Naira only.

5.0 COLLECTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Interested bidders are to collect tender documents from the Procurement Unit on Ground Floor Wing B of the Authority Headquarters Building between 9:00am – 4:00pm (Monday – Friday) with evidence of payment of a non-refundable tender fee of One Hundred Thousand Naira (N100,000.00) only which shall be paid into the Authority's Treasury Single Account (TSA) domiciled at the Central Bank of Nigeria.

6.0 SUBMISSION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Prospective bidders should take note of the following steps for submission of tender documents: -

i. Enclose two (2) copies of the technical bids in a sealed envelope marked "Technical"

ii. Enclose two (2) copies of the financial bids in a sealed envelope clearly marked" Financial"

iii. Enclose both Technical and Financial envelopes into a bigger envelope and write "(Submission of tender) indicating the Lot you are bidding for.

iv. Furthermore, the name, address and phone number of each company should be written on the front of the envelope after sealing.

v. All Bids should be dropped in the designated tender box at the **Procurement Unit on the Ground Floor, Wing B of the Authority Headquarters Building**, addressed to:

The Authority Chief Executive,

Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA), Plot 1012, Cadastral Zone, C.B.D,
Abuja.

7.0 CLOSING DATE

Submission of tender shall end on **Friday 6th November 2026 at 12.00 noon**.

8.0 OPENING OF TENDER

Tender will be opened immediately after the deadline for submission on **Friday 6th November**
2026 at 12.00 noon at the **Procurement Unit on Ground Floor, Wing B of the Authority's Headquarters Building**.

9.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

a) Bids must be in English Language and signed by an official authorized by the bidder.

b) Bids submitted after the deadline for submission would be returned unopened.

c) This invitation for Tender shall not be construed as a commitment on the part of Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) nor shall it entitle any company to make any claim whatsoever or seek compensation having responded to the invitation.

d) Any Bidder who fails to comply with the instructions shall automatically be disqualified.

e) All pre-qualified bidders will be contacted for financial bid opening, while financial bids of un-successful bidders will be returned un-opened.

Signed:
Management

NAICOM warns insurers, claims idle recapitalisation funds risk sanctions

By **Bankole Orimisan**

THE National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) has warned insurance companies against keeping recapitalisation funds idle, urging them to deploy the capital to strengthen underwriting capacity, improve claims settlement and restore policyholders' confidence.

The Commissioner for Insurance, Olusegun Ayo Omosehin, gave the warning at the 2026 yearly industry conference in Lagos. He stressed that compliance with the new minimum capital requirements would mean little if operators failed to deploy the funds productively to strengthen their businesses and improve service delivery.

"Capital should not remain idle on the balance sheet," Omosehin said, insisting the objective was not merely to have insurers raise additional funds, but to ensure the capital worked to expand capacity and strengthen the industry.

"We are not saying just bring it and keep it and just be looking at it and wake up and admire it every night. No, we want that capital to work and work for the industry," he added.

The warning comes as the industry shifts its focus from meeting revised minimum capital requirements to showing how stronger balance sheets can translate into greater risk-bearing capacity, improved claims payment and wider insurance coverage.

The regulator's position highlighted the need for insurers to move beyond compliance and build the technical expertise, risk assessment systems and financial resilience required to underwrite larger commercial transactions, infrastructure projects and industrial assets without weakening underwriting standards or exposing shareholders' funds to excessive investment risks.

However, higher capital alone will not guarantee growth if operators continue to struggle with weak distribution networks, limited public confidence, poor product awareness and concerns over claims settlement.

Omosehin also called for disciplined investment policies anchored in capital preservation, liquidity, and sustainable long-term returns, warning against excessive concentration in volatile economic conditions. He said insurers must align their investments with their liabilities and maintain effective asset and liability management frameworks to ensure that funds remain available when claims fall due.

The commission is preparing the industry for a transition from the Minimum Capital Requirement framework to Risk-Based Capital supervision, under which capital adequacy will be assessed in relation to the risks undertaken by individual insurers. The proposed shift is expected to place greater emphasis on risk selection, solvency management and the quality of operators' internal controls.

For insurers seeking to expand their portfolios, the transition will require stronger actuarial capabilities, improved risk modelling, sound investment decisions and closer board oversight of underwriting performance. Operators will need to show their capital can absorb potential losses from the risks they accept, rather than rely solely on meeting regulatory thresholds.

FirstBank eyes stronger ties amid push for increased lending post-recapitalisation

By **Abigail Ikhaghu**

FIRST Bank Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Olusegun Alebiosu, has called for stronger collaboration among financial industry stakeholders to improve banking services and strengthen the sector's contribution to economic development, as industry leaders raised concerns about banks' ability to translate increased capital into productive lending.

Alebiosu made the call as FirstBank hosted the West Africa International Banking Dialogue and Awards Gala 2026 in partnership with The Asian Banker in Lagos, where banking executives, regulators and fintech leaders examined the challenges facing financial services across the region.

According to him, the banking dialogue offered industry leaders a unique opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations that will shape the future of banking in the region.

The discussions highlighted concerns over the deployment of fresh capital raised by Nigerian banks, access to finance for small businesses, competition from financial technology companies and the difficulties of conducting cross-border transactions.

Managing Director of the Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System (NIBSS), Premier Oiwoh, disclosed that 33 banks raised N4.65 trillion in fresh capital, with domestic investors accounting for nearly 75 per cent, raising questions about how they would deploy the funds to support economic growth.

Represented by Head of IT Governance and Service Delivery at NIBSS, Stephen Ohiomoba, he said the capital should translate into more productive lending, particularly to small businesses, agriculture, manufacturing and infrastructure.

"The new capital our banks have raised was not raised for its own sake," Ohiomoba said, stressing the need for banks to deploy their resources in ways that support economic activity.

He identified three priorities for the industry through 2030: deploying capital for greater economic impact, strengthening resilience and compliance in everyday banking, and extracting more value from shared financial infrastructure.

Ohiomoba also disclosed that NIBSS's National Payment Stack had processed more than 100 million successful transactions by September 2026.

Renaissance Capital revises Dangote Refinery's valuation to N700.41/share

By **Helen Oji**

RENAISSANCE Capital Africa has raised its estimated value of Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals to N700.41 per share, a 33.41 per cent premium over the N525 offer price, as stronger refining margins and 'better-than-expected' earnings improved its outlook.

The revised valuation, contained in the investment firm's October 16 update, 'Stronger Refining Margins Drive Earnings Outperformance,' represented an increase of N80.94, or about 13.1 per cent, from its previous estimate of N619.47 per share.'

The upward revision comes as the refinery's initial public offering (IPO), which involves selling 4.1 billion shares at N525 each, has been extended to October 27, 2026, after regulatory approval to accommodate investor interest and broaden access across Africa and other markets.

The offer, valued at approximately N2.15 trillion, is one of the most significant equity fundraising exercises in Nigeria's capital market. Renaissance Capital's revised valuation would further shape investor assessment of the offer, particularly as prospective shareholders weigh the refinery's earnings potential against the offer price.

However, the N700.41 figure reflects an analyst's valuation, not a guaranteed market price or investment return. The eventual value investors realise will depend on the refinery's financial performance, market conditions and the price at which its shares trade after listing.

The latest assessment follows a stronger-than-expected financial performance in the first nine months of 2026, with the refinery recording substantial growth in revenue, earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA), and net profit.

For the nine months ended September 30, 2026, the refinery reported a net profit of $4.73 billion, compared with a loss of $117.2 million in the corresponding period of 2025. Revenue increased by 144.5 per cent year-on-year to $22.48 billion, while EBITDA rose to $5.52 billion from $627.6 million a year earlier.



Director, IXPL, Jegede Olayiwola (left); Social Media Strategist, IXPL, Adediran Oluwabunmi; Director, IXPL, Owolabi Mustapha; Product Manager, IXPL, Omolayo Ajibola and Software Developer, IXPL, Francis-Akinolu Ayomide during the official launch of IXPL Limited in Lagos, at the weekend.

ProvidusUnity Bank vows trade finance boost for exporters

By **Abigail Ikhaghu**

PROVIDUSUNITY has pledged to provide trade finance solutions to help Nigerian exporters overcome operational challenges, access international markets and expand their businesses, as the lender seeks to support growth in the country's non-oil export sector.

The bank made the commitment at the fifth edition of its Non-Oil Export Business Forum in Kano, which brought together more than 200 exporters, industry associations, and government institutions to discuss export competitiveness, trade facilitation, and opportunities for Nigerian businesses in international markets.

Speaking at the event, ProvidusBank Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Walter Akpani said the non-oil export sector offers opportunities to diversify the economy, strengthen foreign exchange earnings, and support business growth.

Speaking on behalf of the bank's Treasurer, Enyinnaya Akagha, he said realising the sector's potential requires stronger collaboration across the export value chain and financial solutions that meet exporters' operational needs.

"As a Future Forward bank, ProvidusUnity Bank is committed to providing responsive, seamless and innovative trade solutions that help businesses overcome operational challenges, access new markets and scale internationally," Akpani said.

He added that the bank would work with exporters, industry associations, and regulators to help build a more competitive and resilient export sector.

The forum comes as Nigeria's non-oil export earnings continue to grow. According to the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC), the country generated a record $6.1 billion in non-oil export receipts in 2025, up 11.5 per cent from 2024.
Export volumes rose to 8.02 million metric tonnes, with 281 non-oil products reaching 120 countries. However, the sector still faces challenges in local processing, access to trade finance, compliance with international standards and market expansion.

Liberia taps NAICOM for guidance on capital, risk-based supervision

By **Bankole Orimisan**

NIGERIA's insurance regulatory reforms are attracting regional interest, with Liberia seeking technical support from the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) on risk-based capital requirements, supervisory practices and regulatory transitions as it moves to strengthen the financial resilience of its insurance industry.

The Central Bank of Liberia (CBL), which regulates the country's insurance industry, requested support during a working visit to NAICOM by a delegation led by Mulbah Francis Bowah, identifying Nigeria's experience as a potential guide for improving insurance supervision and strengthening regulatory institutions.

According to NAICOM, the Liberian delegation identified risk-based capital implementation, risk assessment and mitigation, insurance supervision and examination methodologies as priority areas for technical cooperation.

Bowah said Liberia was committed to strengthening its regulatory framework and expected Nigeria's experience to support its ongoing reforms and the development of a more resilient insurance market.

He described Nigeria as a strategic partner in advancing insurance regulation across Africa, expressing appreciation for NAICOM's willingness to share its experience and technical expertise.
NAICOM's Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration, Ekerete Ola Gam-Ikon, received the delegation and represented the Commissioner for Insurance, Olusegun Ayo Omosehin.

Gam-Ikon reaffirmed the commission's readiness to share regulatory experience and best practices with other African jurisdictions, highlighting the importance of regional cooperation, institutional capacity building and knowledge exchange in strengthening insurance supervision.

The engagement follows Nigeria's insurance industry recapitalisation under the Nigerian Insurance Industry Reform Act (NIIRA) 2025, which introduced higher minimum capital requirements for insurance and reinsurance companies. NAICOM said 50 insurance and reinsurance companies had met the new capital requirements by the end of the compliance period on July 31, 2026.

Beyond recapitalisation, Nigeria's experience holds potential lessons for Liberia on the relationship between capital adequacy, risk management and effective supervision. However, stronger capital requirements alone cannot guarantee a resilient insurance market without sound underwriting, effective corporate governance, reliable financial reporting and prompt settlement of legitimate claims.

From an industry perspective, the move toward risk-based capital supervision shifts the focus from assessing insurers mainly against prescribed minimum capital thresholds to examining whether their capital is sufficient for the risks they undertake. Such a framework can encourage more disciplined underwriting and improve regulators' ability to identify vulnerabilities before they threaten an insurer's solvency.

For insurers, however, the transition can require substantial investment in actuarial expertise, risk modelling, data management and internal controls. Regulators must also develop the technical capacity to assess complex portfolios consistently and ensure that supervisory requirements reflect the realities of their domestic markets.

NEWS AGENCY OF NIGERIA

Wada Maida House, Independence Avenue, Central Business District, Abuja

INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 2026 CONSTITUENCY PROJECTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The News Agency of Nigeria, (NAN), intends to undertake the execution of some of its Constituency projects approved under the 2026 Appropriation Act and hereby invites interested, competent, and eligible contractors for the execution of the following projects:

2. SCOPE: GOODS

Lot G1: Provision of computers, sitting desks & tables for ICT Centre at Ibaka, Okrika/Ogu-Bolo Federal Constituency, Rivers State.

LotG2: Provision of educational materials for selected primary schools across Okrika/Ogu-Bolo Federal Constituency, Rivers State

3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Prospective bidders should submit the following documents in their technical bids:

i. Evidence of Certificate of Incorporation issued by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) including Form CAC 1.1 or CAC2 and CAC7;
ii. Evidence of Company's Income Tax Clearance Certificate for the last three (3) years valid till 31stDecember, 2026;
iii. Evidence of Pension Clearance Certificate valid till 31st December, 2026 (this requirement is only applicable to bidders whose number of staff is 15 and above);
iv. Evidence of Industrial Training Fund (ITF) Compliance Certificate valid till 31st December, 2026 (this requirement is only applicable to bidders whose number of staff is 5 and above or the bidder's annual turnover is N50m and above);
v. Evidence of Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) Clearance Certificate valid till 31stDecember, 2026;
vi. Evidence of Registration on the National Database of Federal Contractors, Consultants and Service Providers by submission of Interim Registration Report (IRR) expiring on 31/12/2026 or valid Certificate issued by BPP.
vii. Sworn Affidavit:
- disclosing whether or not any officer of the relevant committees of the News Agency of Nigeria or the Bureau of Public Procurement is a former or present Director, shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the bidder and to confirm that all information presented in its bid are true and correct in all particulars;
- that the company is not in receivership or the subject of any form of insolvency or bankruptcy;
- that the company does not have any Director who has ever been convicted in any court in Nigeria or any other country for criminal offence such as fraud or financial impropriety;

viii. Company's Audited Accounts for the last three (3) years -2023, 2024 & 2025;
ix. For Lot G1: Evidence of current registration/accreditation with the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA)
x. Reference Letter from a reputable Commercial Bank in Nigeria, indicating willingness to provide credit facility for the execution of the project when needed;
xi. Company's Profile with the Curriculum Vitae of Key staff to be deployed for the project, including copies of their Academic/Professional qualifications such as COREN, QSRBN, ARCON, CORBON etc.;
xii. Verifiable documentary evidence of at least three (3) similar jobs executed in the last five (5) years including Letters of Awards, Valuation Certificates, Job Completion Certificates and Photographs of the projects;
xiii. Evidence of Remita Payment for Bidding Documents;
xiv. For Joint Venture/Partnership, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) should be provided (CAC, Tax Clearance Certificate, Pension Clearance Certificate, ITF Compliance Certificate, NSITF Clearance Certificate, IRR & Sworn Affidavit are compulsory for each JV partner);
xv. All documents for submission must be transmitted with a Covering/ Forwarding letter under the Company/Firm's Letter Head Paper bearing amongst others, the Registration Number(RC) as issued by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), Contact Address, Telephone Number (preferably GSM No.), and e-mail address. The letter head Paper must bear Names and Nationalities of the Directors of the Company at the bottom of the page, duly signed by the authorized officer of the firm;

N.B: ***The above listed requirements shall form part of the Bids Evaluation Criteria and non-compliance with any of the stated criteria shall result in automatic disqualification of the bidder.***

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the Procurement Unit between 9.00am – 4.00pm (Mondays – Fridays) except Public Holidays at the:

Procurement Unit on 3rd Floor, Room 207, News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) Headquarters, Abuja.

4. COLLECTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Tender documents to be obtained from the Procurement Unit on 3rd Floor, Room 207, News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) Headquarters, Abuja on presentation of a copy of the original Treasury Receipts of non-refundable Tender fee of **N10,000.00 per Lot paid into NAN's TSA A/C No: 0020092461018**

5. SUBMISSION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

5.1 The Completed Technical and Financial bids are to be submitted in ***TWO (2) COPIES EACH WHICH WILL INCLUDE ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND ONE (1) COPY.*** The documents should be in ***TWO (2) SEPARATE SEALED ENVELOPES*** clearly marked ***'TECHNICAL BID'*** and ***'FINANCIAL BID'*** and both sealed in a third envelope marked with the ***APPROPRIATE PROJECT TITLE AND LOT NUMBER*** at the top right hand corner and addressed to The Managing Director, News Agency of Nigeria, Wada Maida House, Independence Avenue, Central Business District, Abuja .

5.2 The Name & address of the Company should be written at the reverse side of the envelope.

5.3 All submissions are to be dropped in the designated Tender Box on the 3rd Floor, Room 207, News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) Headquarters, Abuja not later than ***12:00 noon Monday, 16th November, 2026.***

6. OPENING OF TECHNICAL BIDS

The technical bids will be opened immediately after the deadlines for submission at ***12:00 noon Monday, 16th November, 2026*** in the Agency's Headquarters Abuja in the presence of Bidders or their representatives while the financial bids will be kept un-opened.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION

a. Bids must be in English Language and signed by an official authorized by the bidder;
b. Bids submitted after the deadline for submission would be returned un-opened;
c. All costs will be borne by the bidders;
d. Only successful bidders at technical evaluation will be invited at a later date for financial bids opening, while the financial bids of un-successful bidders will be returned un-opened;
e. Bids shall be submitted in person and not through post. Any bid submitted through post shall not be accepted;
f. The News Agency of Nigeria is not bound to pre-qualify any bidder and reserves the right to annul the Procurement process at any time without incurring any liabilities in accordance with Section 28 of the Public Procurement Act 2007.

Signed
MANAGING DIRECTOR/CEO
NAN

SALES OF LIQUID FILLING LINE MANUFACTURING PLANT



S/No	Description	Quantity
1.	Liquid Filling Line Manufacturing Plant Capacity1500 ltr, Flame Proof Construction with INDIAN standard accessories complete plant. To fill 50ml to 4 litres containers	1 No
	LIQUID FILLING LINE:	
2.	Turn Table SBTT- 36 GMP Model	1 No
3.	Automatic FLOWMATIC PLC Base Auto Volume Adjustable 4 Head Liquid filling machine (All components contacts parts stainless steel with cabinet) With Flame Proof Motor.	1 No
4.	Automatic Single Head Flit off Plastic Screw Capping Machine Model No. SBCS-60S GMP Model with A/C Frequency Drive and one size change parts WITH CHANGE PARTS & CAP ELEVATOR	1 Set
5.	Linear Screw Capping Machine Model SBCS-100LS with one set of cap change parts – cap place on bottle manually	1 No
6.	Turn Table SBTT – 36 GMP Model	1 No
7.	Wrap Around Sticker Labeling Machine Model No. SBSL – 120 GMP Model for ROUNDJAR	1 No
8.	Double Side (Front & Back- Round) Self Adhesive Sticker Labeling Machine with Round bottle attachment SBSL – 120D GMP Model	1 No
9.	Packing Conveyor Belt (12 feet)	1 No
10.	Semi Automatic Shrink Wrapping/Group Bottle Packing Machine	1 No
11.	Top & Bottom Drive Type Carton BOPP Sealing Machine Model: SB-1 IMBT with manual carton adjustment	2 No
12.	BOPP Carton Tapping Machine	2 No

Interested buyer to contact: 08033128202, 08023880451

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES AND SANITATION

LOWER NIGER RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (LNRBDA)

BASIN ROAD, P.M.B 1529, ILORIN, KWARA STATE

INVITATION TO TENDER

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority (LNRBDA) a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Water Resource and sanitation hereby, invites experienced and competent contractors/suppliers for consideration and execution of the following projects under the 2026 Capital Appropriation:

2.0 SCOPE OFWORK

The Scope of Works/Supply for the Projects earmarked for execution are categorized as follows:

2.1 CATEGORY A: WORKS

LOT A1	CONSTRUCTION OF RURAL AGRICULTURE ROADS CULVERTS IN KWARA NORTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT
LOT A2	PRIMARY HEALTH CARE INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT WITH LAND RECLAMATION AT ITORI EWEKORO LGA, OGUN STATE.
LOT A3	CONSTRUCTION OF HOSPITAL LIVING ROOMS WITH FURNITURE FOR PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRE, AT ITORI EWEKORO LGA, OGUN STATE.
LOT A4	CONSTRUCTION OF BLOCKS OF CLASSROOMS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN EDU/MORO/PATEGI FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY, KWARA STATE
LOT A5	PROVISION of SOLAR BOREHOLE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN EDU/MORO/PATIGI LGA FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY, KWARA STATE
LOT A6	INSTALLATION OF SOLAR STREET LIGHTS IN ABEOKUTA SOUTH AND ABEOKUTA NORTH LGAs IN OGUN STATE

2.2. CATEGORY B: GOODS

LOT B1	PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY OF AGRICULTURAL INPUTS FOR FARMERS TO BOOST AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IN KWARA NORTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT
LOT B2	SUPPLY OF TABLES AND CHAIRS TO A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN DELTA CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT, DELTA STATE
LOT B3	SUPPLY OF SEWING MACHINES, GRINDING MACHINES, MOTORCYCLES, HAIRDRYERS, ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL TOOLS FOR NASARAWA NORTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT

3.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following documents are to be included with Technical Proposals:

i. Evidence of registration Certificate of Incorporation with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) including Form CAC2 and CAC7 or CAC STATUS REPORT.
ii. Evidence of Company's Income Tax Clearance Certificate for the last three (3) years valid till 31st December, 2026 with Average Annual Turnover of N20 million for both Categories.
iii. Evidence of current Pension Compliance Certificate valid till 31st December, 2026.
iv. Evidence of current Industrial Training Fund (ITF) Compliance Certificate valid till 31st December, 2026.
v. Evidence of current Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) Compliance Certificate valid till 31st December, 2026.
vi. Evidence of Registration on the National Database of Contractors, Consultants and Service Providers by submission of Interim Registration Report (IRR) expiring on 31st December, 2026 or Valid Certificate issued by BPP.
vii. Valid sworn affidavit disclosing whether or not any officer of the relevant committees of the Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority or the Bureau of Public Procurement is a former or present Director, shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the bidder and to confirm that all information presented in its bid are true and correct in all particulars.
viii. Company's Audited Accounts for the last three (3) years (2023, 2024 & 2025).
ix. Evidence of financial capability to execute the project by submission of Reference Letter from a reputable Commercial Bank indicating willingness to provide credit facility for the execution of the Project when needed.
x. Company Profile with the Curriculum Vitae of Key Staff to be deployed for the Project, including copies of their Academic/Professional qualifications (in case of Construction: COREN, QSRBN, ARCON, CORBON etc).
xi. Verifiable documentary evidence of at least three (3) similar jobs executed in the last five (5) years including Letters of Awards, Valuation Certificates, Job Completion Certificates and Photographs of the Projects.
xii. List of Machineries/Equipment with proof of ownership/lease (where applicable).
xiii. For Electrical Works, verifiable evidence of Certificate of the Firm's Registration with NEMSA Electrical Contractor Certification issued by the Nigerian Electricity Management Services Agency (NEMSA)
xiv. All documents for submission must be transmitted with a Covering/Forwarding Letter under the Company/Firm's Letter Head Paper bearing amongst others, the Registration Number (RC) as issued by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), Contact Address, Telephone Number (preferably GSM No.), and e-mail address. The Letterhead Paper must bear the Name and Nationalities of the Directors of the Company at the bottom of the page, duly signed by the authorized officer of the firm.

4.0 COLLECTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

CATEGORY A & B

Interested companies are to collect the Standard Bidding Document (SBD) as from 12.00 Noon on Monday, 19th October, 2026 from the Procurement Unit, Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority, Basin Road Ilorin on evidence of payment of a non-refundable fee of N10,000.00 (Ten Thousand Naira) only per Lot, paid into the Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority's Remita Account in any Commercial Bank. GIFMIS Code of the Authority, 1000111147 is required on the Remita Platform.

5.0 SUBMISSION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

5.1 Category A & B-Invitation to Tender (Works and Goods)

Prospective Bidders are to submit bid for each of the Lots desired, two (2) hard copies each of the Technical and Financial Bids with softcopy (flash drive) of the Financial Bids only in MS Excel Format, packaged separately in sealed envelopes and clearly marked as "Technical Bid" or "Financial Bid". Thereafter put the two sealed envelopes together in a bigger sealed envelope addressed to the Managing Director, Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority, Basin Road Ilorin and clearly marked with the Name of the Project and the Lot Number. Furthermore, the reverse of each sealed envelope should have the name and address of the Bidder and should be deposited in the Tender Box at the address in 4.0 above, not later than 12.00 Noon on Tuesday, 17th November, 2026.

6.0 OPENING OF BID DOCUMENTS

6.1 Technical Bid Documents will be opened immediately after the deadline for submission at 12.00 Noon on Tuesday, 17th November, 2026 at the Board Room of Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority, Basin Road Ilorin, in the presence of required BPP representatives, while the Financial Bids will be kept unopened. Please ensure that you sign the Bid Submission Register at the address stated in 4.0 above, as the Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority will not be held liable for misplaced or wrongly submitted bids.

6.2 For further enquiries and results of prequalification, please visit the Authority's website:http://www.lnrbda.gov.ng

7.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

i. Bids must be in English Language and signed by an officer authorized by the Bidder:
ii. Bids submitted after the deadline of submission would be returned unopened:
iii. Bidders should not bid for more than One (1) Lot in this advertisement:
iv. Joint ventures for this procurement is NOT accepted:
v. Pre-qualified Bidders will be notified at a later date:
vi. All cost will be borne by the Bidders as the Authority will not be held responsible for any cost or expenses incurred by any interested party (ies) in connection with any response to this invitation:
vii. The Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority is not bound to prequalify any Bidder and reserves the right to annul the Procurement Process at any time without incurring any liabilities in accordance with Section 28 of the Public Procurement Act, 2007:
viii. For further enquiries and results of prequalification/shortlist, please visit the Authority's website http://www.lnrbda.gov.ng or send e-mail to 2026procurement@lnrbda.gov.ng;
ix. This Invitation is published for information purposes only and does not constitute an offer by this Authority to transact with any party for any of the Projects; nor does it constitute a commitment or obligation on the part of the Authority.

Signed:
Engr. Olusola George Olumoroti
Managing Director
Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority

GOMBE STATE GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA
STATE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD (SUBEB)
FEDERAL LOW COST NEAR ILMI INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE,
PMB 097, GOMBE, GOMBE STATE.

INVITATION TO TENDER
FOR YEAR 2025 UBEC/GME-SUBEB MATCHING GRANT PROJECTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Gombe State Universal Basic Education Board (GME-SUBEB) in compliance with requirements of the Public Procurement Act, 2007 and other extant government regulations, intends to undertake projects for the implementation of the 1st – 4th Quarters 2025 UBEC/GME-SUBEB Matching Grant Projects. The Board therefore, invites experienced and competent companies to submit bids for the following underlisted projects.

2. SCOPE OF THE WORK

a) Construction of new classrooms and offices
b) Renovations of dilapidated classrooms
c) Drilling / Rehabilitation of water boreholes
d) Procurement of Pupils/ECCDE furniture

3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

i- Evidence of Certificate of Incorporation issued by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) including Forms CAC1.1 or CAC2 and CAC7;
ii- Evidence of Company's Tax Clearance Certificate for the past three (3) years valid till 31st December, 2026;
iii- Evidence of Pension Clearance Certificate valid till 31st December, 2026 (this requirement is only applicable to bidders whose numbers of staff is 15 and above);
iv- Evidence of industrial Training Fund (ITF) Compliance Certificate valid till 31st December, 2026 (this requirement is only applicable to bidders whose numbers of staff is 5 and above or the bidders' annual turnover is N50m and above);
v- Evidence of Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) Clearance Certificate valid till 31st December 2026;
vi- Evidence of Registration on the National Database of Contractors, Consultants and Service Providers by submission in of Interim Registration Report (IRR) expiring on 31st December 2026 issued by the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP);
vii- Sworn Affidavit:
- disclosing whether or not any officer of the relevant committees of Gombe state Universal Basic Education Board or Bureau of Public Procurement is a former or present Director, shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the bidder and confirm that all information presented in its bid are true and correct in all particulars.
- that no Director has been convicted in any Country for any criminal offence relating to fraud or financial impropriety or criminal misrepresentation or falsification of facts relating to any matter;
- that the Company is not in receivership, subject to any form of insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings or the subject of any form of winding up petition or proceedings;

viii- Company's Audited Account for the last three (3) years – 2023, 2024 & 2025;
ix- Reference Letter from a reputable Commercial Bank in Nigeria, indicating willingness to provide credit facility for the execution pf the project when needed;
x- Company's Profile with Curriculum Vitae of Key staff to be deployed for the project, including copies of their academic/Professional qualifications such COREN, QSRBN, ARCON, CORBON, etc.;
xi- Verifiable documentary evidence of at least three (3) similar jobs executed in the last five (5) years including Letters of Awards, Valuation Certificates, Job Completion Certificates and Photographs of the projects;
xii- Works: List of Plants/Equipment with proof of ownership/Lease Agreement;
xiii- For Supply of Equipment: Letter of Authorization as representative of the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs);
xiv- For Joint Venture/Partnership, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) indicating Lead Partner should be provided (CAC, Tax Clearance Certificate, Pension Clearance Certificate, ITF Compliance Certificate, NSITF Clearance Certificate, IRR & Sworn Affidavit are compulsory for each JV partner)

Note: All documents for submission must be transmitted with a Covering/Forwarding letter under the Company/Firm's Letter Head Paper bearing amongst others, the Registration Number (RC) as issued by the CAC, Contact Address, Telephone Number (preferably GSM No.), and email address. The Letter Head Paper must bear the Names and Nationalities of the Directors of the Company at the bottom of the page, duly signed by the authorized officer of the firm.

4.0 COLLECTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Interested Companies are to collect the Standard Bidding Documents (SBD) from the office of the Director of Planning, Research and Statistics of the Board upon presentation of evidence of payment of a non-refundable tender fee of **N10,000.00k** per lot paid into Gombe State Revenue Account in any reputable Commercial Bank in Nigeria.

5.0 SUBMISSION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Prospective bidders are to submit bid for the Lot desired in two (2) hard copies each of the Technical and Financial Bids in sealed envelope and clearly marked as "Technical Bid" or "Financial Bid". Thereafter put the two sealed envelopes together in a bigger sealed envelope and addressed to the Executive Chairman, Gombe State Universal Basic Education Board PMB 097, Near Ilmi International College, Federal Low-Cost Gombe, Gombe State, and clearly marked with the name of the Project and Lot Number. Furthermore, the reverse of each sealed envelope should bear the Name and Address of the bidder and be drop in the designated Tender Box, at the Directorate of Planning, Research and Statistics of the Board not later than **12:00 noon, Monday, 16th November, 2026.**

6.0 OPENNING OF TECHNICAL BIDS

Only the Technical bids will be opened immediately after the deadline for submission at **12:00 noon, Monday, 16th November, 2026** at the Premises of the Board in the presence of bidders or their representatives, while the Financial bids will be kept un-opened. Please ensure that you sign the Bid Submission Register in the office of the Director of Planning, Research and Statistics of the Board, as Gombe State Universal Education Board will not be held liable for misplaced or wrongly submitted bids.

7.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

a. Bids must be in English Language and signed by an official authorized by the bidder;
b. Bids submitted after deadline for submission would be returned un-opened
c. All cost will be borne by the bidder;
d. Technical Bids would be opened in the presence of the Bidders or their representatives, CSOs in the areas of Anti-Corruption and Transparency and Private professional bodies and will be covered by video recording; invitation link will be sent to bidders who chooses to join the bid opening online;
e. Only pre-qualified bidders will be invited at a later date for financial bids opening, while financial bids of un-successful bidders would be returned un-opened.
f. The Board is not obliged to award the contract to the lowest bidder;
g. The Board may verify any or all claims made by bidders and shall disqualify any company whose claims are found to be false in addition to other sanctions that may be deemed necessary; and
h. The Gombe State Universal Education Board is not bound to pre-qualify any bidder and reserves the right to annul the Procurement process at any time without incurring any liabilities in accordance with Section 28 of the Public Procurement act, 2007.

SIGNED
PROF. HASSAN BELLO
Executive Chairman

FEDERAL COLLEGE OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF SERVICE COMPLEX (BLOCK C ROOMS C818 & C819)
Federal Secretariat Complex, Phase II, Shehu Shagari Way, Central Business District, FCT-Abuja, Nigeria

INVITATION TO TENDER FOR EXECUTION OF FY2026 CAPITAL PROJECTS UNDER FEDERAL COLLEGE OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE (FEDCAM)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The **FEDERAL COLLEGE OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE FEDCAM** in furtherance of it's statutory mandate intends to undertake the Procurement of various Goods under the 2026 Capital Appropriation and in accordance with Extent Provision of Section 25 of the Procurement Act, 2007.

1.2 The College therefore invites all experienced and competent contractors and suppliers with relevant experience for consideration for the execution of the following projects tabulated in 2.0

2.0 SCOPE OF WORK

S/N	LOT NO	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
1	LOT A1	Furnishing of student hostels
2	LOT A2	Furnishing of four classrooms
3	LOT A3	Construction of parameter fence

3.0 ELIGIBILTY REQUIREMENTS

i. Verifiable Evidence of certificate of registration with corporate affairs commission (CAC) including form CAC 1.1 or CAC2 and form CAC7.
ii. Evidence of current tax clearance for the last three years 2023, 2024, 2025 valid till 31st December, 2026
iii. Evidence of current pension compliance certificate valid till 31st December, 2026
iv. Evidence of current industrial training fund (ITF) compliance certificate valid till 31st December, 2026
v. Evidence of current national social insurance trust fund (NSITF) compliance certificate valid till 31st December, 2026
vi. Evidence of registration on the database of Federal contractors, consultants and service providers; by submission of the interim registration report (IRR) expiring 31st December, 2026 or valid certificate issued by BPP
vii. Sworn Affidavit disclosing whether or not any officer of the relevant committees of the Federal College of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (FEDCAM) or the Bureau of public procurement is a former or present director, shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the bidder and to confirm that all information presented in its bid are true and correct in all particulars.
viii. Company's Audited Accounts for the last three years 2023, 2024, 2025
ix. Evidence of financial capability to execute the project by submission of reference letter from a reputable commercial bank in Nigeria willingness to provide credit facility for the execution of the project when needed.
x. Company profile with verifiable documentary evidence of at least three (3) similar jobs executed in the last five (5) years including letters of award, valuation certificates and photographs of the projects.
xi. Letter of authorization as representative of the original equipment manufactures (OEM) must be attached
xii. Letter of authorization as representative of the original equipment manufactures (OEM) listed in the approved policy for Procurement of Health and Medical Equipment for Tertiary Hospitals in Nigeria, for bidders of affected Lot.
xiii. For joint ventures/partnership, memorandum of understanding (MoU) should be provided (all the eligibility requirements are compulsory for each JV Partner)
xiv. All document for submission must be transmitted with a covering\ forwarding letter under the company\firm's letter headed paper bearing amongst other, the Registration Number (RC) as issued by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), contact address, telephone number (preferably GSM No) and E-mail address, the letter headed papers must bear the names and nationalities of the directors of the companies at the bottom of the page duly signed by the authorized officer of the firm.

NOTE that all documents/information required must be paginated, submitted in the sequence/order as listed in i – xiv above.

4.0 COLLECTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Interested Companies are to collect the standard documents (SBD) from the office of the Head of Procurement, Federal College of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (FEDCAM) Administrative Headquarters, Office of the Head of Service, Federal Secretariat Complex, Phase II, Shehu Shagari Way, Central Business District, FCT – Abuja, Nigeria between 10am – 3pm, Mondays – Friday, upon showing evidence of payment of non – refundable fee of **N10,000.00 (Ten Thousand Naira)** only, per Lot, paid into the Federal College of Complementary and Alternative Medicine's Remita Account in any Commercial Bank (TSA Account Number is to be obtained from the College's Central Pay Office Federal College of Complementary and Alternative Medicine, Abuja.

5.0 SUBMISSION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Perspective bidders are to submit bid for each of the lot desired, two (2) hard copies each of the technical and financial bids with soft copy of financial bid in MS Excel format, packaged separately in sealed envelopes and clearly marked as "Technical Bid" or "Financial Bid" with the Company's name written on each envelope. Thereafter put the two sealed envelopes together in a bigger sealed envelope addressed to the Sole Administrator, **Federal College of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (FEDCAM)** Administrative Headquarters, Office of the Head of Service, Federal Secretariat Complex, Phase II, Shehu Shagari Way, Central Business District, FCT – Abuja, Nigeria, and clearly marked with Name of the project and the Lot number. Furthermore, the reverse of each sealed envelope should have the name and address of the bidder and should be deposited in the Tender Box at the address in 4.0 above, not later than 12.00 noon on Monday 2nd November, 2026

6.0 OPENING OF BID DOCUMENTS

Technical Bids will be opened immediately after the deadline for the submission by 12.00 noon on Monday 2nd November, 2026 at the College Administrative Headquarters in the presence of Bidders or their representatives, while the Financial Bids will be kept unopened. Please ensure that you sign the Bid submission register at the address stated in 4.0 above, as the centre will not be held liable for misplaced or wrongly submitted bids.

7.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

i. Bids must be in English Language and signed by an official by the bidder
ii. Bid submitted after the deadline of submission would be returned un-opened
iii. Pre-qualified Bidders will be contacted at a later date for Financial Bid opening while financial Bids of unsuccessful bidders will return unopened.
iv. All costs will be borne by the bidders as the College will not be held responsible for any cost or expenses incurred by any interested party (ies) in connection with any response to this invitation
v. Non-compliance with the conditions stated herein will lead to automatic disqualification of the bidder from the bidding process.
vi. The College is not bound to pre-qualify any bidder and reserves the right to annul the Procurement process at any time without incurring any liabilities in accordance with Section 28 of the Public Procurement Act, 2007.
vii. For further enquiries, please contact Procure Unit between 10.00am to 4.00pm (Mondays to Fridays) College Administrative Headquarters, Office of the Head of Service, Federal Secretariat Complex, Phase II, Shehu Shagari Way, Central Business District, FCT – Abuja, Nigeria.

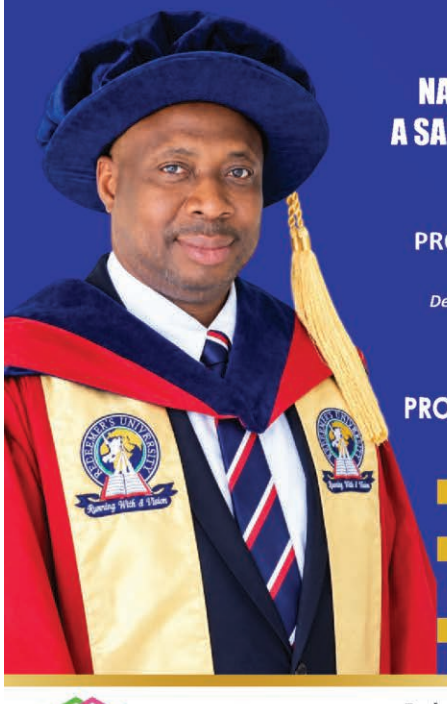
Signed:
SOLE ADMINISTRATOR
Federal College of Complementary and Alternative Medicine

REDEEMER'S UNIVERSITY
P.M.B. 230, EDE, OSUN STATE, NIGERIA.
www.run.edu.ng

25th Inaugural Lecture Series

The Vice-Chancellor
PROF SHADRACH OLUFEMI AKINDELE, FFAN, FFFPS
on behalf of the Senate of the University, cordially invites the general public to the

25th Inaugural Lecture Series



Titled:

NATURE, NANOMEDICINE AND NUMBERS: A SALUBRIOUS ODYSSEY OF A TOXICOLOGIST

To Be Delivered By

PROF. CHIAGOZIEM ANARIOCHI OTUECHERE
BSc, MSc, PhD (Ibadan)
Professor of Biochemical Toxicology and Phytomedicine
Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences

Under the Distinguished Chairmanship of

PROF SHADRACH OLUFEMI AKINDELE, ffan, fffps
Vice-Chancellor

Date: Tuesday, 20th October, 2026
Venue: Redeemer's University Auditorium, Ede, Osun State.
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Times Higher Education **Impact Rankings 2026**
#2 OVERALL AMONG FEDERAL, STATE AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN NIGERIA

Redeemer's University ranked 1st in Nigeria in seven SDGs

...running with the vision

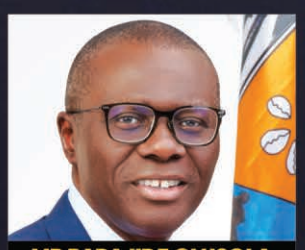
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REAL ESTATE LINKAGES: THE PRACTICABLE FRAMEWORK

REDA'26 Real Estate Discussions & Awards

20TH & 21ST OCTOBER, 2026

9:00AM RADISSON BLU IKEJA GRA, LAGOS



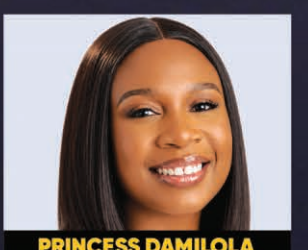
MR BABAJIDE OLUSOLA SANWO-OLU
The Executive Governor of Lagos State



MUTTAQA RABE DARMA
Honourable Minister of Housing & Urban Development, Federal Republic of Nigeria



MR JOHN UWAJUMOGU
Special Adviser to the President on Industry, Trade and Investment Federal Republic of Nigeria



PRINCESS DAMILOLA SONAYON JAMES
APC DEPUTY GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA/Head, Sustainability Risk, and Strategy, Conrad Clark Nigeria Limited.



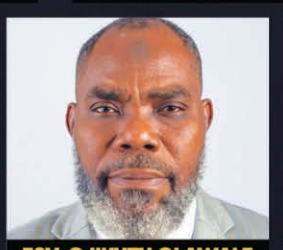
DR. OLUYINKA ABIODUN OLUMIDE
Honourable Commissioner Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development, Lagos State



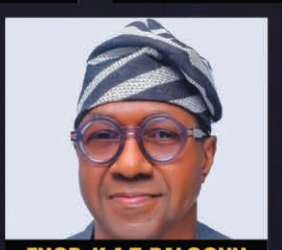
HON. MOYOSORE ADEBANJO
Chairman, Onigbongbo Local Council Development Area



OLAJIDE A. BABATUNDE
Special Adviser to the Lagos State Governor on e-GIS & Urban Development, Lagos State.



ESV. OJIKUTU OLAWALE
Director, Acquisition, Revocation & Compensation, Ministry of Lands Bureau, Lagos State



ENGR. K.A.T. BALOGUN
General Manager/CEO, Lagos State Electrification Agency



HON AYODEJI JOSEPH
MD/CEO , LSDPC



AKIN OPATOLA
Immediate Past President, Fiabci



CHUDI UBOS
Partner, Ubosi Eleh + Co | Former President, FIABCI Africa Region



DR DERIN PHILLIPS
Executive Director, Business Development and Joint Venture, LSDPC



OLAIDE AGBOOLA
Co-Founder/CEO, PURPLE



PHYLLIS UZOMA
Head, Risk Management & Compliance, Nigeria Mortgage Refinance Company (NMRC)



AYODELE OLOWOOKERE
CEO, Imperial Homes Mortgage Bank



ODUNAYO OJO
CEO, UPDC Plc



AYULI JEMIDE
Founder/Lead Partner, Detail Commercial Solicitors



AZUBIKE EMODI
CEO, Afriland Properties



OLADUNNI BASHIR
MD/CEO, Wemabod Limited



ROLAKE AKINKUGBE - FILANI
CEO, Energy Inc. Adviisors



OBINNA UDEAGHA
Managing Director, ONL Group



VIAVO HUNPONU-WUSU
Managing Partner & CEO, Blackstone Legal Advisory Services & Blackstone Luxury Properties



JOHN OAMEN
Co-Founder/CEO, Cutstruct



FEMI AWOFALA
Founder/CEO, The African Catalyst



DEBO ADEJANA
Co-Founder/CRO - McDA Advisory Company Limited



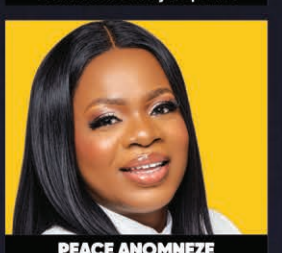
MAYOWA ADEOSUN
Founder/CEO, Assetrica



CHUKWUKA HARRISON OKOYE
MD/CEO, Facibus Housing



ADEKUNLE JINADU
Founder/CEO, GoodTenants



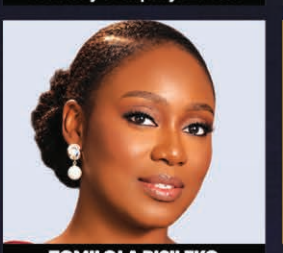
PEACE ANOMNEZE LL.B, B.L, EMBA
Lead Advisor, Real Estate Masterclass Hub Limited (REMHL)



DR. EUGENE O. ITUA, PH.D., MIEPN
CEO, Natural Eco Capital



TOCHI ADESANYA
Founder/Business Strategist, Liveizy



TOMILOLA BISILEKO
Managing Consultant/Director, Bellwether Real Estate Limited



MARTIN UCHE
CEO, Fortren & Company



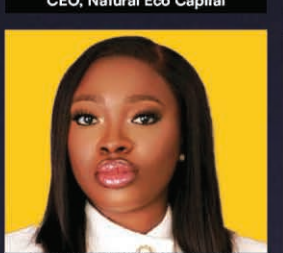
BARR. ADAKU CHIBUIKE-OCHIUWA
Real Estate Lawyer | Senior Mediator, The Priceless Chambers



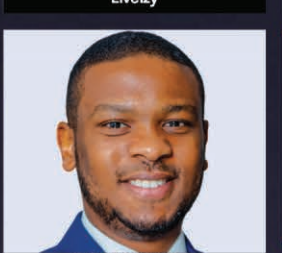
OLADAPO RUNSEWE
Head of Professional Services, CW Real Estate



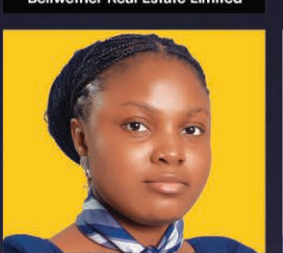
OLAWUNMI ALADE
Partner, Detail Commercial Solicitors



MOJISOLA AFOLAYAN
CEO/Property Advisor, CDRE Development Limited



LAOLU ALABI
Managing Director, Cusrevo Investments Limited



BUKOLA OWOLABI
Team Lead, Real Estate Sector, PAC Capital

TOLUWALOPE ORUNMUYI
Senior Associate, Babalakin & Co

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE & INVESTMENT
LSDPC Lagos State Development & Property Corporation
ONIGBONGBO LCDA, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA
FIABCI
LASAA
Thinkmint Nigeria A member of the TM Group
Greenmortgage
FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE & INVESTMENT
MINISTRY OF PHYSICAL PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
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Edala
B&C Babalakin&Co.
FACIBUS
Roofteller
Wemabod
URBAN SHELTER
zylus
Cutstruct
HAVEN HOMES
EKO DEVELOPMENT
Sylken
AZURI TOWERS

To Participate Visit: www.reda2026.thinkmint.eu Email: conference@thinkmint.ng
Call: 0911 342 3640, 0911 256 8630

INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (INEC)

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION TO SERVE AS OBSERVER GROUPS FOR 2027 GENERAL ELECTION

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) hereby invites registered Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Diplomatic Corps and other stakeholders whose work is on democracy, governance and election wishing to observe the Nigeria 2027 General elections scheduled to hold on **16th January (national election) and 6th February 2027 (state election)** to visit (http://observergroups.inecnigeria.org) and apply. This is without prejudice to any previous correspondence with the Commission.

2. Observer groups are to submit information including legal status (registration with CAC or other relevant Agency), evidence of registration with the Civil Society Desk at INEC Headquarters, evidence of previous election observations with INEC (if any) and acknowledgment page of submission of reports of election observation (if any), With the completed form EC14A(I)

3. The deadline for submission of application (Form EC14A (1)) is **26th October, 2026.** The list of successful observer groups approved for accreditation will be published.

4. Any falsification of documents in the submissions will lead to automatic disqualification and possible prosecution.

ACCREDITATION OF SUCCESSFUL OBSERVER GROUPS

5. Each successful group would be required to complete the online deployment of field observers' Form (EC14A (ii)) and submit same.

6. Successful observer groups should also note that in order to enable the Commission produce identification/accreditation tags for deployed field observers, passport photographs of the field observers to be deployed to the field should be arranged on Local Government Area (LGA) basis, in JPEG Format.

7. **NOTE ON ELECTION OBSERVATION EXERCISE**

Observer groups should note that the core principle of election observation in line with best practices, would guide the conduct of field observers during the election. These include impartiality, objectivity and non-partisanship.

Please be guided accordingly.

SIGNED:
INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (INEC)

INEC: Making your vote count, consolidating our democracy.

iccc.inec.gov.ng www.inecnigeria.org; www.inecnews.com @inecnigeria
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IN THE HIGH COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA
IN THE PORT HARCOURT JUDICIARY DIVISION
HOLDEN AT PORT HARCOURT

AFFIDAVIT ID: RVSJ/AF/408002/2026
AFFIDAVIT OF STATEMENT OF CLAIM/WITNESS STATEMENT ON OATH

I, Mr. Simeon Nwennendah Wutche, adult, Male, Business man, Christian citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, of Rumuwutche family of Rumuwokerebe, Rumuokwurusi Town , Port Harcourt, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, do hereby make oath and declare as follows :

1. That I am the deponent and make this affidavit on good faith.
2. That I am the 1st Claimant in Suit No: PHC/279/CS/2026 and the deponent herein, conversant with the facts of that case.
3. That I consented and authorized the filing of the said Suit No: PHC/279/CS/2026 as 1st Claimant
4. That, however, I did not give the name and description of the land in dispute as Ohia Mgbaboesawu, Iriebe New Layout as stated in the statement of claim and in the Witness Statement on oath filed in the said suit
5. That the said description of Ohia Mgbaboesawu, Iriebe New Layout was inserted in the court processes without my knowledge and without proper briefing from me
6. That the correct name and proper description of the land in dispute which is the subject matter of the said suit and which I authorized to be litigated upon is Eli Mini-Onwo Egbu Rumuwutche situate at Rumuokwurusi Town, Obio/Akpor LGA, Rivers State.
7. That the said Eli Mini-Onwo Egbu Rumuwutche is the ancestral land of and owned by Rumuwutche family of Rumuokwurusi Town, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.
8. That I know as a fact that the Land referred to in the said suit as Ohia Mgbaboesawu Iriebe New Layout is actually known as and called Eli Mgbaboesawu Rumuwutche which land is already a subject matter of litigation pending before the Court of Appeal, Port Harcourt Division, and is not the land I intended or authorized to be the subject matter of the said suit.
9. That to avoid confusion, misrepresentation, and multiplicity of actions over the same subject matter before different courts, I deem it necessary to correct the records
10. That I hereby state that the land in dispute in suit No: PHC/279/CS/2026 is Eli Mini-Onwo Egbu Rumuwutche and not Ohia Mgbaboesawu, Iriebe New Layout
11. That I have authorized the withdrawal of all processes purporting that Ohia Mgbaboesawu instead of Eli Mini-Onwo Egbu Rumuwutche is the subject matter of the said suit.
12. That this Affidavit is made in good faith to put the records straight and in the interest of justice
13. That this affidavit is now made for record and official purposes.

That I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing same to be true and correct by the provisions of the Oaths ACT, 2004.

Sworn to at the RIVERS STATE
HIGH COURT Registry,
PORT HARCOURT
This 16th Day of October 2026

Deponent

THE JUDICIARY HIGH COURT REGISTRY PORT HARCOURT CASH OFFICE DATE

BEFORE ME:

COMMISSIONER FOR OATHS

PUBLIC NOTICE
FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC DISPLAY EXERCISE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FOR THE PROPOSED EASTERN ASSET 3D SEISMIC DATA ACQUISITION PROJECT FOR OML 53 IN IMO STATE BY SEPLAT ENERGY PLC.

In accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act CAP E12 LFN 2004, which makes it mandatory for proponents of all new major developmental activities to carry out EIA for their proposed projects, the Federal Ministry of Environment hereby announces twenty-one (21) working days public display for information and comments on the draft EIA report submitted by Seplat Energy Plc.

Brief Project Description:

The proposed project entails conducting a 3D seismic data acquisition project within the OML 53 located within Oguta, Ohaji/Egbema and Owerri West LGAs in Imo State. The 3D seismic acquisition will involve the deployment of dynamite explosives (in uninhabited areas) and vibroseis (in built-up areas) that emit acoustic signals that are simultaneously recorded by geophones laid out on the terrain. The planned 3D acquisition is estimated to last a maximum period of up to 12 months (comprising mobilisation, survey preparation, data acquisition and demobilisation).

The Display Centers are:

- Oguta Local Government Area Headquarters, Oguta, Imo State;
  Ohaji/Egbema Local Government Area Headquarters, Mmahu-Egbema, Imo State;
- Owerri West Local Government Area Headquarters, Umuguma Town, Imo State;
- Imo State Ministry of Environment, State Secretariat, Owerri;
- Federal Ministry of Environment, Imo State Field Office, Owerri;
  Federal Ministry of Environment, Environmental Assessment Department, Environment House, Independence Way South, Central Business District, Abuja - F.C.T.
- www.ead.gov.ng

Duration of Display:

Date: 20th October - 17th November, 2026.
Time: 8:00 am - 4:00 pm Daily.

ALL COMMENTS SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE HONOURABLE MINISTER, FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT HEADQUARTERS, MABUSHI, ABUJA - FCT AND VIA info@ead.gov.ng ON OR BEFORE 24TH NOVEMBER, 2026.

SIGNED
PERMANENT SECRETARY
FOR: HONOURABLE MINISTER



CAVEAT EMPTOR

PUBLIC NOTICE ON ECOBANK NIGERIA LIMITED PROPERTIES IN ABUJA AND ITS ENVIRONS

Ecobank Nigeria Limited ("Ecobank" or the "Bank") hereby warns members of the public against persons falsely claiming to be agents or representatives of the Bank in connection with the properties listed below in Abuja and its environs. Members of the public should verify any proposed transaction directly with the Bank before making any commitment or payment.

FRAUD ALERT

Members of the public should be alert to suspected impersonation and property fraud, including:

1. Unauthorised individuals falsely claiming to represent Ecobank or its agents.
2. Circulation of counterfeit property listings, cloned documents, and fake social media advertisements.
3. Solicitation of payments through unverified bank accounts or cash transactions.
4. Issuance of forged title documents and fraudulent receipts.

CLARIFICATION ON PROPERTY STATUS

Ecobank Nigeria Limited states that the properties listed below remain its property. No sale, lease, assignment, development right or other dealing in these properties is authorised unless confirmed by the Bank in writing. This notice does not affect any subsisting transaction duly authorised by the Bank.

PROPERTIES SUBJECT TO THIS NOTICE

S/N	ADDRESS
1	9 KONTANGORA CLOSE, AREA 3 BRANCH FCT, ABUJA
2	PLOT 1040 CADASTRAL ZONE BO9, ALONG MABUSHI EXPRESS, KADO DISTRICT, ABUJA
3	DAKWA ROAD, OPPOSITE MOBIL FILLING STATION, OFF KADUNA-ABUJA ROAD, MADALLA MOTOR SPARE PARTS PARK, NEAR ZUBA
4	BWARI AREA COUNCIL, ABUJA
5	PLOT 2263, CADASTRAL ZONE AO2, WUSE 1 DISTRICT,ABUJA.
6	56, LADOKE AKINTOLA CRESCENT, GARKI II, ABUJA
7	PLOT 927, CADASTRAL ZONE B6, MABUSHI DISTRICT, ABUJA
8	PLOT 153, CADASTRAL ZONE 07-05, DISTRICT CENTRE, KUBWA, ABUJA.
9	52 GADO NASCO ROAD, KUBWA ABUJA.
10	KUJE MARKET (BUILT UP AREA) KUJE/GWAGWALADA ROAD, KUJE AREA COUNCIL, ABUJA
11	PLOT NO 677 CADASTRAL ZONE A07 AMINU KANO CRESCENT WUSE II, ABUJA.
12	PLOT 12 K -N ROAD FEDERAL GOVT. PROTOTYPE HOUSING ST. KARU, NYANYA, ABUJA
13	9 GADO NASCO ROAD, ABUJA
14	HALL 1, BLOCK B, ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK, AMAC UTAKO ULTRA MODERN INTERNATIONAL MARKET, ABUJA
15	PLOT A14, ZUBA FLY-OVER LAYOUT, ZUBA FRUIT MARKET, GWAGALADA, ABUJA
16	PLOT 1165, CADASTRAL ZONE A05, MAITAMA, ABUJA (LAKE CHAD AREA)

WARNING AGAINST UNAUTHORISED DEALINGS AND TRESPASS

Unauthorised entry, occupation, construction or development on these properties may give rise to civil liability and, where the statutory requirements are met, criminal liability. Ecobank reserves the right to pursue appropriate legal remedies, including:

1. Referral of suspected offences to the appropriate law enforcement agencies for investigation and, where warranted, criminal prosecution.
2. Removal of unauthorised structures through the applicable lawful procedures.
3. Civil proceedings for injunctive relief.
4. Recovery of possession and damages where applicable.

VERIFY DIRECTLY WITH THE BANK

Before engaging in any transaction involving the listed properties, members of the public should:

1. Confirm Property Status

Obtain written confirmation from the Bank that the proposed transaction is authorised, including its applicable terms.

2. Engage Only Authorised Personnel

Deal only with the Head, Ecobank Business Services, or representatives whose authority for the proposed transaction has been confirmed in writing by the Bank. Official identification alone is not proof of authority to sell or lease a property.

3. Follow Approved Payment Procedures

- Never make payments in cash or to individuals.
- Only make payments into Ecobank's designated corporate account as officially communicated and independently verified with the Bank.
- Confirm account details directly from, Ecobank approved representative, using the verified contact details below before making payment.

4. Authenticate All Documents

- Have original title documents and transaction documents inspected and independently verified by a qualified legal practitioner.
- Engage a qualified legal practitioner to conduct a title search at the Abuja Geographic Information Systems (AGIS) or other relevant land registry, as applicable.
- Ensure all consents and approvals required by law, including Ministerial consent where required, are obtained at the appropriate stage of the transaction.

5. Report Suspicious Activities Immediately

Contact Ecobank if:

- You are approached by persons whose authority to sell, lease, transfer or develop the listed properties cannot be verified with the Bank.
- You become aware of suspected unlawful occupation, trespass, construction or development on any of the listed properties.
- You are presented with documents purportedly issued by Ecobank that appear suspicious or unverifiable

SCOPE OF THIS NOTICE

CONTACT FOR VERIFICATION & REPORTS

HEAD Ecobank Business Service Unit
Ecobank Pan African Centre (EPAC)
270B Ozumba Mbadiwe Avenue, Victoria Island, Lagos.
Email: alleng-realty@ecobank.com

IMPORTANT NOTICE

IGNORE UNVERIFIED OFFERS. VERIFY DIRECTLY WITH ECOBANK NIGERIA LIMITED BEFORE ENTERING INTO ANY TRANSACTION..

Any person dealing with an unauthorised person does so at their own risk. This notice does not constitute an offer for sale or lease. The Bank reserves all its rights and remedies.

Dated: 19 October 2026
By Order of Management
Ecobank Nigeria Limited

ecobank.com

Ecobank
The Pan African Bank

TheGuardian Property

www.guardian.ng Monday, October 19, 2026

How high financing costs threaten commercial real estate, construction

With commercial property lending rates reportedly ranging from 23 to 38 per cent, developers face higher borrowing costs, while contractors struggle with working capital, delayed payments and shrinking profit. Industry experts say these pressures are making projects less viable, contributing to reduced development activity and pushing some contractors to decline jobs or rely on clients' funds and personal resources, ***CHINEDUM UWAEGBULAM*** *reports.*

NIGERIA'S commercial real estate and construction sectors face mounting financial pressure as high borrowing costs, rising building material prices, exchange-rate volatility, and weakening purchasing power complicate development and investment decisions.

Developers reliant on bank loans are reconsidering investments, delaying projects, and exploring alternative funding sources, while construction firms struggle with working capital constraints, shrinking profit margins, and delayed payments. The consequences threaten project delivery, investment returns and the supply of office complexes, shopping malls, hotels and industrial facilities.

With commercial lending rates reportedly ranging from 23 to 46 per cent yearly, the cost of credit is eroding projected returns on property investments. Developers should decide whether to accept expensive loans, inject additional equity or postpone projects until financing conditions improve.

The Central Bank of Nigeria's monetary policy rate stood at 23 per cent following its September 2026 policy decision. Its money market indicators for August 2026 put the prime lending rate at 17.86 per cent and the maximum lending rate at 29.20 per cent.

These figures reflect broader banking conditions rather than the specific rates available to every developer, whose borrowing costs depend on creditworthiness, collateral, loan tenor and transaction charges.

The implications for project economics are substantial. A developer borrowing N1 billion at an annual interest rate of 27 per cent would incur N270 million in interest over a year if the principal remained outstanding. At 30 per cent, the interest bill would rise to N300 million, excluding principal repayments and other charges. Such costs can undermine a project's viability, particularly when construction expenses rise unexpectedly, or completed properties take longer to sell or lease.

The pressure is compounded by construction inflation. Fortren & Company reportedly estimated that construction costs in Nigeria increased by 20 per cent between December 2025 and May 2026, driven by higher building material and energy prices. Cement prices in several markets were reported at between N11,500 and N15,000 per 50kg bag in 2026, compared with approximately N7,500 in late 2025.

Reported outstanding bank credit to real estate rose from N792.708 billion at the end of 2025 to N814.996 billion in the first quarter of 2026. Although the figures indicate substantial bank exposure to the sector, they do not establish how many projects have been delayed or abandoned because of high interest rates.

Industry experts have identified real estate investment trusts, joint ventures and public-private partnerships among financing models used in property development. These arrangements could diversify funding, particularly for commercial properties capable of generating predictable rental income. However, capital-market financing requires transparent governance, credible cash-flow projections, reliable valuations and investor confidence.

They argued that the challenge is not simply whether developers and contractors can obtain loans, but whether they can secure finance on terms that allow projects to remain viable. More affordable long-term capital, reliable payment systems and better control of construction costs will be essential to sustaining investment and project delivery.

Without these, developers may continue to defer investments, contractors may decline projects, and the resulting costs could be passed on to businesses, tenants and property buyers.

Former President of the Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS), Segun Ajanlekoko, told *The Guardian* that expensive financing and rising building material prices had significantly increased commercial property development costs, contributing to weak patronage from domestic buyers.

He linked the relatively low volume of commercial building development to high interest rates on funding sourced largely from commercial banks. According to him, using expensive short-term financing for long-term property investments creates a mismatch that undermines project viability and ultimately transfers additional costs to consumers.

"You cannot use high short-term funding to achieve a feasible and viable product without passing it on to the poor consumers," he said.

Ajanlekoko advised developers to prioritise cost-effective designs, avoiding unnecessarily elaborate specifications that do not serve the needs of their target markets or improve project returns. Simpler designs and, where appropriate, fast-track construction methods using components assembled quickly on site could shorten delivery periods and reduce exposure to financing charges.

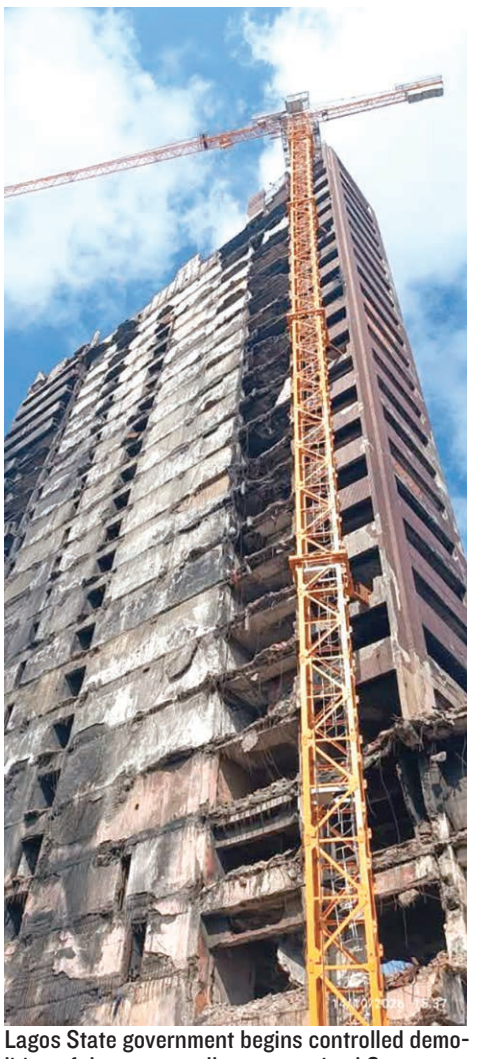
He also recommended procuring essential building materials upfront where financially feasible, while considering storage costs and the risk of tying down working capital. Appointing quantity surveyors early in the development process, he said, would enable developers to prepare reliable cost plans, assess design options, establish budgets and monitor expenditure before overruns become difficult to control.

Ajanlekoko called for a specialised bank to provide long-term construction and property development loans at single-digit interest rates. Such an institution, he argued, could align repayment schedules with development timelines and improve the viability of projects requiring substantial initial capital.

The financing squeeze is also affecting construction firms, whose cash-flow problems are often intensified by delayed payments from clients. Contractors must pay workers, purchase materials and maintain equipment while waiting for certified invoices to be settled. Where payments are delayed, firms may have to borrow at commercial rates to finance work already completed.

Chief Executive Officer of NISH Affordable Housing Limited, Dr Yemi Adelakun, described the situation as a "deadly triangle" involving high borrowing costs, rising material prices and delayed payments.

He said expensive loans had become increasingly inaccessible or unattractive to contractors, while material price increases rendered previously submitted quotations unviable. Delayed payments further tied down funds needed to procure materials, pay workers and sustain ongoing projects.



Lagos State government begins controlled demolition of the structurally compromised Great Nigeria Insurance House on Lagos Island.

"The effects of these anomalies are negative working capital, cost overruns and delayed or abandoned projects," Adelakun said.

According to him, bank loans now account for only between five and 10 per cent of project financing among the construction operations he described, compared with 30 to 40 per cent in 2020. He attributed the decline to high default rates, tighter lending conditions and contractors' reluctance to borrow at prevailing rates.

The situation creates a difficult choice for contractors bidding for projects. Passing additional costs to clients could make their bids uncompetitive, while absorbing them reduces profit margins and leaves firms vulnerable to further price increases.

> "Expensive loans had become increasingly inaccessible or unattractive to contractors, while material price increases rendered previously submitted quotations unviable. Delayed payments further tied down funds needed to procure materials, pay workers and sustain ongoing projects. The effects of these anomalies are negative working capital, cost overruns and delayed or abandoned projects.

Adelakun said some contractors were declining contracts because of uncertainty over material costs, payment schedules and already narrow margins. Projects were increasingly being financed through clients' funds and contractors' personal resources rather than bank borrowing.

To manage the pressure, he identified mobilisation advances, escrow arrangements, supplier credit, equipment leasing, joint ventures and invoice financing as alternatives. Invoice financing allows firms to raise funds against receivables, subject to the quality of the invoices and the client's creditworthiness. Equipment leasing can reduce upfront capital requirements, although its total cost must be weighed against purchasing.

Adelakun also advocated a more structured approach to project cash flow, including placing substantial upfront payments in escrow and purchasing materials in bulk when prices ease.

Under his proposed milestone-based escrow arrangement, payments would be released in stages: 30 per cent at foundation level, another 30 per cent at roofing and the remaining 40 per cent at finishing, subject to verification of completed work. He argued that the arrangement could improve accountability and ensure funds are released in line with construction progress.

He urged contractors to reconsider fixed-price contracts in an environment of volatile material costs. Without suitable price-adjustment clauses, firms risk being locked into rates that no longer cover delivery costs. Changes to government procurement procedures, payment terms and bank lending practices, he said, would help contractors remain operational and competitive.

For property developers, the response increasingly involves reducing dependence on commercial bank debt and mobilising capital through equity, joint ventures, instalment payment plans and other arrangements.

Chief Executive Officer of Propertygate Development and Investment Limited, Mr Adetokunbo Ajayi, said commercial property lending rates ranged from 23 to 38 per cent annually and could be higher, depending on the transaction.

Although the high-interest environment had not directly affected his company's development operations because it did not currently rely on commercial bank debt, Ajayi said it continued to constrain the company's expansion plans and had wider implications for the sector.

He estimated that financing costs for developers relying on bank loans could account for between 25 and 38 per cent or more of gross development cost. He added that rising capital costs were changing investment thresholds, with projects that previously targeted returns of 22 to 25 per cent now requiring yields approaching 40 per cent or higher to compensate for financing expenses.

"High interest rates render long-term bank debt unsuitable for property development finance," Ajayi said, noting that developers were increasingly exploring alternative funding sources.

These include developer-client instalment plans, corporate bonds, equity injections, joint ventures, off-plan sales and unitisation or fractional investment structures. Such mechanisms can spread funding requirements among investors or help developers mobilise money before projects are completed, but they require credible valuations, transparent governance and clear arrangements for managing risk.

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

GuardianProperty

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Building council seeks partnerships to bridge construction skills gap

By **Victor Gbonegun**

THE Sector Skills Council for Building in Nigeria (SSCBiN) has called for partnerships with professional bodies and industry stakeholders to formalise workforce training and certification in the building and construction sector.

Speaking on the theme, "The Next Frontier in Real Estate: Innovating for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth," at the 20th anniversary symposium of the Abuja Property Development Company Limited (APDC), the council's President, Dr Samson Opaluwah, said the initiative would provide practical training and promote the employment of certified and skilled construction professionals.

Opaluwah, a former Chairman of the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (CORBON), said Nigeria needed to move beyond traditional approaches to building and real estate management amid rapid urbanisation, population growth and economic pressures.

He identified three pillars for the future of real estate: innovation and sustainable construction technologies, human capital development and standardisation of construction skills, and inclusive growth through affordable housing.

He urged stakeholders to adopt climate-resilient designs, energy-efficient building systems and green building materials, stressing that sustainability was no longer a luxury or marketing buzzword but an economic and environmental imperative.

"A building is only as good as the hands that build it. The next frontier in real estate requires an uncompromising commitment to skilled workmanship, professional standards and quality assurance," he said.

Opaluwah called for the implementation of the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF), including National Occupational Standards (NOS), recognition of prior learning (RPL) and certification of informal construction workers.

He said builders, technologists, technicians and artisans involved in construction projects must meet recognised standards of competence and safety. "APDC must lead the way in prioritising certified, skilled manpower across all its supply chains," he added.

The SSCBiN president said sustainable development would be meaningless if it excluded the majority of Nigerians, stressing the need for housing solutions that catered to middle- and low-income earners as well as the premium market.

He advocated innovative financing, efficient land use and public-private partnerships (PPPs) to make homeownership more accessible.

To unlock real estate's potential as an engine of inclusive economic growth, Opaluwah said PPPs must evolve beyond transactional arrangements into strategic frameworks that reduce investment risks and attract long-term financing.

He identified key policy interventions, including reducing the risks associated with land acquisition and titling, introducing infrastructure-for-equity frameworks, and incentivising financial institutions and pension fund administrators to invest patient capital in real estate development.

Opaluwah also called for mandatory inclusionary zoning and mixed-income requirements in affordable housing schemes. "Every PPP agreement involving public asset concessions or government land must explicitly enforce compliance with the Nigerian National Building Code and mandate the deployment of registered professionals and certified construction artisans (NSQF/SSCBiN standards) to eliminate structural failures and safeguard public assets," he said.

He urged APDC to build on its reputation by helping to reshape the real estate market through green and smart communities, including residential estates in the Federal Capital Territory designed to achieve carbon neutrality and energy independence.

NCF urges Lagos to introduce carbon budgeting, protect wetlands

By **Abigail Ikhaghu**

THE Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) has called on the Lagos State Government to introduce carbon budgeting, designate more protected wetlands, enforce compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment requirements and increase investment in green infrastructure, public transport and renewable energy.

The Chairman of the NCF National Executive Council, Hon. Justice Raliat Adebiyi, made the call at the 20th annual Walk for Nature, themed "Inspired for Climate Action: Lagos Must Listen, Our Action Matters." The event, held at Lagos State University, Ojo, was organised in partnership with the Lagos State Government.

Adebiyi urged the state to make environmental protection central to its development decisions, saying climate action should go beyond public awareness to include stronger environmental policies, enforcement of existing requirements and increased investment in natural systems that protect communities against climate-related risks.

She called for the full domestication and implementation of the Climate Change Act 2021 at the subnational level, including carbon budgeting for Lagos, and the integration of nature-based solutions into the state's climate adaptation and drainage master plans.

"Climate action must be fully integrated into land-use planning, flood management, urban development and environmental governance. What is required now is execution," she said.

Adebiyi identified wetlands, forests, waterways and green spaces as essential to Lagos' ability to withstand environmental pressures, warning that their destruction weakened natural systems that protected communities.

"Lagos is at the frontline of Nigeria's climate vulnerability. A city surrounded by water yet increasingly threatened by it. Rising sea levels, annual flooding, extreme heat and the steady loss of wetlands are putting our communities, our livelihoods and our future at risk," she said.

She also urged businesses to make environmental responsibility part of their investment decisions, supply chains, production systems and waste management, rather than limiting their commitments to sustainability reports and environmental, social and governance statements.

Adebiyi encouraged universities to use research and innovation to develop practical solutions to environmental problems. She also urged students to support community initiatives, promote responsible consumption and hold institutions accountable through informed advocacy.

Speaking at the event, Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, represented by the Permanent Secretary, Office of Environmental Services, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, Tajudeen Gaji, said development must comply with environmental and drainage requirements.

He stressed that wetlands and mangroves were important natural defences against flooding and coastal erosion, adding that Lagos' coastal location, dense population and rapid growth made the protection of its natural ecosystems particularly important.

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CAVEAT EMPTOR

PUBLIC NOTICE CONCERNING THE PROPERTIES OF LATE ALHAJA MRS JUMOKE YUSUF

The general public is hereby notified that the following properties belong to the Estate of **LATE ALHAJA MRS. JUMOKE YUSUF:**

1. No. 5, Tapa Street, Ijesha-Tedo, Surulere, Lagos.
2. No. 8, Along 22 Road, Abesan Estate, Lagos.
3. One Acre of Land at Ori Okuta Estate, Ogijo Bus Stop, Ikorodu.
4. No. 2A, Adeboye Sowande Street, Okota, Lagos.
5. No. 2B, Adeboye Sowande Street, Okota, Lagos
6. No. 9, Olorunosebi Street, Kosi-Ketu, Lagos.

The public is hereby warned against purchasing, leasing, mortgaging or otherwise dealing with the above properties without lawful authorisation. Anyone who does so acts entirely at their own risk.

BE WARNED!

SIGNED:
DPALMS ATTORNEYS
Solicitors to Olatokunboh Bunmi Mustapha, Oluwatosin Shote, Aderonke Abiola Makanjuola and Tope Yusuf. Children of the Deceased.

BOLLESS GLOBAL SERVICES LTD
11, ADENIYI COKER STREET, VICTORIA ISLAND LAGOS
0803 160 3373 , 0805 658 5586
PROPERTIES FOR SALE

1) **WATERFRONT PROPERTY FOR SALE AT IKOYI**
Description: Old Waterfront Detached Mansion
Location: Queens Drive Off Bourdillon Road Ikoyi
Size: 5093 sqm. **Price:** N5.5m per sqm

2) **FOR SALE WATERFRONT LAND**
Size: 9290 sqm (half can be sold)
Location: Ozumba Mbadiwe, Victoria Island Lagos
Prices: 3.8m per sqm. **Title:** C of O

3) **FOR SALE: Prime Development Property**
Size: 4000 sqm, **Title:** C of O
Location: Sinari Daranijo Street Victoria Island
Price: 10b (2.5m per sqm)

4) **WAREHOUSE FOR SALE**
Location: Burma Road, Apapa
Total Land Size: 3380 sqm with two Bay warehouses with attached office space
Title: Deed of Assignment, **Price:** 3b

5) **Warehouse for Sale**
Total size: 14,320,000 sqm
3 bay Warehouse of size 7420 sqm
Title: C of O. **Price:** 6b
Location; Oregun, Directly facing Ikorodu Road

6) **Warehouse (Industrial property)**
Location: Henry Carr Street, Ikeja
Total size: 16,570sqm, Warehouse **Size:** 9453 sqm
Price: 12b. **Title:** C of O

Lagos council unveils recycling facility to fight flooding, create jobs



By **Favour Udezue**

TO reduce the risk of flooding and create economic opportunities for residents, Ojokoro Local Council Development Area (LCDA) has inaugurated a Recyclable Collection Hub designed to transform discarded materials into valuable resources.

The facility, a partnership between the council, the Association of Scraps and Waste Pickers of Lagos (ASWOL), Rethinking Cities, the Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA), the Food and Beverage Recycling Alliance, and Heinrich Böll Stiftung, will strengthen responsible waste management and demonstrate the economic value of recycling.

Speaking at the event, the Executive Chairman of Ojokoro LCDA, Oluyemisi Rosiji, described the initiative as more than the opening of another public facility, noting that it marked a shift towards a new approach to waste management in the community.

According to her, materials commonly regarded as rubbish can become sources of income and economic opportunities when properly collected, sorted and recycled.

She emphasised that environmental sanitation was a collective responsibility that required active participation from residents, businesses, community organisations and government.

Rosiji explained that indiscriminate waste disposal could block drainage channels, contribute to flooding, create unpleasant surroundings and expose communities to health risks.

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GuardianProperty

Cooperatives seek housing vouchers, guarantees to boost homeownership

By **Chinedum Uwaegbulam**

THE Cooperative Housing Federation of Nigeria (COHFON) has advocated housing vouchers, guarantees and innovative financing mechanisms to help prospective homeowners access funding and reduce intermediaries in housing delivery.

The federation's President, Dr Yemi Adelakun, made the call in a paper titled Cooperative Housing in Nigeria, presented at the National Cooperative Summit, Expo and Awards organised by the Cooperative Federation of Nigeria in Abuja.

He urged governments to facilitate partnerships with prequalified engineering, procurement, construction and finance companies with proven technical and financial capacity to deliver predesigned homes at agreed prices.

Backed by credible guarantees from organised housing cooperatives, such arrangements could help societies that own land but lack the technical expertise or financial resources to develop it.

Adelakun also called for a dedicated revolving intervention fund to provide housing finance through cooperatives at single-digit interest rates, building on the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria's (FMBN) Cooperative Housing Development Loan programme.

He said the measures would connect organised housing demand with developers, financial institutions and government support, creating a more predictable market for affordable homes.

Acknowledging existing government-backed housing finance initiatives involving the FMBN, Family Homes Funds, the Federal Government Staff Housing Board and the Mortgage Refinance and Investment Fund (MREIF), Adelakun cited interest rates of six per cent, five per cent, three per cent and 9.75 per cent, respectively.

He, however, maintained that government institutions alone could not meet Nigeria's housing needs, particularly given the limited number of households that qualify for available mortgage products. He urged governments to introduce additional financing mechanisms for informal-sector workers and other underserved groups, while providing land equity to support affordable housing development.

Adelakun, who is also the convener of Cooperative Housing Summit Africa (CHOSA), said cooperative housing could expand homeownership, particularly among households excluded from conventional mortgage financing.

He explained that pooling members' savings, aggregating demand and developing suitable financing arrangements could address persistent barriers, including high construction costs, expensive credit, limited access to land and inadequate mortgage guarantees.

According to him, the model brings prospective homeowners together before construction begins, enabling developers and financiers to work with organised groups whose housing needs, affordability levels and financial commitments have been established.

This, he said, could reduce the risk of developers building homes beyond buyers' reach while helping cooperatives negotiate better prices, improve construction quality and secure more reliable delivery arrangements.

"Nigeria does not only need more houses; Nigeria needs better mechanisms for organising people, savings, land, finance and housing supply into a coherent pathway to homeownership," Adelakun said.

He argued that cooperative housing could convert individual housing needs into collective purchasing power, small savings into housing equity and fragmented demand into projects capable of attracting financing.

Adelakun noted that conventional mortgage products remained inaccessible to many Nigerians, particularly artisans, market traders, artists and other self-employed people whose irregular or difficult-to-verify incomes often prevent them from meeting lenders' eligibility requirements.

Housing cooperatives, he said, could bridge this gap by mobilising savings and equity contributions, strengthening members' financial profiles and providing collective guarantees to attract lenders and reputable construction firms.

The model could also enable members to acquire land and residential properties individually or collectively, or participate in housing projects through investments in shares and other approved financial arrangements.

He stressed, however, that cooperative housing should not be confused with conventional savings and thrift societies. Existing multipurpose and sectoral cooperatives could instead partner with specialised housing cooperatives to address members' housing needs.

He identified good governance, transparency, accountability, capable leadership and sound financial management as critical to the success of cooperative housing schemes.



Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) during this year's Walk for Nature organised in partnership with the Lagos State government at the state's university, Ojo at the weekend.

Group mobilises action to restore degraded Rivers community ecosystem

By **Victor Gbonegun**

ENVIRONMENTAL group, Spaces for Change (S4C), has called for coordinated, evidence-based action to address toxic gas emissions and environmental damage in Bille community, Rivers State.

Residents have reported persistent foul odours, prolonged gas leaks, bubbling water sources, suspected water contamination and explosions. Fishing and farming activities have also declined, resulting in significant livelihood losses.

Women and young people have reported health complaints, including chest pains, skin irritation, boils and fainting episodes among children, which they associate with the unfolding crisis.

Speaking on the issue, S4C Executive Director, Victoria Ibezim-Ohaeri, warned that delays in remediation could trigger a humanitarian crisis. She said Nigeria's extractive-sector transition should be measured not only by changes in ownership, production or energy sources, but also by how environmental liabilities are managed, affected communities protected and damaged ecosystems restored.

She spoke after a dialogue organised by S4C in partnership with the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) and the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA), with support from the Ford Foundation.

The forum, titled "Remediation Before Divestment and Energy Transition: Amplifying the Bille Environmental Crisis," examined the environmental, public health and livelihood implications of the situation, as well as liabilities arising from petroleum asset transfers.

Ibezim-Ohaeri said the dialogue acknowledged NEITI's commitment to transparency, NOSDRA's efforts to strengthen environmental monitoring and liability clearance, and the House of Representatives Committee on Host Communities' commitment to facilitating dialogue and policy follow-up.

According to her, the communiqué issued after the meeting called for remediation obligations to be assessed, disclosed, financed and addressed through enforceable arrangements before petroleum assets are divested.

It also stressed that investigations must lead to concrete action on risk management, remediation and accountability, with priority given to public health, access to safe water, livelihood recovery and ecosystem restoration.

Participants called for transparency and meaningful community involvement in resource governance, noting that Nigeria's energy transition must address inherited environmental liabilities alongside future climate and energy objectives.

They urged authorities to prioritise emergency preparedness and protect public health and livelihoods while investigations continue. The dialogue also advocated greater use of satellite surveillance, gas-leak detection, emissions tracking and environmental fingerprinting technologies to identify pollution sources and strengthen investigations.

Ibezim-Ohaeri said these measures required clear institutional responsibilities, effective enforcement and stronger regulatory oversight of environmental monitoring, technical investigations, spill response and restoration.

Participants further warned that poor decommissioning of oil and gas infrastructure could encourage illegal refining, underscoring the need for effective oversight and responsible management of petroleum assets throughout divestment and the energy transition.

Engineers urged to embrace digital technology, enforce standards

From **Rotimi Agboluaje**, Ibadan

STRUCTURAL engineers have been urged to abandon outdated practices, embrace digital technology and ensure strict compliance with professional standards to deliver safe, resilient and sustainable infrastructure.

A former president of the Nigerian Institution of Structural Engineers (NIStructE), Oreoluwa Fadayomi, made the call at the opening of the institution's 2026 Conference and 39th Annual General Meeting, held at the University of Ibadan, Oyo State.

Fadayomi said the future of infrastructure development depended on the profession's ability to combine technological advancement with professional responsibility and effective regulation.

He said Nigeria needed to move beyond conventional approaches to structural engineering to address emerging infrastructure challenges and prevent recurring building collapses and structural failures.

Fadayomi identified engineering resilience, digital transformation and sustainable structural design as priorities for improving the safety, durability and performance of infrastructure. He also urged policymakers to focus on implementing policies rather than merely formulating them.

"A guideline becomes a safety improvement only when it changes practice," he said.

Fadayomi urged engineers to adopt modern digital tools without neglecting the fundamental principles of the profession, stressing the importance of understanding the underlying structural and physical principles of engineering.

Earlier, NIStructE President, Taiwo Elegba, called for stronger structural engineering practice to address changing environmental conditions and the growing demands of infrastructure development.

Elegba urged practitioners to adopt digital tools, optimise the use of construction materials and explore innovative approaches to improve infrastructure resilience and sustainability.

He also stressed the need for collaboration with regulatory agencies and strict compliance with professional standards to ensure that buildings and other infrastructure were safe, stable and durable.

The President of the Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE) and chairman of the occasion, Ali Rabiu, described engineers as custodians of public safety whose decisions had far-reaching implications for human lives, economic productivity and national development.

Ogun pig farmers lose N5b to swine fever, seek govt intervention

From **Azeez Olorunlomeru**, Abeokuta

PIG farmers in the Ikangba/Agoro axis of Odogbolu Council of Ogun State have demanded urgent government intervention after an outbreak of African swine fever, which allegedly led to losses exceeding N5b, forcing more than 99 per cent of farms in the area to shut down.

The farmers, under the aegis of the Ikangba-Agoro Pig Farmers' Association, made the demand during a protest in Ikangba, organised in collaboration with the Food and Farmers' Rights Campaign.

The aggrieved farmers called on the Federal and the Ogun State governments to provide compensation, grants, soft loans and other forms of assistance to enable affected farmers to resume production.

Speaking at the protest, the Ogun State coordinator of the Campaign for Workers' Democratic Rights, Mr. Eko John Nicholas, disclosed that tens of thousands of pigs had died from the disease, leaving more than 2,000 farmers facing severe financial difficulties.

Nicholas stated that the association losses extended beyond livestock to farm infrastructure, feed stocks, feed ingredients, revenue and other investments across the pig production value chain, adding that the shutdown of farms had also rendered several farm workers jobless, worsening the economic hardship faced by affected households.

The farmers described the outbreak as the third major episode of African swine fever to devastate their investments in the past decade, accusing the federal and state governments of failing to provide adequate support despite the scale of the losses.

"Moving forward, we can no longer suffer and die in silence," the association said, urging the authorities to intervene immediately to prevent the collapse of the local pig farming industry."

One of the affected farmers, Folorunsho Ayodele, said he lost pigs worth more than N18m, while a neighbour lost livestock valued at over N30m.

Ayodele said some of the dead pigs weighed more than 300kg, with a kilogramme selling for N2,500 and above, adding that many farmers had taken loans to finance their businesses. "Many of us are on loans, and some are even in hospital because of the shock of these terrible losses. The experience is better imagined than experienced."

He appealed to President Bola Tinubu and Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun to assist the affected farmers. "We need all the supports to go back to our business and continue to contribute our quota to our country's development."

Another farmer, Adeola Oyeleye, said she had lost investments worth more than N10m, adding that some farmers in the area had suffered losses exceeding N100m. "I know of those who lost over N100m to this outbreak, so we are really overwhelmed by these terrible losses. We just beg the government to come to our aid."

Oyeleye called for compensation, grants, low-interest loans and other forms of assistance to help farmers rebuild their businesses. She also urged the government to intensify efforts to develop a vaccine against the disease.

The association called for soft loans at single-digit interest rates, quality breeding stock, feed inputs and training for affected farmers. It also requested disease prevention and control materials, including disinfectants, protective boots and knapsack sprayers.

It urged the authorities to provide food and other relief materials for farmers struggling to support their families after losing their livelihoods, as well as social welfare and unemployment assistance for displaced farm workers.

Beyond the immediate relief, the farmers called for the establishment of a high-powered technical committee comprising scientists, farmers and other professionals to accelerate research into vaccines and drugs against the disease.

They urged the government to strengthen agricultural and veterinary research institutions, including the National Veterinary Research Institute in Vom, Plateau State, and relevant university research centres, to develop effective prevention and control measures.

The association also called for increased public investment in agricultural research and development, arguing that greater attention to the sector was necessary to protect food security and farmers' livelihoods.

The farmers acknowledged the efforts of the Minister of Livestock Development, Idi Mukhtar Maiha, in launching an African swine fever control and biosecurity campaign at the Oke-Aro Pig Farm Estate.

The campaign reportedly included the distribution of protective equipment and disease-control materials through the Livestock Productivity and Resilience Support Project.



The outbreak of African swine fever has shut down 99 per cent of farms in Odogbolu Local Council.

Movement launches initiative to advance global food system

By Gbenga Akinfenwa

TO commemorate the 2026 World Food Day, the EARTHDAY.ORG has launched Food for Our Planet initiative; a multiyear global campaign focused on transforming the way food is produced, consumed and valued to build a healthier, sustainable and equitable global food system.

The launch is coming on the heels of the fact that global food systems are undermining public health and the environment. Diet-related chronic diseases have reached epidemic proportions, while harmful pesticides and chemicals, plastics and microplastics, and ultra-processed foods raise growing concerns about human health, just as millions of people also lack access to healthy and affordable food.

Experts claim that addressing these challenges requires fundamental changes to how food are produced and consume, including reducing reliance on industrial animal agriculture and accelerating the shift toward healthier, more plant-based diets.

Global Director of Food and Environment at EARTHDAY.ORG, Jillian Semaan, said the industry players cannot continue to ignore the enormous toll the food system is taking on public health and the environment.

"From the harmful chemicals and plastics in our food to the devastating consequences of industrial animal agriculture, the way we produce and consume food must change. Food for Our Planet is about mobilizing people, engaging governments and businesses, and building partnerships to drive meaningful change toward a healthier, more transparent food system that puts people and the planet first."

According to its design, Food for Our Planet will drive global action across three interconnected priorities: Healthy People, Healthy Soils and Healthy Futures.

Through Healthy People, EARTHDAY.ORG will drive action to:reduce harmful substances: Reduce the use of harmful pesticides and chemicals, plastics and microplastics in food by 30 per cent by 2040; advance food transparency: advocate for mandatory labeling of all ultra-processed foods; accelerate plant-based diets: build a global consumer movement of 10 million people committed to eating more plant-based foods; transform school food systems: Work with schools and universities to expand access to plant-based option; invest in safer alternatives: Work with companies and governments to mobilise at least $20b in investments in alternatives to harmful chemicals; and educate and mobilise: Reach at least 100 million people with education about the health and environmental impacts of food production and consumption, and healthier, more sustainable alternatives.

"Through Healthy Soils, EARTHDAY.ORG will advance efforts to: restore agricultural land: transition 100 million acres of agricultural land to regenerative and other soil-restoring practices that improve soil health, increase carbon sequestration and restore surrounding ecosystems; reduce chemical dependence: support farmers in reducing reliance on harmful pesticides, chemicals and synthetic fertilizers; and finance the transition: engage governments, multilateral institutions, philanthropies and investors to mobilise financial support for healthier, more sustainable agricultural practices worldwide.

WACOT renews strategic partnership with Edo to drive agric transformation

By Gbenga Akinfenwa

WACOT Limited has extended its agreement with the Edo State Government on fertiliser production through the Edo State Fertiliser and Chemical Company Limited (ESFCCL), located in Auchi.

This partnership, which commenced in 2017, reaffirms both parties' commitment to boosting local fertiliser production, supporting smallholder farmers, and advancing Nigeria's food security.

The renewal reinforces the strategic importance of the Auchi facility to Nigeria's agricultural sector, particularly its capacity to support the specialised fertiliser needs of different regions. Through its blending capabilities, the plant serves as a critical link between local fertiliser production, regional agricultural requirements, and national food security priorities.

Speaking on the significance of the facility from an industry perspective, the President of the Fertiliser Producers and Suppliers Association of Nigeria (FEPSAN) and Director, Corporate Affairs, TGI Group, Mr. Sadiq Kassim, said the facility is of strategic importance to Nigeria's fertiliser industry and national food security.

"It is the only plant in the South-South with the capability to produce tailored, crop-specific fertiliser blends suited to the region's soil requirements. The facility also has the capability to produce specialised chemical blends to meet the specific needs of the North-East, where security challenges have made establishing fertilizer production facilities particularly difficult. These capabilities further highlight the importance of sustaining and strengthening local fertiliser production to meet the diverse agricultural needs of our country."

Also commenting on the renewed partnership, the Managing Director of WACOT Limited, Mr. Naveen Chaurasia, said the renewal of agreement is a strong statement of the long-term commitment to Edo State and to Nigeria's agricultural transformation.

Since 2017, we have demonstrated that a well-managed public-private partnership can revive moribund assets and deliver real value. WACOT and TGI Group remain focused on food security, local production, and empowering farmers with affordable, high-quality fertiliser.

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Violent attacks raise fears over free electioneering in states

From the obstruction of Peter Obi's convoy in Benue to reported attacks on opposition campaign teams in Edo and Enugu, allegations of political intimidation are raising questions about candidates' freedom to mobilise voters and the preparedness of security agencies for the 2027 general elections, ***FELIX UROKO*** *reports.*

FOR residents of Yelwata, a farming community in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State, the visit of Peter Obi, presidential candidate of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), was an opportunity to draw renewed attention to the killings, displacement and disruption of livelihoods that have scarred their community.

But the humanitarian visit, scheduled for September 8, was cut short when youths blocked Obi's convoy along Gboko Road in Makurdi, preventing him from proceeding to the affected community.

Obi said he had travelled to commiserate with families affected by the killings when his convoy was stopped by people shouting that he should leave. He said he chose not to force his way through the blockade to avoid a confrontation that could endanger lives.

The Benue State Government denied responsibility, saying it had not been informed of the visit. The police, however, said they had received notification and deployed officers to provide security. The following day, the police announced the arrest of 46 suspects allegedly linked to the obstruction.

Although the arrests opened the way for further investigation, they did not, by themselves, establish who organised the blockade or whether any political office-holder directed it.

Yet, the incident has acquired significance beyond Benue. Coming as political parties intensify mobilisation ahead of the 2027 general elections, it has raised questions about whether opposition candidates can freely visit communities, meet supporters and present their programmes without obstruction or intimidation.

The concerns have been reinforced by reports of attacks on opposition political activities in Edo and Enugu states, as well as allegations of threats, damaged campaign property and interference with party mobilisation in other parts of the country.

Opposition parties have accused members or supporters of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) of involvement in some of the incidents. The APC has rejected suggestions that it pursues a policy of intimidation, insisting that allegations against it should be supported by verifiable evidence.

The competing claims have placed the conduct of political parties, the response of security agencies and the protection of citizens' democratic rights under scrutiny as the 2027 elections approach.

From Benue to Edo and Enugu

IN Edo State, the African Democratic Congress (ADC) reported that its campaign train was attacked in Igueben Local Government Area on October 6.

The party's chieftain and former governorship aspirant, Kenneth Imasuangbon, its Edo Central senatorial candidate, Herbert Okonofua, and other leaders were in the convoy when suspected attackers allegedly opened fire.

The ADC accused political loyalists of the APC of involvement and alleged that Igueben council chairman, Endurance Azemegbe, led the attackers. It said one of its supporters, identified as Jerry Oliha, sustained gunshot wounds.

Azemegbe denied the allegation, saying he was not in Igueben when the incident occurred. His response leaves the allegation of his involvement to be established or dismissed through investigation.

The reported attack followed controversy over a video circulating online in which Edo APC chairman, Jerett Tenebe, was reported to have threatened to use an AK-47 rifle against people who refused to vote for the party, including President Bola Tinubu.

Opposition parties condemned the reported remarks, arguing that electoral competition should be determined by voters rather than threats. The episode has also drawn attention to the responsibility of party leaders to ensure that political rhetoric does not encourage intimidation or violence.

In Enugu State, the NDC governorship candidate, Chinyeaka Ohaa, alleged that he and his supporters were attacked on October 10 while returning from Akanu Ibiam International Airport, where party members had gathered to welcome him.

Ohaa said several supporters sustained injuries, vehicles were damaged, and mobile phones belonging to journalists and party members were seized. He alleged that the attackers followed his convoy to the party's campaign office, where another confrontation occurred.

The ADC, NDC and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) subsequently condemned the reported incidents and called on security agencies and the Federal Government to protect opposition politicians and their supporters.

The Enugu State Government denied involvement in the attack. The police said officers responded to a distress report, restored order, took an injured person to hospital and commenced an investigation.

> "The ability of a candidate to travel to a community, meet residents and explain a programme is a basic element of electoral competition. When a visit is obstructed or a political gathering is disrupted, the immediate effect extends beyond the candidate and party involved. Residents may lose an opportunity to question those seeking their votes, while supporters may become reluctant to participate in subsequent activities."

As in Benue and Edo, the allegations and denials have yet to establish responsibility conclusively. But the circumstances surrounding the Enugu incident highlight the importance of protecting candidates, supporters, journalists and party offices during lawful political activities.

The incidents differ in their circumstances and the evidence available. They should not automatically be treated as parts of a coordinated operation. Nevertheless, reports of disruptions across different states have intensified calls for impartial investigations and stronger guarantees for political participation.

Opposition raises the alarm over reported attacks

BEYOND the individual incidents, the ADC has raised concerns about what it describes as a pattern of attacks on opposition members and political gatherings.

The party's National Publicity Secretary, Bolaji Abdullahi, said its records covered reported incidents between July 2025 and September 2026 in Kaduna, Kebbi, Ekiti, Cross River, Rivers, Edo, Osun, Kogi and Enugu states.

According to the party, the incidents included attacks on political meetings, destruction of party property, assaults on participants and threats against citizens because of their political preferences. It called on the Inspector-General of Police to provide public updates on investigations into the reported cases.

Abdullahi argued that citizens should be free to support political parties of their choice and that registered parties should be able to organise meetings and conduct lawful activities without intimidation.

The ADC also questioned the response of security agencies in some of the cases it cited, calling for greater transparency and accountability.

The party's claims broaden the debate from the safety of individual candidates to the conditions under which political competition will take place nationally. However, establishing whether the incidents constitute a wider pattern requires verification of individual cases, including their circumstances, available evidence and the findings of investigations.

A Lagos-based NDC member, Silvester Adah, also called on security agencies to strengthen their presence before, during and after the elections. He alleged that the APC had plans to intimidate voters in areas where opposition parties enjoyed support.

The allegation reflects the concerns of some opposition members but requires independent substantiation. Its wider implication is the need for security agencies to demonstrate their impartiality through their conduct and handling of complaints from all political parties.

As the 2027 campaign season approaches, the central issue is whether parties can compete under conditions that allow voters to hear competing arguments and make independent choices.

Political mobilisation involves rallies, community visits, meetings with interest groups, distribution of campaign materials and public engagement by candidates. Disputes over venues, routes, supporters and local political influence can become more pronounced as competition intensifies.

Where credible allegations of intimidation are not investigated transparently, distrust can deepen. Opposition parties may question the willingness of security agencies to protect them, while supporters may become suspicious of rival groups. Such perceptions can undermine confidence in the electoral process even where allegations have not been established.

The reported incidents have generated reactions from political actors across party lines, many of whom have argued that opposition candidates must be allowed to campaign freely.

Presidential candidate of the African Action Congress, Omoyele Sowore, condemned the intimidation of opposition parties. The *Obidient* Movement also accused the ruling APC of involvement in the reported incidents, describing them as evidence of what it considered the ruling party's desperation. The accusation remains the movement's position and has not, by itself, established responsibility for the incidents.

A stalwart of the NDC, Tanko Yunusa, said no amount of intimidation would prevent the party from campaigning across the country. He condemned the incidents in Benue, Edo, Delta and Enugu, arguing that failure to investigate such cases could deepen distrust ahead of the 2027 elections.

The PDP governorship candidate in Cross River State, Sir Arthur Jarvis Archibong, also alleged that the ruling party disrupted his attempt to visit a royal palace for political mobilisation.

The allegations from different states have reinforced opposition calls for security agencies to protect candidates regardless of party affiliation. They have also increased pressure on political parties to distance themselves from violence and ensure that their supporters respect the rights of opponents.

The APC, however, has rejected suggestions that it is pursuing a policy of restricting opposition activities.

Abimbola Tooki, spokesman for the APC National Chairman, said allegations of political intimidation should be supported by verifiable evidence rather than broad accusations against the ruling party.

The APC's position is that political competition must be conducted within the law and that responsibility for individual incidents should be established through evidence.

The party's denial does not settle the allegations against individuals or groups in particular cases. Equally, accusations against APC members or supporters should not be treated as established facts without the findings of credible investigations.

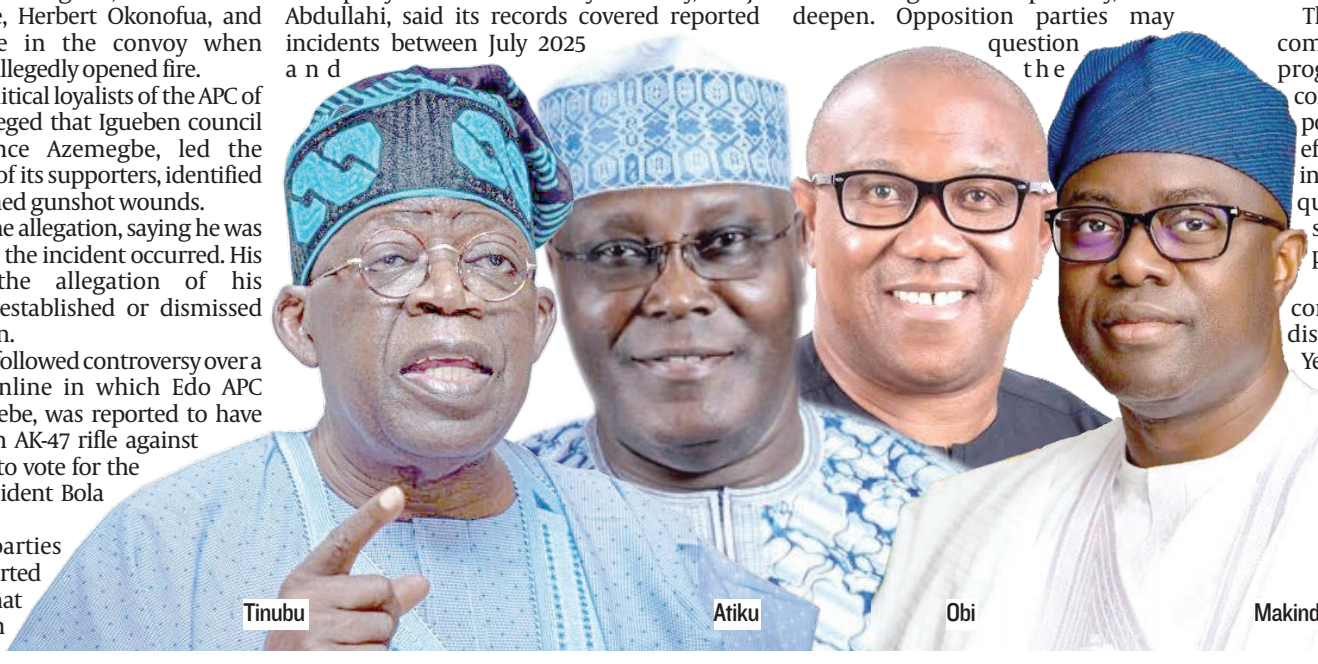
The challenge for the authorities is to investigate complaints impartially, publish findings where appropriate and prosecute those found culpable, irrespective of their political affiliations.

Beyond party rivalry

THE debate over political intimidation raises a broader question about the quality of democratic participation in Nigeria.

The ability of a candidate to travel to a community, meet residents and explain a programme is a basic element of electoral competition. When a visit is obstructed or a political gathering is disrupted, the immediate effect extends beyond the candidate and party involved. Residents may lose an opportunity to question those seeking their votes, while supporters may become reluctant to participate in subsequent activities.

This concern is particularly relevant in communities affected by insecurity, displacement and economic hardship. In Yelwata, for instance, the intended purpose of Obi's visit was to draw attention to the experiences of residents affected by killings and displacement. The obstruction therefore raised questions not only about political access but also about the ability of affected communities to engage public figures seeking elective office.



NATIONAL SPACE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

KM 17, UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA EXPRESSWAY (AIRPORT ROAD), ABUJA, NIGERIA.

INVITATION TO TENDER (TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL) AND EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS AT NASRDA HEADQUARTERS AND CENTRES UNDER THE 2026 CAPITAL/ZIP APPROPRIATION

1. **INTRODUCTION**
The National Space Research and Development Agency and its centres invites qualified, interested and credible contractors, suppliers and service providers to tender for the following lots of goods, works and services under the 2026 capital/zip appropriation:

2. **SCOPE OF GOODS/WORKS/SERVICES**

2.1 **SECTION A: GOODS**

LOT NO.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
A1	SUPPLY OF SCIENTIFIC, ENGINEERING AND TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT
A2	SUPPLY OF SOFTWARE/HARDWARE, ICT EQUIPMENT AND INFRASTRUTURE, INTERNET, LICENSES ETC.
A3	SUPPLY OF VEHICLES, TRUCKS, BUSES
A4	SUPPLY OF OFFICE EQUIPMENT AND FURNISHING
A5	SUPPLY OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT/OUTREACH MATERIALS, DRUGS
A6	SUPPLY OF EMPOWERMENT/ENTREPRENUERSHIP MATERIALS, GRANTS/STARTUP CAPITAL, SCHOLARSHIPS.

2.2 **SECTION B: WORKS**

LOT NO.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
B1	SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF SOLAR POWER SYSTEMS/LIGHTS/RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEM
B2	CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION OF BUILDINGS, FENCES
B3	CONSTRUCTION OF BOREHOLES, HANDPUMPS

2.3 **SECTION C: SERVICES**

LOT NO.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
C1	CAPACITY BUILDING/TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY SERVICES

2.3 **SECTION D: ZONAL INTERVENTION PROJECTS**

LOT NO.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
D1	SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF SOLAR POWERED LIGHT IN CHANCHAGA FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY, NIGER STATE
D2	CAPACITY BUILDING TO THE YOUTH ACROSS GWARZO/KABO FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY, KANO STATE
D3	SUPPLY OF EMPOWERMENT MATERIALS TO CONSTITUENTS OF LAGOS ISLAND 1 FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY, LAGOS STATE
D4	SUPPLY OF GRAINS IN AYEDAADE/IREWOLE/ISOKAN FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY, OSUN STATE
D5	EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS IN IDANRE/IFEDORE FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY ONDO STATE
D6	SENSITIZATION OF TRADITIONAL RULERS AND CRITICAL STAKEHOLDERS ON COMMUNITY SECURITY WITHIN AKOKO NORTH EAST/NORTH WEST FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY, ONDO STATE
D7	PROMOTING RENEWAL ENERGY ENTREPRENURSHIP THROUGH PRACTICAL SOLAR INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE TRAINING FOR YOUTHS IN NIGER EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT, NIGER STATE
D8	RENOVATION OF SELECTED CLASSROOMS IN PAKORO AND CHANCHAGA LGA'S IB NIGER-EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT, NIGER STATE

3.. **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**
Interested Contractors, Suppliers and Service Providers Are Required to Submit the Following Documents:
i. Evidence Of Certificate of Incorporation Issued by Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) Including Form CAC 1.1 Or CAC2 and CAC7. Business Name Is Also Acceptable for Services;
ii. Evidence Of Company's Income Tax Clearance Certificate (Or Personal Income Tax Clearance of All the Partners in Case of Business Name) For the Last Three Years (2023, 2024, 2025) Valid Till 31st December, 2026;
iii. Evidence Of Pension Clearance Certificate Valid Till 31st December, 2026 (This Requirement Is Only Applicable to Bidders Whose Number of Staff Is 15 And above);
iv. Evidence Of Industrial Training Fund (ITF) Compliance Certificate Valid Till 31st December, 2026 (This Requirement Is Only Applicable to Bidders Whose Number of Staff Is 5 And Above or The Bidder's Annual Turnover Is N50m And Above);
v. Evidence Of Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) Clearance Certificate Valid Till 31st December, 2026;
vi. Evidence Of Registration on The National Database of Federal Contractors, Consultants and Service Providers by Submission of Interim Registration Report (IRR) Expiring On 31st December, 2026 or Valid Certificate Issued By BPP;
vii. Sworn Affidavit Disclosing Whether Any Officer of The Relevant Committees Of The National Space Research And Development Agency Or The Bureau Of Public Procurement Is A Former Or Present Director, Shareholder Or Has Any Pecuniary Interest In The Bidder And To Confirm That All Information Presented In Its Bid Are True And Correct In All Particulars;
viii. Comprehensive Company's Profile with The Curriculum Vitae Of Key Staff to Be Deployed for The Project, Including Copies of Their Academic/Professional Qualifications Such As COREN, QSRBN, ARCON, CORBON Etc.;
ix. Verifiable Documentary Evidence Of At Least Three (3) Similar Jobs Executed in The Last Five (5) Years Including Letters of Awards, Valuation/Job Completion Certificates and Photographs Of The Projects;
x. Works: List of Plants/Equipment with Proof of Ownership/Lease;
xi. Reference Letter Form a Reputable Commercial Bank In Nigeria, Indicating Willingness To Provide Credit Facility For The Execution Of The Project When Needed;
xii. Company's Audited Accounts for The Last Three (3) Years (2023, 2024, 2025);
xiii. For Mapping/Satellite Imaging and Related Services, Contractors/Service Providers Must Be Registered with National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA), The Repository Of Satellite Images Over Nigeria As Required By The Law.
xiv. For Motor Vehicle Procurement, Only Companies Included in The National Automotive Design and Development Council's Approved List of Local Manufacturers of Vehicles or Their Authorized Representatives Should Bid for The Procurement;
xv. For It Jobs: Evidence of Registration/Accreditation with Computer Professional Registration Council of Nigeria and National Information Technology Development Agency;
xvi. Training: Evidence of Firm's Current Registration with Centre for Management Development (CMD);
xvii. For Joint Venture/Partnership, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Should Be Provided (CAC, Tax Clearance Certificate, Pension Compliance Certificate, ITF Compliance Certificate, NSITF Compliance Certificate, IRR & Sworn Affidavit Are Compulsory for Each JV Partner);
xviii. All Documents for Submission Must Be Transmitted with A Covering/Forwarding Letter Under the Company/Firm's Letterhead Paper Bearing Amongst Others, The Registration Number (RC) As Issued by The Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), Contact Address, Telephone Number (Preferably Gsm No.) And E-Mail Address. The Letterhead Paper Must Bear the Names and Nationalities of The Directors of The Company at The Bottom of The Page, Duly Signed by The Authorized Officer of The Firm.

4.. **COLLECTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS (GOODS AND WORKS)**
Tender Documents Are Obtainable from The Office Of The **Director, Procurement, National Space Research And Development Agency, Abuja** Upon The Payment Of A Non-Refundable Tender Processing Fee Of **N10,000.00** (Ten Thousand Naira) Only Per Lot, To **NASRDA TSA Account**. Firms Interested in Services Will Not Pay at This Stage Until After Shortlisting.
Note: Revenue Reference Number (RRN) Can Be Generated at The Account Section of The Agency to Enable Payment into The Agency's Remita Account in Any Reputable Commercial Bank in Nigeria.

5. **SUBMISSION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS (GOODS AND WORKS)**
Prospective Bidders Are to Submit Bid for Each of The Lots Desired, Two (2) Hard Copies Each Of The Technical And Financial Bids With Soft Copy Of The Financial Bid Only In Ms Excel Format, Packaged Separately In Sealed Envelopes And Clearly Marked As "Technical Bid" And "Financial Bid". Thereafter, Put the Two Sealed Envelopes Together in A Bigger Sealed Envelope Addressed To The: **Director-General/ CE**, National Space Research And Development Agency, Pyakasa Junction, Airport Road, Lugbe, Abuja And Clearly Marked With The Name Of The Project And The Lot Number. Furthermore, The Reverse of Each Sealed Envelope Should Bear the Name and Address of The Bidder and Dropped in The Designated Tender Box in The **Office of The Director, Procurement, NASRDA Headquarters, Abuja Not Later Than 12:00 Noon Of 16th November, 2026**.

6. **SUBMISSION OF EOI DOCUMENT (SERVICES)**
Interested Firms Are to Submit Two (2) Bound Copies of The Expression of Interest (EOI) Documents Separated by Dividers and Arranged as Indicated Above. The Documents Should Be Submitted in A Sealed Envelope and Addressed as Indicated Above, And Clearly Marked with The Name of The Project and Lot Number. Furthermore, The Reverse of Each Sealed Envelope Should Bear the Name and Address of The Bidder and Dropped in The Designated Tender Box in The **Office Of The Director, Procurement, NASRDA Headquarters, Abuja Not Later Than 12:00 Noon Of 3rd November, 2026**.

7. **OPENING OF EOI AND TECHNICAL BIDS**
The EOI And the Technical Bids Will Be Opened Immediately After the Deadlines for Submission At **12:00 Noon On 3rd November, 2026** and **12:00 Noon On 16th November 2026**, Respectively In The Prof. Borroffice Ajayi Conference Hall, NASRDA Headquarters Abuja; While The Financial Bids Will Be Kept Un-Opened. Please Ensure That You Sign the Bid Submission Register In The Office Of The **Director, Procurement, Ground Floor, Admin Building, NASRDA Headquarters Abuja**, As The Agency Will Not Be Held Liable For Misplaced Or Wrongly Submitted Bids.

8. **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**
i. Bids Must Be in English Language and Signed by An Official Authorised By The Bidder;
ii. Bids Submitted After the Deadline for Submission Would Be Returned Un-Opened;
iii. No Bidder Should Bid for More Than Two (2) Lots Overall;
iv. The EOI/Bid Opening Will Be Carried Out in The Presence of Two (2) Representatives Of Private Sector Professional Bodies And Civil Society Organization In The Areas Of Anti-Corruption/Transparency;
v. The Agency Reserves the Right to Authenticate All Claims Made by Any Contractor In Its Submission;
vi. Failure To Provide Any Information Required Shall Lead to Instant Disqualification;
vii. Submission Of Bids and Expression of Interest Should Not Be Construed as A Commitment on The Part of The Agency;
viii. It Shall Not Entitle Any Contractor to Make Any Claims Whatsoever or Seek Any Remedy/Indemnity from The Agency by Virtue of Such Company Having Responded to The Advertisement;
ix. Goods And Works: Only Pre-Qualified Bidders at The Technical Evaluation Will Be Contacted at A Later Date for The Financial Bids Opening, While the Financial Bids of Un-Successful Bidders Will Be Returned Un-Opened;
x. Services: Only Shortlisted Bidders at The EOI Evaluation Will Be Contacted at A Later Date for Collection of Request for Proposals;
xi. Preference Shall Be Given to Nigerian Companies in Line with The Presidential Executive Order 5 For the Promotion of Nigerian Content in Contracts Relating to Science, Technology and Engineering.

9.0 **DISCLAIMER**
The National Space Research and Development Agency Will Not Be Responsible for Any Cost or Expenses Incurred by Any Interested Party in Connection with Any Response to This Invitation. The Agency Is Not Bound to Shortlist/Pre-Qualify Any Bidder and Reserves the Right to Annul the Procurement Process at Any Time Without Incurring Any Liabilities in Accordance with Section 28 Of The Public Procurement Act (PPA.), 2007.

SIGNED:
DIRECTOR GENERAL/CHIEF EXECUTIVE
NATIONAL SPACE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
KM 17, UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA EXPRESSWAY (AIRPORT ROAD),
ABUJA, NIGERIA

Property owners adopt strategies to eject tenants, raise rents

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

inflation does not mean prices have fallen; rather, they are rising more slowly. For households already facing higher rents, accumulated increases in food, transport, electricity and other essentials continue to erode purchasing power.

While tenants complain about rent increases, landlords and developers argue that they are also operating in an increasingly expensive housing-production environment. The cost of construction and maintenance has risen sharply, driven by inflation, materials, labour, energy, transport, exchange-rate pressures and high borrowing costs.

Developers also face land acquisition, title documentation, planning approvals, development charges and the cost of providing infrastructure such as roads, drainage, water and electricity. These expenses eventually feed into house prices and rents.

The Federal Government has expanded interventions through the Renewed Hope Housing Programme, the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria and other housing-finance initiatives. One prominent intervention is the MOFI Real Estate Investment Fund, which, as of late August, had deployed N140 billion through 21 financial institutions to create 2,018 mortgages across 27 states.

But the scale of the intervention also highlights the enormity of the challenge. The Federal Government's National Housing Data Technical Committee put Nigeria's housing deficit for 2025 at 15 million units.

Experts said the solution must go beyond building more houses and address the entire housing value chain, including land, infrastructure, finance, approvals and transportation. They called for serviced land, improved infrastructure, streamlined approvals and incentives for genuine affordable and rental housing.

The Co-founder of Rethinking Cities, Mr Deji Akinpelu, told *The Guardian* that many landlords, particularly those in the diaspora, benchmark their returns in dollars and raise naira rents as the currency depreciates.

"The deeper cause, though, is that housing has become an asset market detached from local incomes. Lagos's price-to-income ratio is 19.2 times, driven by infrastructure and location premiums rather than income growth. Public investment ends up raising private land values, evictions destroy the cheapest homes, and empty buildings are held as stores of value," he said.

Akinpelu said rising transport costs had also eroded the savings from moving to cheaper locations. "For middle earners, moving out from a location changes where the cost falls rather than removing it. A commute from Ajah to Ikeja can take three hours each way. The bigger danger is that rents near BRT corridors and the Red Line are rising fastest. Without land-value capture and inclusionary zoning around stations, new transit will push out the very people it was built to serve," he said.

He also criticised Lagos State's land policies and charges, saying the 2026 Blue Book had raised land valuations by 300 to 525 per cent, increasing fees tied to those valuations. He contrasted one-bedroom units on state land with subsidised infrastructure, costing N8 million to N9 million, with comparable PPP units at about N22 million.

On interventions, Akinpelu said existing housing finance schemes were insufficient to address the rental crisis. "These are ownership schemes in a city where fewer than one in three residents own their homes, so they cannot address rising rents," he said.

He called for serviced public land, waived fees for affordable housing, faster approvals and greater access to pension funds for developers. For tenants, he advocated passage of the tenancy bill and development of a social rental sector through inclusionary zoning, an inclusionary housing trust fund and Special Planning Area status for informal communities.

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

PUBLIC NOTICE
FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC DISPLAY EXERCISE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FOR THE PROPOSED WESTERN ASSET 3D SEISMIC DATA ACQUISITION PROJECT FOR OMLS 4, 38, & 41 IN DELTA STATE AND EDO STATE BY SEPLAT ENERGY PLC.

In accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act CAP E12 LFN 2004, which makes it mandatory for proponents of all new major developmental activities to carry out EIA for their proposed projects, the Federal Ministry of Environment hereby announces twenty-one (21) working days public display for information and comments on the draft EIA report submitted by Seplat Energy Plc.

Brief Project Description:

The proposed project entails conducting a 3D seismic data acquisition project within the concessions OML 4, 38, & 41 located within Orhionmwon LGA of Edo State and Ndokwa West, Sapele, Okpe, Ethiope West LGAs in Delta State. The 3D seismic acquisition will involve the deployment of dynamite explosives (in uninhabited areas) and vibroseis (in built-up areas) that emit acoustic signals that are simultaneously recorded by geophones laid out on the terrain. The planned 3D acquisition is estimated to last a maximum period of up to 12 months to 3 years (comprising mobilisation, survey preparation, data acquisition and demobilisation).

The Display Centers are:

- Orhionmwon Local Government Area Headquarters, Abudu, Edo State;
- Ndokwa West Local Government Area Headquarters, Kwale, Delta State;
- Sapele Local Government Area Headquarters, Haddock Road Sapele, Delta State;
- Okpe Local Government Area Headquarters, Orerokpe, Delta State;
- Ethiope West Local Government Area Headquarters, Oghara Town, Delta State;
- Delta State Ministry of Environment, State Secretariat, Maryam Babangida Way, Asaba, Delta State;
- Edo State Ministry of Environment, State Secretariat, Benin City;
- Federal Ministry of Environment, Delta State Field Office, Asaba;
- Federal Ministry of Environment, Edo State Field Office, Benin City;
- Federal Ministry of Environment, Environmental Assessment Department, Environment House, Independence Way South, Central Business District, Abuja - F.C.T.
- www.ead.gov.ng

Duration of Display:

Date: 20th October - 17th November, 2026.
Time: 8:00 am - 4:00 pm Daily.

ALL COMMENTS SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE HONOURABLE MINISTER, FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT HEADQUARTERS, MABUSHI, ABUJA - FCT AND VIA info@ead.gov.ng ON OR BEFORE 24TH NOVEMBER, 2026.

SIGNED
PERMANENT SECRETARY
FOR: HONOURABLE MINISTER

World Report

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Tragedy as giant statue of Jesus crushes priest to death during service

A CHURCH service that began normally suddenly turned into a mourning scene in Ecuador after a giant wooden cross bearing a sculpture of Jesus Christ, fell and crushed the officiating Catholic priest to death.

The priest, whose name was given as Father Patricio Alfredo Sánchez Molinari, was conducting a Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro) Parish, located within the Central Vicariate of the Archdiocese of Guayaquil, when the incident occurred.

Disturbing footage circulating across social media platforms shows Father Sánchez standing at the altar during the liturgical service. Without warning, the large wall-mounted crucifix tilted forward and collapsed directly on the priest.

Parishioners and church staff at the scene immediately rushed to assist the clergy as he collapsed to the floor. Emergency medical personnel were also summoned to the parish, but Father Sánchez succumbed to the severe head injuries sustained from the impact.

The Archdiocese of Guayaquil released an official statement confirming the death of Father Sánchez on Saturday, October 17, expressing deep grief over the sudden loss and offering prayers for his parish community and family.

Local authorities and church officials are investigating the structural fixings that anchored the heavy crucifix to the church wall. Early reports indicated there is currently no evidence of foul play or deliberate tampering, though investigators are examining whether structural wear, aging mountings or improper installation contributed to the collapse.

But many people have been wondering how a firmly secured cross against the wall could fall precisely at the very spot the priest was standing.

The incidentwas a horrifying moment, not only for Catholic faithfuls but Christians round the world, who may have never heard of a crucifix falling off from its position.

Several dead, injured in major fire at Canada military base

SEVERAL people have been killed or injured following a fierce fire near a Canadian military base in Alberta, the nation's military has said.

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) said the full extent of the incident's impact was being assessed and that details of casualties and injuries would not be made public until that was complete.

Canadian Forces Base, Wainwright, where the fire broke out at about 16:00 local time (22:00 GMT) on Saturday, is one of the country's busiest military training bases.

It was reported that at least, seven people were killed and dozens more injured when a gas line or gas well was hit during a live-fire training exercise, citing unnamed military sources.

Defence Minister, David McGuinty, said the CAF and local authorities were managing the fire, describing the situation as "very active and delicate."

Canada's Prime Minister, Mark Carney, said his thoughts are with all the brave women and men affected.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), said Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton had declared a code orange, a disaster response protocol for responding to a high-casualty incident.

France wakes up to aftermath of violent protests

CITIES across France woke up yesterday to a devastated streets, smashed storefronts and burnt buildings as the aftermath of violent demonstrations against the rising cost of living that swept the country.

More than half-a-million people joined Saturday's nationwide protests as severalcities including Paris, Marseille, Bordeaux, Limoges and Nice,witnessed clashes between protesters and police, which resulted in mass looting of valuable properties and setting ablaze, others.

French Prime Minister, Sébastien Lecornu, condemned the extreme intensity of the violence, stressing that 1,200 people had been arrested and 150 police officers hurt.

A 17-year-old boy has his right hand blown off by a crowd-control grenade in the southern city of Saint-Etienne.

The widespread unrest followed weeks of students protests and came just six months ahead of Presidential elections.

The violence has drawn global headlines. Without evidence, in a post on social media, United States Vice President, JD Vance, blamed immigration and problems of assimilation for the unrest.

Saudi Arabia executes two Bangladeshis over sexual act inside Mecca mosque

SAUDI Arabia has executed two Bangladeshi nationals convicted of committing an act of indecency inside a mosque in the holy city of Makkah.

According to a report by Khaleej Times, the kingdom's Ministry of Interior disclosed this in a statement, identifying the executed individuals as Nazrul Islam Abdul Basir and Siti Akhtar.

The Ministry said that security authorities apprehended them following the incident, after which investigations were conducted and charges filed before the competent court.

The court subsequently found them guilty and sentenced them to death, citing the seriousness of the offence and the violation of the sanctity of the time and place where it occurred.

The ministry said the death sentences were imposed under ta'zir, a form of discretionary punishment under Islamic law, following the court's determination that the accused had committed the offence.

It added that the judgment became final after the competent authority upheld it. At the same time, a royal order was subsequently issued for the executions to be carried out in accordance with Sharia.



Smoke rises above the city following Ukrainian air attack on the oil terminal in St Petersburg on October

Ukrainian drone attack on Russia's St Petersburg kills one, hits energy sites

A MASSIVE Ukrainian drone attack on St Petersburg in Russia has left at least, one dead and five others injured, the city's governor, Alexandre Beglov said yesterday.

Beglov said firefighters were battling blazes at the St Petersburg oil terminal, the Ruchi oil depot and industrial warehouses in the Kolpino district south of the city.

The governor said several residential buildings were also hit while the attack disrupted flights at St Petersburg's main airport, one of the country's busiest, for safety reasons.

Russian e-commerce company, Ozon, said there was a fire at its logistics hub in St Petersburgwhilean internet company, VK, said that although its data centre in the Leningrad region had been attacked by drones, normal services are available to users.The governor of the Leningrad region surrounding St Petersburg, Alexander Drozdenko, said 145 drones had been shot down and about 20,000 people were without electricity following the drone raid.

Russia's state-run news agency, TASS said the attack was the largest on the region in the last four years.

Moscow's defence ministry said 1,015 Ukrainian drones were neutralised overnight.

In Ukraine, Russian forces struck residential buildings overnight, killing two people and injuring 12, including two children, said President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in a post on X (formerly Twitter) yesterday.

His words: "This morning, there was a strike on an agricultural enterprise in Volyn.All necessary services are working at the site.In total, over this past week, the Russians have attacked Ukraine with almost 2,700 attack drones, 1,700 aerial bombs and 66 missiles, most of them ballistic."

The attacks came after Zelenskyy said that Kyiv would resume hitting Russian refineries, insisting he was standing up for his war-torn country as support from the United States declined.

Zelenskyy told the British newspaper, the Financial Times this week that Kyiv was done with an energy ceasefire unilaterally declared by United States President Donald Trump and would resume strikes on Russia in retaliation for a wave of attacks.

Trump had announced an immediate energy ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine last week, but Zelenskyy said Moscow continued to violate the deal.

"Since the American President announced the energy ceasefire a week ago, Russia has deliberately attacked Ukraine's energy and oil and gas sectors 76 times. Last night alone, there were strikes on substations in the Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Khmelnytskyi and Odesa regions", he wrote in his X (formerly Twitter) yesterday.

Cameroon's opposition MRC elects first female President, Noah

CAMEROON'S main opposition - Cameroon Renaissance Movement (MRC),has elected a new party President, Tiriane Balbine Noah. She replaces Maurice Kamto and becomes the first woman to lead the party.

The MRC held its extraordinary elective congress at the weekend despite intense pressure put on authorities to ban the meeting.

Supporters gathered at the party headquarters in Yaoundé to elect their new leader and denounce the restrictions they faced.

"In Cameroon, things are done in such a way that everything becomes extraordinary. The MRC, a party that has been persecuted since its inception, is unfortunately not allowed to exercise its rights. So, today, we can only be pleased that this congress is taking place under good conditions and that we have been granted the authorization", the National Secretary in Charge of Party Reform, Joseph Emmanuel Ateba,told Africanews.

About 1,200 party delegates were ton ground to choose Kamto's successor after leading the party for 14 years before resigning last month.

Second Vice-President, Noah has served as interim President until last Saturday, when she ran for the post of the President unopposed after her only challenger withdrew.

"Kamto has trained people, great guardians like Noah, who served as Vice-President of MRC. Today, we are proud to make her our President", an MRC delegate,KuesbiMefo Thierrysaid.

Noah was elected with over 96 per cent of the votes. The result secures her a renewable five-year term and makes her the party's first female president.

"All the activists who have paid with their lives, their freedom, their safety and their commitment deserve recognition. Our conduct throughout this congress will be the finest political tribute we can pay to our former national president, a genuine democrat, a humanist and a man of peace", Noah said in a speech to the convention.

Kamto and his deputy stepped down in a bid to save the MRC amid suspicions that the government was attempting to dismantle the party.

As Noah begins her term, MRC is setting its sights on the 2027 local elections.

Firm offsets dialysis cost for patients in Lagos, Ibadan, Akure

By Ijeoma Nwanosike

AS the rising cost of dialysis places increasing pressure on families of patients with kidney failure, healthcare company Osiris Health has provided free haemodialysis sessions to patients in Lagos, Ibadan and Akure.

The sessions, held to commemorate World Heart Day, took place at the company's dialysis centres at R-Jolad Hospital, Gbagada, Lagos; Lad Hospital, Orita Challenge, Ibadan; and First Mercy Specialist Hospital, Gbogi, Akure.

Osiris Health said a single dialysis session costs between N50,000 and N80,000 in many private facilities, while most patients require two to three sessions weekly.

The company said the frequency of treatment could push the cost to about N1 million monthly, with many patients having little or no insurance coverage to offset the expense.

It said the financial burden was particularly severe because kidney failure often requires lifelong dialysis, making sustained access to treatment difficult for patients and their families.

Osiris Health estimated that 25 million Nigerians live with chronic kidney disease, noting that high blood pressure and diabetes, which are major drivers of heart disease, are also leading causes of chronic kidney disease in the country.

The company said heart disease remains the most common cause of death among people on dialysis, highlighting the close link between cardiovascular and kidney health.

Speaking on the initiative, Chief Executive Officer of Osiris Health, Ayoola Oladipupo, said the company was seeking to make dialysis more affordable in the cities where it operates while using its activities to create social impact.

Oladipupo said the company offered some of the lowest dialysis prices in the cities where it operates and was cheaper than many government hospitals.

Although Osiris Health is a for-profit organisation, he said it was driven by purpose and impact, adding that World Heart Day provided an opportunity to raise awareness about kidney disease while offering relief to affected families.

He said the company also conducts free blood pressure and blood sugar screenings in churches, mosques and markets around its dialysis centres as part of its preventive health initiatives.

Osiris Health currently has five hospital partners across Lagos, Ibadan, Akure, Warri and Ilorin and plans to establish 20 dialysis centres.

Experts task African countries on sustainable cleft care interventions

• NACLP wants FG to establish dental clinic in local councils

From Nkechi Onyedika-Ugoeze, Abuja

LEADING African cleft-care experts have called on governments to build sustainable health systems capable of providing comprehensive care for children with cleft lip and palate throughout their lives.

They said cleft care must move beyond isolated surgical interventions to a comprehensive model involving surgery, anaesthesia, nursing, nutrition, speech and language therapy, dentistry, orthodontics, psychosocial support and long-term follow-up.

The experts spoke at the 6th Biennial Congress of the Pan-African Association for Cleft Lip and Palate (PAACLIP), organised by the Nigerian Association for Cleft Lip and Palate (NACLP) in Abuja.

President of PAACLIP, Prof. Adeola Olusanya, said the ultimate objective of expanding access to cleft surgery should be to establish health systems capable of overcoming infrastructure, workforce and geographical challenges and delivering quality care to future generations.

She said the complexity of cleft conditions required multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary care, stressing that "our ultimate goal must be longevity."

Olusanya said the congress also marked a new phase in which African national cleft associations would host PAACLIP conferences, strengthening locally led solutions and giving the continent a stronger voice in global cleft-care advocacy.

President of NACLP, Dr Seidu Bello, urged the Federal Government to establish at least one community dental clinic in each of the country's 774 local councils.

He said cleft lip and palate and other major oral diseases should be covered under the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) framework to reduce financial barriers to treatment.

Bello said the proposed clinics could be staffed by dental auxiliaries, including dental surgery assistants and dental therapists, to provide oral-health education, preventive services, scaling and polishing, early detection and referral of cases requiring specialist care.

"This would be a practical way of bringing oral health to the doorsteps of ordinary Nigerians," he said.

He also called for a review of the structure of oral healthcare within the Federal Ministry of Health, including strengthening the Dentistry Division as an Oral Health Division to provide broader coordination of cleft conditions, dental diseases, noma and other oral-health challenges.

Bello acknowledged the contribution of Smile Train and other partners to expanding cleft care and developing local capacity in Nigeria.

Meanwhile, the Federal Government has pledged to integrate cleft care into Nigeria's mainstream health system, saying thousands of children born with the condition still face barriers to surgery, speech therapy, orthodontic care, nutrition and psychosocial support.

Minister of State for Health, Dr Adekunle Salako, said cleft surgery should no longer be treated as an act of charity but as a routine component of the national health system.

"Behind every number is a child," Salako said, stressing the need to ensure affected children can eat, speak, attend school and live with dignity and confidence.

He said programmes supported by Smile Train in Nigeria had contributed to 45,786 cleft surgeries, 1,853 speech therapy interventions, 2,433 orthodontic treatments and 2,033 nutrition interventions since the first free cleft surgery under the programme was performed at Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Zaria, in 2002.



Dr Olusanya

Salako said the next phase should focus on integrating cleft services into existing government health structures rather than creating parallel systems.

He said the Federal Ministry of Health would work with professional associations, health insurance institutions and development partners to establish a defined package of comprehensive cleft care for vulnerable children, particularly those under five.

The package, he said, should cover surgery, speech therapy, orthodontics, nutrition and follow-up services.

'Self-medication, over-the-counter drugs alter early detection of ailments'

By Victoria Nwachukwu

THE Association of Medical Officers of Health in Lagos has warned that reliance on self-medication and over-the-counter drugs could delay early detection and appropriate treatment of health conditions.

Chairman of the association, Dr Adeleke Awolesi, urged Nigerians to make primary healthcare centres (PHCs) their first point of contact for health concerns rather than relying on pharmacies, patent medicine vendors or self-medication.

He spoke during the second edition of Wellness Diary Live, a health webinar organised by Brand Multimedia Communication Network, themed "Primary Health Care and Everyday Wellness: Why Community Health Matters."

Awolesi, who is a Medical Officer of Health in Lagos State, said PHCs were designed to provide accessible and affordable essential health services, including prevention, health education, early detection, immunisation, maternal and child healthcare, treatment of minor ailments and referral of cases requiring higher-level care.

He said bypassing PHCs for over-the-counter medication could undermine early detection and appropriate treatment.

Awolesi also identified declining immunisation coverage and vaccine hesitancy in Lagos as concerns requiring stronger community engagement. He urged parents to ensure their children received vaccines according to the recommended schedule and to seek reliable medical information when confronted with vaccine-related misconceptions.



He called for greater community ownership of primary healthcare, saying traditional and community leaders, religious organisations, civil society groups and other community-based institutions should support preventive healthcare and encourage residents to use available PHC services.

He also urged traditional birth attendants to promptly refer pregnant women requiring skilled medical attention, particularly where complications could develop.

Awolesi called for greater government investment in PHC infrastructure and services, stressing that strengthening primary healthcare was critical to improving access and health outcomes.

Earlier, the Convener of Wellness Diary Live, Aderayo Olaiya, said primary healthcare should form part of everyday wellness rather than being discussed only during outbreaks or major health crises.

Olaiya said preventive care, immunisation, early detection and appropriate treatment should be part of routine healthcare, adding that stronger communication between health professionals and the public was needed to bridge information gaps.

Students receive asthma, lung health training

By Isaac Taiwo

ABOUT 20 secondary school students in Lagos have received training on asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and general lung health as part of activities marking World Lung Day.

The programme, held at Anthony Secondary School, Anthony, Lagos, was organised by Equitable Respiratory Health in Africa (EQUI-RESP. AFRICA), in partnership with the Centre for 21st Century Issues and Education District II, Lagos State.

The organisers said early education could help students recognise respiratory conditions, reduce stigma, support peers living with asthma and make informed choices to protect their lungs.

Speaking at the event, Executive Director, Centre for 21st Century Issues, Titilope Akose, said the initiative was designed to improve awareness of respiratory diseases among young people and other stakeholders.

Akose said the programme had also been extended to nurses, while plans were underway to train media practitioners and other stakeholders on respiratory health.

She said a key lesson for the students was how to respond when someone suffers an asthma attack, including providing basic first aid before professional medical assistance arrives.

According to her, teachers also needed such knowledge because they were usually the adults closest to students during school hours.

"The take-home for the students is for them to know what to do when they see anyone under asthma attack, such as the first aid they need to give to the victim," she said.

Akose said the organisers planned to extend the programme to other education districts in Lagos State, subject to funding.

She also called for greater awareness of the Child Rights Law of Lagos State, saying children, parents and teachers needed to understand children's rights and available channels for seeking protection.

Co-Principal Investigator, EQUI-RESP. AFRICA project, Prof. Obianuju Ozoh, said the project was funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), United Kingdom, through the University of Edinburgh and the University of Lagos.

Ozoh, of the College of Medicine, University of Lagos, said community engagement and stakeholder involvement were key components of the project.

She said the students were taught about the functions of the lungs, factors that could damage them and measures to maintain good respiratory health.

REA's mini-grids:

Ensuring electricity access translates into rural prosperity

Nigeria's expanding network of renewable energy projects is beginning to connect electricity supply with agricultural processing, transportation and small businesses. But the real measure of success will be whether communities can afford the power, sustain the businesses it enables and generate enough income to keep the systems running.
***KINGSLEY JEREMIAH** reports.*



Managing Director/CEO, Rural Electrification Agency (REA), Abba Aliyu (left); His Royal Highness, Sale Muhammadu Umar, Mai Kaltungo; Minister of Power, Joseph Tegbe;Gombe State Governor, Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya and the Project Developer/Managing Director of Mids Dynamics Limited, Khalid Mohammed, at the commissioning of a IMW mini-grid and groundbreaking for a 16 MW interconnected mini-grid in Gombe State at the weekend.

NIGERIA'S electricity crisis is not simply a problem of insufficient generation. It is also a problem of unreliable supply, ageing infrastructure, transmission constraints and financial weaknesses that prevent available electricity from consistently reaching consumers.

The country has more than 13,000 megawatts (MW) of installed generation capacity, but actual output has frequently remained far below that level. Gas supply constraints, infrastructure failures, and transmission bottlenecks have widened the gap between installed capacity and electricity delivered to consumers. Distribution losses, inadequate metering and weak revenue collection further complicate the sector's ability to provide reliable and financially sustainable electricity.

For rural businesses and agro-processors, these weaknesses translate into higher operating costs, lost production time and limited opportunities to expand. Farmers may have sufficient produce to support local processing industries, but unreliable electricity can make the cost of operating machinery commercially prohibitive.

It is against this background that decentralised renewable energy is gaining importance in Nigeria's electricity-access strategy. Rather than relying exclusively on improvements to the national grid, the Federal Government is expanding mini-grids and other distributed energy systems to serve communities where conventional electricity supply remains inadequate.

The Rural Electrification Agency (REA), the Federal Government's implementing agency under the Federal Ministry of Power, is mandated to electrify unserved and underserved communities to catalyse economic growth and improve quality of life. The agency's establishment is provided for under Section 127 of the Electricity Act 2023, while Sections 128 and 129 outline its objectives and functions, including promoting affordable, sustainable and reliable electricity access.

The agency's challenge is to demonstrate that expanding electricity access can do more than increase the number of connections. Its recently commissioned 1MW solar mini-grid, equipped with 2.4 megawatt-hours (MWh) of battery storage in Tallasse, Balanga Local Government Area of Gombe State, offers an opportunity to examine the economic proposition.

According to reports on the commissioning and the REA's project information, the intervention includes electric tricycles, a groundnut oil processing plant, a modular electric rice mill and electric flour-grinding machines. The design links electricity supply to agricultural processing, transportation and small-scale enterprise.

However, the economic significance of these investments will depend on what happens after commissioning. Installed equipment does not automatically translate into higher incomes, new jobs or improved agricultural productivity. Those outcomes depend on affordability, utilisation, market demand and the ability to maintain the infrastructure.

From electricity access to productivity

THE Federal Government's approach, as outlined in the REA's account of the Balanga project, is to position electricity as an economic resource rather than an end.

Minister of Power, Joseph Olasunkanmi Tegbe, described the intervention as an expression of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's approach to infrastructure investment, arguing that power supply should support livelihoods, enterprise and local economic activity.

"President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has been very clear that infrastructure must ultimately improve the lives and livelihoods of Nigerians. What we are commissioning in Balanga reflects that philosophy," Tegbe said.

He added that the objective extended beyond generating one megawatt of electricity to creating an energy platform for farmers, businesses and transportation operators.

The economic logic is straightforward. A farmer who sells raw groundnuts may capture only part of the value generated along the agricultural supply chain. Local processing could create opportunities to produce groundnut oil and retain more value within the community. Similarly, a rice mill could allow farmers and traders to process paddy closer to production centres, potentially reducing transportation costs and improving access to processed products.

Electric grinding machines could support small businesses serving households and food vendors, while electric tricycles could improve movement between farms, processing facilities and markets.

Tegbe specifically highlighted these productive uses, arguing that electricity should be assessed by its contribution to markets, jobs and prosperity rather than by megawatts alone.

Yet the economic benefits remain conditional. A processing plant cannot improve farmers' earnings if it operates below capacity, charges unaffordable fees or lacks sufficient raw materials. A rice mill will not necessarily be competitive if existing processors offer lower prices or better services.

> "For us in Gombe State, this project is significant because it connects energy directly to the economic strengths of our people. Balanga is an agricultural community," Yahaya said.

The REA must therefore establish whether the equipment is being used regularly, how much produce is processed and whether participating farmers and business operators earn more than they did before the intervention.

Battery storage and the cost of reliability

THE inclusion of 2.4MWh of battery storage addresses another major constraint on the economic value of electricity: reliability.

For businesses, interruptions can delay production, increase operating costs and undermine delivery schedules. Battery storage can help balance renewable generation with demand and provide electricity when solar output falls, although its actual contribution depends on system configuration, demand patterns and operating arrangements.

The distinction between generation capacity and storage capacity is important. The mini-grid's 1MW rating represents power output, while 2.4MWh measures the amount of energy the battery can store. The storage capacity alone does not establish how many hours the community will receive uninterrupted electricity.

According to REA's Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Abba Abubakar Aliyu, the agency is increasingly incorporating storage, monitoring technology, productive-use equipment and sustainable operating models into its interventions.

"Access without reliability limits economic impact," Aliyu said, adding that the agency was seeking to build electricity ecosystems rather than simply install power plants.

His position reflects an important policy consideration: the commercial value of electricity depends not only on whether it is available, but also on whether it is dependable and affordable.

If tariffs are too high, small businesses may be unable to operate profitably. If tariffs fail to cover operating and maintenance costs, mini-grid operators may struggle to sustain supply over time. Batteries degrade, equipment requires servicing and distribution networks need maintenance.

The REA will therefore need to demonstrate that the Balanga system can deliver reliable electricity while remaining financially sustainable for both operators and consumers, especially through initiatives like Renewable Energy Service Company.

A national programme, but different stages of delivery

THE Balanga commissioning forms part of a wider pipeline of distributed renewable energy investments across Nigeria. According to the REA's project information supplied for this report, recent interventions span Lagos, Adamawa, Kebbi, Rivers, Plateau, Yobe, the Federal Capital Territory, Kwara and Oyo states.

In June, the agency commissioned a 505-kilowatt-peak (kWp) interconnected solar mini-grid in Epe, Lagos State, intended to serve five communities and their productive users.

In July, the Federal Government broke ground on 39 mini-grids in Adamawa State, with a reported combined capacity of nearly 27MW. The projects included the 10MW Kofare, 2.6MW Saminaka and 890kW Mbamba interconnected mini-grids. The agency also reported a 3.5MW intervention in Kebbi State.

The programme subsequently included approximately 11.9MWp of renewable energy infrastructure in Rivers State and the groundbreaking of a 1.5MW interconnected mini-grid in Pankshin, Plateau State.

In August, the REA reported the groundbreaking of approximately 13.92MWp of interconnected hybrid solar projects across major residential and commercial load centres in Yobe State.

In September, the Federal Government commissioned a solar-hybrid power plant at Yakubu Gowon University in Abuja and the 581kWp Oke-Oyi interconnected mini-grid in Kwara State. The project information supplied by the agency puts the university plant's capacity at 3MW.

In October, the REA reported the groundbreaking of a 17.7MW interconnected mini-grid project in Ibadan, Oyo State, designed to improve electricity supply to five communities and support additional commercial and industrial activity.

These developments indicate an expanding distributed-energy programme, but their stages of delivery must be distinguished. Projects under construction are not equivalent to completed facilities, while commissioning alone does not establish sustained performance or economic impact.

The capacities also cover different technologies and customer categories, making direct comparisons difficult without consistent data on customers served, electricity delivered, project costs and utilisation.

Gombe's partnership and sustainability challenge

GOMBE State Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya described the Balanga project as an outcome of cooperation between the state government and the Federal Government through the REA.

"For us in Gombe State, this project is significant because it connects energy directly to the economic strengths of our people. Balanga is an agricultural community," Yahaya said.

He argued that combining electricity with rice milling, groundnut processing, flour production and electric mobility could strengthen the local economy rather than merely provide lighting.

The governor also pointed to previous collaboration between the state government and the REA, including the 1MW solar mini-grid at Talasse in Balanga, renewable energy interventions in Filiya and Shongom, and the hybrid renewable-energy project around Balanga Dam.

These initiatives indicate that the state's approach extends beyond a single project. Nevertheless, the scale of the economic benefits will depend on how well electricity infrastructure is integrated with local business needs.

The availability of power does not automatically resolve constraints such as limited working capital, insufficient storage, weak market access or inadequate transport links. Agricultural processors need dependable supplies of raw materials and buyers for finished products. Entrepreneurs may also require financing, technical training and access to spare parts.

These complementary needs matter because public investment in electricity and machinery can create opportunities, but it cannot substitute for viable business operations.

Aliyu's emphasis on measuring what happens after electricity arrives is therefore an important starting point. The next step is to translate that principle into a transparent system for tracking outcomes.

For Balanga, useful indicators would include electricity supplied, customer numbers, outage frequency, productive equipment utilisation, processing volumes, operating costs, tariff levels, jobs created and changes in business revenue. Establishing a baseline and publishing periodic results would help determine whether the project is generating benefits that can be sustained and replicated elsewhere.

The real measure of success

THE Federal Government's distributed renewable energy strategy, including the Distributed Access through Renewable Energy Scale-up (DARES) programme and complementary REA interventions, seeks to expand electricity access while encouraging investment in the distributed-energy market.

Mini-grids can play an important role where the national grid is inadequate, but they cannot independently resolve Nigeria's wider generation, transmission, distribution and financial challenges. Their greatest value will come from complementing improvements to the national power system while providing reliable electricity to underserved communities.

Read the remaining story on www.guardian.ng

42 Bauchi minority ethnic groups demand fair deal

From **Rauf Oyewole**, Bauchi

NO fewer than 42 minority ethnic groups in Bauchi State, under the aegis of the Conference of Autochthonous Ethnic Nationalities Community Development Association (CONAECDA), have demanded political relevance and a fair deal in the state's governance.

Speaking during a mobilisation for political development and unity in Toro Local Council Area, the council's branch said the 42 ethnic nationalities account for over 60 per cent of the population of the area but have faced long-standing marginalisation.

The State Chairman, Samuel Haruna, urged the leaders of different tribes in Toro to be wary of exploitation ahead of the 2027 general elections, calling for stronger unity among minority groups to avoid further marginalisation in education, politics and territorial development.

He further urged them to resist inducement with petty commodities for votes, stating that the minority groups in the state have long been sidelined from major political positions.

APC chieftain dumps party as el-Rufai's ex-ally quits ADC in Kaduna

From **Bala Yahaya**, Minna

A CHIEFTAIN of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and former Commissioner for Information, Culture and Tourism in Niger State, Mr Jonathan Vatsa, has dumped the party.

Vatsa was appointed Special Adviser on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) by Governor Umaru Bago in 2023, and later Special Adviser on Media and Communication, before he was dropped in December 2025.

In another development, a former chieftain of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Muhammad Sa'idu, has declared the party dead in Kaduna State after his reported defection with over 200,000 card-carrying members to the All Progressives Congress (APC).

A former political ally of former Governor Nasir el-Rufai and Commissioner of Finance in the last administration, Sai'du spoke at a ceremony organised in Zaria over the weekend to receive ADC defectors.

However, in a letter of resignation addressed to the APC Chairman of GuluAnguwa-Gulu Vatsa ward in Lapai Local Council Area, Vatsa said he had quit the party on personal grounds after consulting with his family, friends and political associates.

Atiku demands police officers' pay review, status of Police Exit Bill

FORMER Vice President Atiku Abubakar has accused President Bola Tinubu of abandoning retired police officers to hunger, illness and humiliation while serving officers draw down their pension savings to feed their families.

The African Democratic Congress (ADC) presidential candidate demanded an immediate answer on the Police Exit Bill and an urgent salary review for serving officers, following the pay increase approved for members of the Armed Forces.

In a statement by the Director of Strategic Communication of the ADC Presidential Campaign Council, Phrank-Shaibu, Atiku recalled how retired police officers stood at the gates of the National Assembly with their wives and children, saying, "Some of those children carried placards pleading for a law that could help their parents survive."

According to him, "men and women who answered Nigeria's call for decades are now waiting outside its legislature for Nigeria to answer theirs. Bola Tinubu should be ashamed that it has come to this."

Disclosing that a retired assistant superintendent of police reported a monthly pension of N29,000, Atiku queried what one could buy with N29,000, even as over 120 members of his association of retired officers have died in the last three years.

Consequently, he urged the president to "sit with these officers, look them in the eye, tell them how you expect them to live."

Citing the harrowing living conditions of many others in similar situations, Atiku said no former officer should be discovered in distress before Nigeria remembers what it owes her.

According to him, "Tinubu made life expensive, and even the officers he sends to confront armed criminals are being pushed into poverty.

"We ask them to risk their lives for Nigeria while they wonder how to feed their families and whether their country will stand by them when their service ends. That is a disgrace.

He noted that the Police Exit Bill was sent to the president in March, with Section 58 of the Constitution stipulating 30 days to signify or withhold assent, regretting that the president has rather given the retired officers months of silence instead.

Among others, he urged the National Assembly to publish the bill's formal status, demand an explanation for the delay and determine the constitutional steps now available.



Wife of The African Church Primate, Dorcas Abbe (left); Primate Julius Osayande Abbe; founder of Southwestern University, Babatunde Odufuwa; and his wife, Ibidun Odufuwa, during Abbe's presentation of the Bible at Odufuwa's 70th birthday service at The African Church Cathedral, Salem, in Lagos over the weekend.

Alia chides Wike over FAAC comment as PDP demands facts

- Court orders disclose of Benue revenue, others since 2023

From **Adamu Abuh** and **Andrew Oota**, Abuja

AGAINST the backdrop of remarks by the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, that Benue State, like others, has received huge monthly federal allocations, Governor Hyacinth Alia has warned that the state is not a commodity to be traded in private political negotiations.

The Governor also stated that the political future of the state would be determined by Benue people and not the FCT minister who, while campaigning for President Bola Tinubu, had called on state governors to execute physical projects that justify their federal allocations and the monies under their control.

However, a Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court in Maitama, Abuja, has ordered Benue State Governor, Hyacinth Alia, to disclose the state's financial records from June 2023 to date, including revenues, loans, government contracts and other sources of public funding.

The ruling by Justice Hamza Mu'azu followed a suit by a former governorship aspirant of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) and indigene of Vandeikya Local Council Area, Joseph Waya.

Also, the state's chapter of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) has urged Alia to explain his government's silence to Wike's claim that Benue now receives about N30 billion monthly from the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC).

In a statement yesterday, the state PDP Publicity Secretary, Bright Antyo, queried why the state government had yet to publicly respond to Wike's claim, demanding that Alia either dispute the figures or provide details of the revenue and expenditure, particularly since the removal of the fuel subsidy, had been utilised.

Responding to Wike, the Special Assistant to the Governor on Social Media Communications, Asortar James, stated in a post that "Benue is not Rivers State and Governor Alia is not Fubara."

He added: "The political circumstances of Rivers State cannot automatically become a template for Benue. Every state has its own political realities, interests and democratic mandate.

"No political heavyweight, regardless of position or connections, should presume that Benue's leadership can be determined through private arrangements."

Meanwhile, Waya had accused the state government of failing to avail him of comprehensive details of the state's revenue and expenditure requested under the Freedom of Information on September 8, 2025.

However, the court affirmed Waya's standing to request the information and ordered compliance.

Federal government approves new train coaches, security measures

- Charges rail contractors on durable, sustainable projects

From **Joke Falaju**, Abuja

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu has approved additional train coaches and security equipment to boost railway services and tackle banditry, kidnapping and vandalism.

The items approved include more coaches to increase passenger and freight capacity, and surveillance systems to secure rail infrastructure and protect passengers, the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Funso Adebiyi, disclosed over the weekend.

Adebiyi, who spoke during an inspection tour of the Kano-Maradi railway project, said the ministry was also training railway workers to operate and maintain the new coaches upon delivery.

Stating that insecurity remains a major challenge, he noted that attacks on rail infrastructure disrupt operations, endanger lives and raise maintenance costs.

Meanwhile, the federal government has charged the railway project contractors across the country to ensure quality, durability and sustainability, in line with international best practices.

The government further tasked the contractors to provide comprehensive local capacity building of young Nigerian engineers before handing over rail and terminal infrastructure projects to the Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC).

Adebiyi rejected the installation of short-life consumables, mandating a minimum of three-year lifespan for bulbs and light fittings with customised lamp holders and mobile motorised equipment, to facilitate easy local replacement.

He also directed contractors to provide mechanised cleaning equipment for the regular maintenance of terminal glass structures, considering thermal expansion and contraction, and cautioned against over-reliance on diesel generators and costly, unsustainable energy solutions.

To eliminate technical dependence on foreign contractors and promote continuity, accountability and career progression, Adebiyi directed the NRC Managing Director, Dr Kayode Opeifa, to assemble a team of young, qualified engineers for a month-long hands-on training programme on facility operations, replacement of consumables and maintenance procedures.

'Gas market needs stronger coordination to attract investment'

By **Waliat Musa**

A STRONGER coordination in regulation, infrastructure, market design and financing is imperative to build a liquid, creditworthy and investable domestic gas market by 2028, the co-founder and Chief Executive Officer, Audrey Joe-Ezigbo, Falcon Corporation Limited, has said.

Joe-Ezigbo spoke in Lagos, where she said Nigeria had established much of the policy and regulatory framework needed to develop its domestic gas market.

However, she stressed that the next phase would depend on implementation, reliable gas delivery, commercial discipline and investor confidence.

She cited the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA), the evolving fiscal regime, NNPC's Gas Master Plan 2026, the Domestic Base Price framework and the planned transition to a willing-buyer, willing-seller market in September 2028 as key building blocks.

Firm signs development pact with Gombe communities

By **Tobi Awodipe**

ASHAKA Cement Limited has signed five-year Community Development Agreements (CDAs) with Funakaye and Maiganga communities in Funakaye and Akko local council areas of Gombe State on infrastructure, education, healthcare and economic empowerment interventions.

The agreements, which cover 2026 to 2030, will provide a framework for the company's development projects in its host communities, including agriculture, road rehabilitation, water supply, employment and security.

Speaking at the ceremony in Gombe, Ashaka Cement's Managing Director, Ibrahim Aminu, listed the intervention areas to include agricultural support, youth and women empowerment, education sponsorship, solar-powered boreholes, road rehabilitation, and the construction of schools and clinics across the affected communities.

He also disclosed that the parent company, HBM Nigeria Plc, has commenced a major expansion programme.

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CAF Inter-Club Competitions

Champions League: Rangers beat MC Alger 2-0, inch close to group stage

• El-Kanemi walk tight rope in Confederation Cup

By Christian Okpara

ENUGU Rangers, yesterday, recorded an impressive 2-0 victory over Algeria's MC Alger to raise hopes of a passage to the group stage of the CAF Champions League. But their counterparts, El-Kanemi Warriors had a tough day in Ikenne, where they managed a 2-2 draw with visiting Raja Casablanca of Morocco in the CAF Confederation Cup.

Rangers knew that they needed a good result to make the second leg easier for their fans and they went about the job with the type of determination always associated with the Flying Antelopes.

Despite playing with a man down for most of the game, Rangers kept knocking on the Algerians' door until they found the opening late into the tie.

The second qualifying round game at the MKO Abiola Sports Complex, Abeokuta, Ogun State, saw Super Eagles' defender, Kenneth Igboke, opening scores in the 81st minute from the penalty spot, and James Eno found the back of the net a few minutes later to help the Flying Antelopes to a 2-0 win going into the second leg.

Winners over two legs between both teams will qualify for the lucrative group stage of the CAF Champions League.



Enugu Rangers defeated MC Alger 2-0 in Abeokuta yesterday to set the stage for a decisive second leg in Algeria next weekend.

Expectations high as National Open Judo Championships returns to Umuahia

From Gordi Udeaja, Umuahia

ATHLETES, their officials and other stakeholders, who have been in training for a while are high on expectations ahead of the return of the National Open Senior Judo Championships.

The championships is coming back after years of inactivity, bringing together some of Nigeria's top judokas for a six-day competition aimed at revitalising the sport and fostering unity among stakeholders.

Organised by the Nigeria Judo Federation (NJF) in collaboration with the Abia State Government, the championships will hold at the Umuahia Township Stadium from October 31 to November 5, 2026.

Lagos youths relish inspiring experience at Elevate Basketball Clinic

By Eniola Daniel

FOR the more than 150 young basketball enthusiasts that gathered at the Rowe Park Sports Complex in Yaba, Lagos, the third edition of the Elevate Basketball Clinic, a grassroots initiative designed to develop sporting talent while promoting education and life skills among children, was the beginning of a trip to the biggets level of the game.

Organised by United States-based basketball enthusiast and philanthropist Akinwande Oshodi in partnership with the Lagos State Basketball Association, the one-day clinic attracted boys and girls aged between 10 and 16 from different parts of Lagos State. Participants underwent intensive training sessions focusing on fundamental basketball techniques, teamwork, discipline and personal development.

For many of the young participants, the clinic was a valuable opportunity to improve their skills and strengthen their ambitions of pursuing careers in basketball.

2026 Youth Olympic Games

Kuti, 14 other African table tennis stars set to sparkle

By Daniel Akinola

NIGERIA'S youth prodigy, Mathew Kuti and 14 other African youngsters are on the line to show their prowess in table tennis at the first Olympic event ever to be staged on African soil. The 15 young table tennis talents have earned places at the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026 in Senegal.

The athletes are among the 64 players selected to compete in the table tennis event, which will be held from October 31 to November 5 during the Games, scheduled for October 31 to November 13, 2026, in Dakar.

The table tennis competition will feature athletes from 41 National Olympic Committees (NOCs) spanning five continents, with 32 boys and 32 girls battling for honours in what promises to be a landmark event for the sport and the continent.

Dakar 2026 will feature three table tennis medal events: boys' singles, girls' singles and mixed doubles. The singles competitions will each comprise 32 athletes, while 23 NOCs will contest the mixed doubles event. Every mixed doubles pair will consist of players who are already entered in the singles events, creating a demanding schedule for many competitors.

WAFU B U-17 AFCON Qualifier

'NFF must address decline in youth football to arrest fallen standard'

• Again, Golden Eaglets fail to qualify for U-17 AFCON
• Falconets stumble in FIFA U-17 World Cup

By Christian Okpara

FOR the third consecutive time, Nigeria will not be at the CAF U-17 boys' Africa Cup of Nations following the elimination of the Golden Eaglets at the WAFU B elimination championship. This means that for the third consecutive edition, Nigerian youngsters will not play at the FIFA U-17 World Cup, where future stars are displayed for all the clubs and other stakeholders to take note off.

At the WAFU B Championship holding in Burkina Faso, Nigeria was eliminated from the race at the group stage after holding Cote d'Ivoire to a 1-1 draw in their last group game. The draw came after a 1-2 loss to Niger Republic in their opening game on Wednesday.

Thus, the Golden Eaglets finished third in Group B, which was not enough to take the team to the semifinals and a shot at qualifying for the African U-17 AFCON.

Speaking on the latest "calamity" to befall Nigerian football, a former Super Eagles star, Emeka Ezeugo, said the country will continue to face such disastrous results until the Federal Government realises that patronage and corruption is killing the game.

He said: "Stakeholders must come together to rescue the game from scavengers feeding fat on it instead of proffering ideas for football development.



Nigeria drew 1-1 with Cote d'Ivoire on Saturday to crash out of the WAFU B U-17 AFCON qualifying competition in the group stage.

Catholic golfers' second Marian Classic holds October 23

By Christian Okpara

SOME of the top golfers from the Catholic community will gather at the Lakowe Lakes Golf and Country Club, Lagos, on October 23 to vie for honours at the second edition of the Marian Classic tournamewnt, the organisers have said.

Organised by the Catholic Golfers Association of Nigeria, the tournament, which is open to golfers across the country, seeks to bring together Catholic golfers and players from diverse backgrounds, fostering fellowship, unity and networking through the game of golf.

According to the chairman of the Organizing Committee, Sir Emmanuel Okene, this year's tournament would, for the first time, honour a departed priest, Rev. Fr. Anthony Mario Ozele of the Catholic Diocese of Warri, who recently passed away.

The Marian Classic Tournament is expected to provide an avenue for sporting excellence, social engagement and the promotion of the Catholic faith.

Okene said: "As we tee off for this year's Marian Classic Tournament, we are coming together as a community to honour a shepherd we dearly miss — the late Fr. Mario Ozele. Fr. Mario showed us the true meaning of authentic evangelization."

Dubois eyes Usyk's belts after demolishing Wardley

Olaniyan blow out Garver in two rounds

DANIEL Dubois wants a trilogy fight with Oleksandr Usyk following his destructive coming-of-age victory over Fabio Wardley at The O2 Arena on Saturday.

Dubois dominated their rematch from the moment he floored Wardley after just 17 seconds and referee Steve Gray waved off the contest in the second round as the underdog continued to absorb heavy punishment.

It was a performance that elevates Dubois to the pinnacle of the heavyweight division and now the WBO world champion is eager to avenge his two losses to Usyk in the belief he has developed the tools to defeat the Ukrainian great.

Usyk relinquished the WBC, WBA and IBF belts soon after labouring to a late stoppage over kickboxer Rico Verhoeven in May but is fighting on, with promoter Frank Warren ready to "get him back into the equation".



Dubois knocked out Wardley in the second of their 10-round bout at the weekend.

Solution

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'NFF must address decline in youth football to arrest fallen standard' /39



Making a sham of 2027

BUBA Galadima, outspoken chieftain of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), drew attention to the development whereby opposition candidates were being paid off to drop their 2027 electoral ambition. He alleged that the candidates of other parties were bought with huge sums to step down for the candidates of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

According to him, the APC was buying up opposition candidates at state and federal levels with cash sums ranging from N50 million to 200 million, together with vehicles, to forfeit their tickets for 2027 elections. He spoke on October 7, 2026, on *Arise* Television's Prime Time programme. Galadima's whistleblowing sounded like some fiction at first, but with time, it began to make some sense.

Just days after, the candidates of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), for the House of Representatives and Senate in the Federal Capital Territory, FCT, stepped down for APC candidates at a ceremony organised by the FCT Minister, Nyesom Wike. The candidates are; Gomna Stephen Gashe (Abaji/Gwagwalada/Kwali/Kuje), Ahmed Dogara Jacob (Municipal/Bwari), and Angulu Bako (Senate).

Speaking at his Rainbow Coalition meeting, Wike, the sole administrator of PDP, boasted that he was willing to concede the FCT National Assembly seats to APC because President Bola Tinubu resides in the territory. Wike called himself the "commander of field operations" of Tinubu's re-election campaign in FCT, and said members of his coalition and APC were working towards a common presidential objective.

Hear him: "Ordinarily, as the national leader of the PDP, I should have told them to allow me to take one. But because the president resides here (FCT), he lives here. I don't want to share anything with the president. Take senator and the two House of Representatives seats. But in my state (Rivers), I will take small." Then the PDP candidates pledged their loyalty to Wike and promised to abandon their tickets.

Before the primaries, aspirants belonging to the same party are allowed to negotiate and decide who may step down, on the basis of electoral strength and capacity to win the primary and also the main election. The leadership of a party could take it upon itself to broker such negotiation. But after parties have submitted names of candidates to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), it is not democratically decent to have candidates of one party openly declare their support for rival candidates of another party.

Wike's open infractions send wrong signals about what democracy is not. He has arrogated to himself the power to field candidates for electoral officers. That power belongs to the political party and was not intended for an individual to exercise. Where is the NWC and the national executives of Wike's PDP, where crucial party decisions are ratified? Where are the judges that give judgments in favour of one-man rule against the larger PDP? When this democracy enters recession, let it be clear that those who enabled Wike are responsible. It is not part of the rules for one man to hijack a political party, to dispense favours to friends and punishment to foes. That's not the intention of the party system.

INEC's party membership trap



INEC Chairman, Prof. Joash Amupitan

Section 77 of the Electoral Act requires parties to maintain a digital and physical register of members. They are to submit the registers to INEC at least 21 days before primaries. It used to be 30 days. Due to instabilities in parties, some had to rush to meet the 21-days deadline. Only APC made it in record time and seamlessly. Penalties for failure to comply within time could disqualify a party from fielding candidates.

There is a contention that mischief was intended in the amendment of Section 77; that it was deliberately crafted to put hurdles in the way of opposition parties and their candidates. In 2023, there was room for aspirants who lose in party primaries to shop for tickets in other parties. The 2026 Electoral Act forecloses that movement if not done within stipulated time. In 2023, the candidate of the Labour Party (LP), Peter Obi, picked the LP ticket in a last-minute arrangement after PDP was out of his reach. The LP came third in that election despite reported electoral manipulations and glitches. Since then, every effort in the books, including this amendment, have been considered to checkmate Obi and the opposition in 2027.

When the African Democratic Congress (ADC), began to gain ground in 2025, it was alleged that bookmakers in the ruling party envisaged Atiku Abubakar to win the ticket of the party in a primary dictated by market forces. They reckoned that as Obi did in 2023, he was likely to pitch tent with another party. The changes inserted in Section 77 were to frustrate aspirants from running around for any available ticket. If Obi had remained in ADC, he would have had no chance to pick the ticket of NDC. Obi escaped the trap.

But a good number of others did not. The case of Ladi Adebutu of PDP Ogun, Isa Pantami PDP Gombe and Aminu Abdussalam Gwaro of Kano NDC are outstanding. They failed to make INEC's list of cleared candidates. These are some of the curiosities INEC will have to untie before the final list of candidates is published.

Before then, Nigerians are wondering what may have gone wrong with the candidates when it is clear that their parties met the deadlines. In the case of Adebutu, he had been with the PDP for many years and is not known to have abandoned the party. He was the party's governorship flagbearer in 2023, where he polled 262,383, against Governor Dapo Abiodun's 272, 298 votes. That margin gives an idea of how formidable Adebutu is. So, what went wrong?

It is curious that Adebutu, Pantami and Gwarzo, among other cases, are strong contenders with good prospects in their states. Adebutu's campaign team has blamed APC desperation for his ouster. Their exclusion is suspicious, but INEC has given them 14 days (October 24) to challenge its decision, which it said was based on a Supreme Court judgment in INEC v. Zenith Labour Party, Appeal No. SC/CV/495/2026, delivered on September 24, 2026.

The Supreme Court ruled that:

"Section 77(5) provides that only members whose names appear on a political party's membership register submitted to INEC at least 21 days before a primary, congress or convention can participate in the exercise.

"Section 77(6) requires political parties to use the membership register submitted to INEC for their primaries, congresses and conventions, while Section 77(7) provides that a party that fails to submit its register within the stipulated period cannot field a candidate in an election."

It is instructive that among those who prompted INEC to quickly act on the Supreme Court judgment and review its list of candidates were members of the APC and their supporters. The party wrote to INEC on October 9, 2026, demanding immediate enforcement of the judgment. They were eager to see INEC delist candidates who in their suspicion did not meet the deadlines. That seems to validate claims that the electoral act amendment was a set up.

> "There is a contention that mischief was intended in the amendment of Section 77; that it was deliberately crafted to put hurdles in the way of opposition parties and their candidates. In 2023, there was room for aspirants who lose in party primaries to shop for tickets in other parties. The 2026 Electoral Act forecloses that movement if not done within stipulated time."

Also, the fact that INEC has given Adebutu, Pantami, Gwarzo and the others 14 days to appeal the omission of their names also suggests that the deadline was a needless punishment. Those 14 days could have been added to the 21 days before parties concluded their primaries. The point is that, laws and court judgments should not be forged with intentions to punish some people. The APC was way ahead in submitting its membership register, at a time other parties were thrown into factional and legal crisis.

Constraining free choice

Political parties help citizens to make up their minds on policy options. It is the reason multiparty democracy recommends a variety of parties, so that voters are not constrained and ultimately disenfranchised.

The APC has been celebrating the conscription of Wike, Ademola Adeleke of Osun State and Charles Soludo of Anambra State into the party's Presidential Campaign Council. It is a novelty of a sort, to have leading members of what used to be the opposition line up for the ruling party. Wike has declared himself the commander of field operations for APC in the FCT and Abuja.

In the Electoral Act 2026, there's no provision for a commander of field operations. Wike has announced how he won election for Governor Monday Opkebholo in Edo State. In that election of September 2024, the Resident Electoral Commissioner, Anugbum Onuoha, was declared by Godwin Obaseki, the governor at the time, to be Wike's cousin. But INEC refused to redeploy Onuoha. That electoral process was glitched during collation and different figures surfaced.

Adeleke used the ticket of Accord Party (AP) to win the August 15, 2026, governorship in Osun. It was a major victory, well celebrated by the opposition. Adeleke narrowly escaped the well-laid plans to snatch the state for APC. The people of Osun refused to let Adeleke down. They voted and protected their votes. Despite all that transpired, Adeleke is now leader of APC Presidential campaign in Osun. Some say it is politics without bitterness. But 30 human beings were killed on both sides before the elections were won and lost.

Soludo has surrendered the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) to APC for use in 2027. APGA will not contest the presidency with APC. Both the PDP and APGA are not lightweight parties, going by their founding histories and accomplishments. But they have been drained and captured by the APC. That's not democracy. It is a transaction.

Tinubu cannot outsource his campaign

When he left for Europe, the reason they gave was that President Tinubu needed to rest well (30 days) before the campaigns. He came back and stated he was: "healthy, sound and ready to go." Now, the story is, there's too much work, no time to run around for campaigns. Mr President, you cannot outsource the social contract. Nigerians want to see you, hear you!

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