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**WEEKEND**

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Public Schools, **Private Lifelines...**

# ALUMNI INTERVENTIONS EXPOSE POOR FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

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Executive Secretary/CEO, Lagos State Security Trust Fund (LSSTF), Dr. Ayo Ogunsan (left); LSSTF Board Chairman, Mr Kehinde Durosinmi-Etti; Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu; Chairman of Premier Lotto Limited, Sir Kessington Adebutu; President of Kotco Group, Aare (Dr) Kola Oyefeso; ex-Board Chairman, Chief Remi Makanjuola and the SSG, Barr. 'Bimbola Salu-Hundeyin, during the commissioning and handing over of the new LSSTF building, renamed as Kessington Adebutu Security Trust Fund Building, in Alausa, Ikeja ... on Friday.

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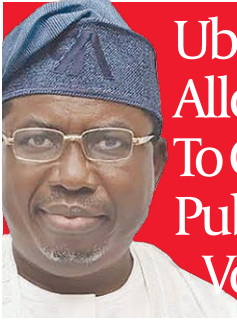
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# State Police Amendment Secures Approval Of 24 State Assemblies

By **Bertram Nwannekanma** (Lagos) and **Terhemba Daka** (Abuja)

THE proposed introduction of state police in Nigeria has crossed a major constitutional hurdle with 24 State Houses of Assembly approving the Constitution (Sixth Alteration) Bill, 2026, paving the way for the establishment of a dual policing system.

The Presidential Working Group on the National Policing Bill, in a statement on Friday, said the approvals met the constitutional requirement of at least two-thirds of the 36 state assemblies.

The group, chaired by the Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, commended the state legislatures for their support for the reform, while acknowledging the National Assembly for passing the amendment in both chambers.

According to the statement,

- **Presidential Working Group Says Constitutional Threshold Met**
- **Draft Bills To Reach Tinubu After Final Review**
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the amendment can now be returned to the National Assembly for transmission to President Bola Tinubu for assent, in accordance with Section 9 of the 1999 Constitution, as amended.

It added that the legislative approval provides the constitutional foundation for the proposed dual policing framework, which the draft National Policing Bill, 2026, is designed to operationalise.

The working group disclosed that its draft bills were undergoing legislative drafting review and validation at the Federal Ministry of Justice and were expected to be returned on or before Friday, October 30, 2026.

The group said it would give

the bills final consideration upon their return before presenting them to the President.

It urged stakeholders to support a smooth transition to a dual policing system, expressing confidence that the reform would strengthen policing and improve the safety and security of Nigerians.

Similarly, Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu has said the anticipated establishment of state police will expand the responsibilities of the Lagos State Security Trust Fund (LSSTF), requiring increased resource mobilisation and logistical support to strengthen policing in the state.

Sanwo-Olu spoke on Thursday at the commissioning of a permanent office building donat-

ed to the LSSTF by philanthropist, Sir Kessington Adebukunola Adebutu.

The governor said the proposed state police would place additional demands on the fund, which mobilises voluntary contributions from individuals and corporate organisations to support security agencies.

He urged the LSSTF board and management to develop innovative funding strategies to ensure that Lagos could adequately equip and support its proposed police formation when the initiative became operational.

"We need to ensure that we are creative, think outside the box and bring resources together to make sure that

Lagos State has one of the best state police formations in the country," he said.

Sanwo-Olu commended President Bola Tinubu for supporting the move towards state police, describing it as an opportunity for states to strengthen their security architecture.

He also assured existing police formations that the transition would be managed through collaboration, without unnecessary disruption or fears of job losses.

The governor said the state government would continue to support security agencies while encouraging the private sector and residents to contribute to the collective responsibility of protecting lives and property.

Sanwo-Olu said the donations demonstrated the importance of public-private partnerships in addressing security challenges, stressing that government alone could not shoulder the responsibility of ensuring public safety.

He urged wealthy individuals, corporate organisations and other stakeholders to emulate the philanthropist by supporting security initiatives.

The governor recalled that the LSSTF was established in September 2007, during the administration of former governor Babatunde Fashola, to mobilise private-sector contributions for security operations.

Sanwo-Olu commended Adebutu for financing the building, which he said was completed in less than a year after its groundbreaking ceremony in December 2025.

He also praised the fund's

board and management, particularly its Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Dr Ayodele Ogunsan, for ensuring the timely completion of the project.

Earlier, LSSTF Chairman Kehinde Durosinmi-Etti described the commissioning as a significant milestone in the fund's history, noting that the organisation had operated from a rented office for nearly 19 years.

Durosinmi-Etti, a pioneer member of the board under its first chairman, Remi Makanjuola, said the new building would provide a permanent institutional home for coordinating partnerships and supporting security agencies.

He identified the fund's autonomy as a major factor behind its effectiveness, explaining that it mobilises voluntary donations from individuals and corporate organisations and operates independently of the day-to-day bureaucracy of the state government.

According to him, approximately 80 per cent of the board's membership is drawn from the private sector. He said the fund does not receive cash subventions from the state government, although the government provides support in kind and remains the largest contributor to security funding and support in Lagos. Durosinmi-Etti said the arrangement gave donors confidence that their contributions would be managed through an established framework and directed towards identified security needs.

**Read the remaining part of this story on [www.guardian.ng](http://www.guardian.ng)**



Director, Mobilisation and Membership, Tinubu Must Stay Movement (TMS), Ibrahim Said-Uba (left); Director-General, Project I-Nigeria/Senior Special Assistant on Housing to the Governor of Ogun State, Olujunwo Obasanjo; Director-General and Chief Executive Officer of the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA)/Chairman and Coordinator of TMS, Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi; and the Director-General of TMS, Marcel Ngogbehei, during TMS campaign strategy meeting in Abuja... on Friday.

## Ebola: Don't Panic, Prepare, Experts Urge Nigerians

From **Nkechi Onyedika-Ugoeze**, Abuja

RENOWNED health experts in the country have urged Nigerians not to panic over the reported outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease in the country, saying they should rather prepare themselves by taking the precautionary measures that can prevent them from being infected.

An Associate Professor of Infectious Diseases, Pathogen Genomics and Molecular Epidemiology in the Department of Microbiology Adeleke University, Ede and the founder of Helix Biogen Institute Ogbomoso, Dr. Oladipo Elijah Kolawole, and a renowned virologist and former president of the Nigerian Academy of Science, Prof Oyewale Tomori, who both spoke with The Guardian on the outbreak, also tasked the Federal Government to ensure accurate risk communication to the public and rapid contact tracing as was the case in 2014.

When the disease was imported into Nigeria in July 2014, the country faced a public health emergency that threatened to overwhelm its healthcare system and expose millions of people to a deadly infection.

The deadly virus was imported into the country on July 20, 2014. The index case, Patrick Sawyer, a Liberian-American

- **Task Govt On Accurate Risk Communication To The Public**

diplomat who flew into Lagos from Liberia, became ill and was admitted to a private hospital, where he was diagnosed to have had Ebola. He however died on July 25, 2014, after infecting health workers that attended to him.

There was palpable fear that Nigeria could become another major epicentre of the transmission of the virus, considering its overstretched health system, densely populated cities and high volume of international travels.

However, Nigeria immediately mobilised its robust infrastructure from its ongoing polio eradication programme to create an Ebola Emergency Operations Centre.

Nigeria's response combined rapid case identification, contact tracing, isolation, laboratory investigation and coordinated public health action.

A central feature was the activation of an emergency operations structure that brought together epidemiologists, laboratory specialists, clinicians, logisticians, communication experts and other professionals. The response was supported by international partners, including the World Health Organisation (WHO), while Nigerian health officials took

responsibility for implementing containment measures.

Contact tracing became particularly important. Health authorities identified people who had come into contact with infected individuals, monitored them for symptoms and arranged for suspected cases to be isolated and investigated.

The approach helped authorities follow the transmission chain rather than wait for patients to appear independently at hospitals.

The country contained the outbreak within three months with 20 confirmed and probable cases recorded, including eight deaths. On October 20, 2014, the World Health Organisation declared Nigeria free of Ebola transmission after the required 42-day period without a new confirmed case.

Twelve years later, that experience is once again being tested. The Federal Government on October 20, 2026, announced that a woman who recently arrived in Nigeria from Uganda had tested positive for Ebola Virus Disease in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The patient had received treatment at a private hospital in Abuja before the diagnosis was confirmed, raising immediate concerns about possible exposure

among healthcare workers, patients, caregivers and other contacts.

According to the Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, 44 close contacts had been identified, with investigations, surveillance and monitoring intensified to prevent further transmission.

Pate, on Thursday, announced that high-risk contacts had been placed in designated quarantine facilities, while others were being monitored under public health supervision.

The identified contacts reportedly include healthcare workers, patients, caregivers, domestic contacts and people associated with the private facility where the patient received treatment. Travel-related contacts are also relevant to the investigation.

Ebola is a rare but deadly disease caused by a virus, and spreads through direct contact with infected bodily fluids such as blood, vomit, faeces or saliva, or through contaminated surfaces and materials. It does not spread through the air like respiratory viruses.

The illness often begins suddenly two to 21 days after exposure with a fever, severe headache, muscle pain, weak-

ness, fatigue, and a sore throat. As the infection advances, patients commonly experience severe vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and skin rashes and the virus can cause multi-organ failure and internal or external bleeding such as bleeding from the gums, nose or gastrointestinal tract, though bleeding does not happen in every case.

The outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo began in May, and that month, the World Health Organisation declared it "a public health emergency of international concern."

As of October 19, 2026, it has claimed at least 4,600 lives, with more than 9,500 cases recorded. It was caused by the Bundibugyo species of Ebola, which is relatively rare, with no approved vaccine.

Current medical management relies on early, aggressive supportive care such as intravenous fluids, electrolyte balancing and treating secondary complications like organ failure.

Shortly after the DR Congo outbreak was announced, it was also reported in Uganda and the country recorded a total of 20 confirmed cases and two deaths, with 18 patients recovering.

The WHO officially declared the Ebola outbreak in Uganda

over on August 25, 2026, after 42 days passed without any new confirmed cases.

Cases have also been recorded in the Netherlands and Kenya. Following the latest case in Nigeria, Pate told a media conference in Abuja that the patient, a woman who recently arrived on an international flight from Uganda, is in isolation and receiving care.

However, Uganda's Ministry of Health says the country currently has no confirmed active cases, adding that preliminary information indicated that the patient had transited through Uganda without symptoms.

In a statement on X, Uganda's Director General of Health Services, Charles Oloro, said the woman had travelled to eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo for business before passing through Uganda in early October.

He argued that her symptoms had only developed after arriving in Nigeria.

The WHO on Thursday warned that Africa faced a "complex" Ebola outbreak after the virus crossed from East Africa to Nigeria.

Infectious disease experts argued that the travel history of the patient is very crucial in identifying and interrupting potential transmission chains to prevent further infections.

## LASG Presents Grants, Equipment To MSMEs To Boost Business Growth

By **Gbenga Salau** and **Chiagugua Aloefuna**

Lagos State government has presented grants ranging from N100,000 to N250,000 and business equipment to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to strengthen entrepreneurship, improve access to finance and promote sustainable business development across the state.

The grants and equipment, which included sewing machines, freezers and grinding machines, were presented at the state's 2026 World MSME Day celebration organised by the Ministry of Commerce, Cooperatives, Trade and Investment, themed 'Empowering MSMEs through Innovation and Sustainable Development.'

In her keynote address, the

Senior Special Assistant to Lagos Governor on Commerce, Cooperatives, Trade and Investment, Mrs. Nana-Hauwa Adeeyo, highlighted the Lagos State Access to Finance for SMEs through Cooperatives (LASMECO), a N10 billion financing initiative established in partnership with the Bank of Industry and Sterling Bank.

Adeeyo said the state government had released N5 billion as matched funding for the scheme, which provides eligible cooperative-based MSMEs with access to loans of up to N10 million at an annual interest rate of nine per cent. She explained that the loans come with a six-month moratorium and a repayment period of up to 36 months without collateral requirements.

## Oyo To Jail Open Grazing Offenders For Five Years, Impose N500,000 Fine

By **Rotimi Agboluaje**, Ibadan

OYO State Rule of Law Enforcement Authority (OYRLEA) has warned herders against open grazing in the state, saying first-time offenders risk a fine of N500,000 or five years imprisonment under the state's anti-open grazing law.

The chairperson of the agency, Justice Aderonke Aderemi (rtd.), gave the warning during a live radio interview in Ibadan, declaring that no individual would be exempted from enforcement of the law.

Aderemi said the authority had commenced intensive operations against violations, including dawn raids that led to the impounding of cattle at Atowoda in Ido Local Council, Batake Village along the Ibadan-Eruwa Road, Idi-Iroko and Moniya.

She said enforcement had also covered government farm settlements in Ido, Ijaye and Akinyele, stressing that the facilities were designated for farming activities and should not be used for unauthorised cattle grazing.

"Open grazing is illegal in Oyo State. The law is very clear. Our farm settlements are for farmers, not for herders. If you want to rear cattle, go to the Ministry of Agriculture, get a licence and get a ranch allocated to you. You cannot destroy people's crops and livelihoods and go scot-free," she warned.

The retired jurist cited Section 16(1) of the Oyo State Open Rearing and Grazing Regulation Law, 2019, which, according to her, prescribes five years' imprisonment or a N500,000 fine for first offenders.

## Kingibe Urges Nigeria To Boost Domestic Healthcare Funding

By **Suliyat Tella**

THE senator representing the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Senator Ireti Kingibe, has called for increased domestic healthcare funding and legislative action to address gaps in Nigeria's healthcare system.

Kingibe made the call during discussions on sustainable health financing at a summit in Abuja, where policymakers and health experts considered how African countries could reduce dependence on donor funding and expand proven health interventions.

"Let us commit to breaking down the silos between innovation and implementation. Let us direct our capital, our technical expertise and our legislative will towards rigorous, measurable scaling of what works," she said, urging stakeholders to move successful health innova-

tions beyond pilot stage to ensure they reach more people.

Kingibe added that governments and other stakeholders needed to work towards ensuring that every African had access to a longer, healthier and more productive life.

The discussions also focused on the use of technology and artificial intelligence (AI) to improve healthcare delivery, predict disease outbreaks and strengthen public health systems.

The Co-founder of MyItura, a Digital Healthcare Provider, Shina Arogundade, said AI-powered platforms could analyse health trends and help predict disease outbreaks and climate-related events.

He stressed, however, that such tools needed proper validation and integration into national public health systems.

# 653 Convicted As FG Steps Up Terrorism Prosecutions –AGF

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

THE Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF) and Minister of Justice, Prince Lateef Fagbemi (SAN), has disclosed that 653 defendants have been convicted in the ongoing 11th phase of terrorism trials, out of 880 cases heard as of midday on Friday.

Fagbemi, who described the exercise as the largest since the commencement of the mass trials, said 1,060 suspects had been brought before the courts during the phase.

He disclosed this on Friday while giving an update on the proceedings, explaining

that seven defendants had been acquitted, while 27 others had been discharged as of about 12:15 p.m.

The AGF, however, said the figures were provisional, as proceedings were still ongoing, adding that the Federal Government would provide the final statistics after the conclusion of the exercise.

The 11th phase is part of the Federal Government's efforts to prosecute terrorism suspects, tackle terrorism financing and address related security offences through the courts.

Fagbemi attributed the scale of the exercise to the cooperation of the judges,

prosecution and defence lawyers, as well as security and other relevant government agencies involved in the trials.

He particularly commended the judges who presided over the proceedings under the leadership of Justice Binta Nyako of the Federal High Court, who has been acting in place of the Chief Judge of the court on issues related to the ongoing trial.

According to him, the arrangement under which multiple judges sit simultaneously has helped to expedite the cases, particularly during the ninth, 10th and 11th phases of the exercise.

The minister also acknowledged the contributions of the Office of the National Security Adviser, the Department of State Services (DSS), the military, the police, correctional centres and the Legal Aid Council of Nigeria.

He said the collaboration among the agencies had been crucial to the prosecution of the suspects and the progress recorded so far.

Fagbemi also commended journalists for informing the public about the government's efforts to ensure that terrorism, terrorism financing and related offences were not allowed to thrive in the country.



Clerk, House of Representatives Committee on South-South Development Commission, Abdulsalam Olalekon (left); Chairman of the Committee, Julius Pondi, and a member, Rodney Ebikebina Ambaiowei, during an investigative hearing on prolonged gas seepage in Bille, Rivers State, and oil spills in Odidi, Ogulagha, Odimodi and neighboring coastal communities in Delta State, involving oil and gas companies, at the National Assembly Complex in Abuja... on Friday.

PHOTO: NAN

## Stakeholders Urge Health Workers To Rethink Migration, Explore Opportunities At Home

By **Ijeoma Nwanosike**

STAKEHOLDERS in Nigeria's healthcare sector have urged health professionals planning to relocate abroad to reconsider their decisions and explore opportunities in healthcare entrepreneurship, investment, innovation and service delivery at home, warning that migration does not automatically guarantee career success.

While Nigeria's healthcare system faces significant challenges, including inade-

quate infrastructure, poor financing and unfavourable working conditions, stakeholders said the sector also offers opportunities for professionals willing to collaborate, develop sustainable business models and improve access to quality care.

This was part of the deliberations at the Business of Health Conference convened by the founder of Luxe Dental Clinic, Lagos, Dr. Funmi Adeniyi themed 'Reversing Medical Tourism:

Building the Infrastructure that Brings the World to Nigeria for Care.'

The conference brought together healthcare professionals, entrepreneurs, investors, business leaders and innovators to examine ways of developing globally competitive healthcare businesses, institutions and infrastructure in Nigeria.

The stakeholders also called for increased investment, improved healthcare financing and stronger institutions to make Nigeria a desti-

nation for quality medical services rather than a country whose citizens routinely travel abroad for treatment.

The call comes amid the continued exodus of health professionals from the country. According to the State of Health of the Nation Report 2025, Nigeria recorded the departure of 3,919 doctors, 7,487 nurses and midwives, 6,861 medical laboratory professionals, 702 pharmacists and 658 physiotherapists, alongside hundreds of other specialists.

## Sokoto Govt Resettles Students Evacuated From Sudan

From **Tunde Omolehin**, Sokoto

SOKOTO State government has spent N6.79b on scholarships and related educational support between May 2023 and September 2026, while also facilitating the resettlement and continuation of studies of students evacuated from war torn Sudan.

The Commissioner for Higher Education, Prof. Isa Maishanu, disclosed this during a press briefing on the achievements of the

**Spends N6.79B On Scholarships**

Ministry of Higher Education and its parastatals under the administration of Governor Ahmad Aliyu Sokoto.

Maishanu said the administration inherited a backlog of unpaid tuition and registration fees affecting students studying in both local and foreign institutions when it assumed office on May 29, 2023.

To address the challenge, he explained that the govern-

ment established verification committees headed by the Commissioner for Lands and Housing, Nasiru Aliyu Dantsoho, for domestic institutions, and the Secretary to the State Government for foreign institutions.

According to the commissioner, the intervention led to the payment of N555 million to clear outstanding registration fees for the 2021/2022 academic session

at Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. He added that outstanding liabilities owed to 10 universities in Sudan, Wisconsin University in Ghana, and Integral University in India were verified and fully settled.

Maishanu further disclosed that the government resolved challenges faced by Sokoto State students transferred from Ukraine to Baze University, Abuja, enabling them to continue their education.

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## Public Schools, Private Lifelines...

# Alumni Interventions Expose Poor

Across the country, alumni associations are increasingly returning to their former schools with more than memories of their schooldays. They are arriving with funds to renovate classrooms, construct buildings, provide desks, equip laboratories and libraries, install solar power, rehabilitate toilets, sink boreholes, award scholarships and support students whose families struggle to meet educational expenses. For many schools, these interventions represent welcome relief from years of inadequate facilities and limited resources. For students, they can mean a safer classroom, access to learning materials and an improved environment in which to study. The recent crisis in King's College, Lagos brings to light the growing involvement of alumni associations in their alma mater and it presents two realities. On one hand, it demonstrates the power of community participation, solidarity and a commitment to giving back. On the other, it raises questions of inadequate government funding, delayed project implementation, poor maintenance and weak accountability in the running of schools, as the burden of sustaining public schools is transferred to private citizens, writes GBENGA SALAU.

FOR many Nigerians, the schools they attended hold memories of friendships forged, lessons learned and dreams nurtured. Years after leaving those classrooms, some former students are returning, not merely to reconnect with old classmates, but to rebuild the institutions that helped shape their destinies.

Across the country, alumni associations are mobilising resources to renovate classrooms, equip laboratories, provide learning materials and restore facilities weakened by years of neglect.

Last week, Government College Ibadan Old Boys Association (GCIoba) had its reunion in Ibadan, where the association unveiled its projects for alma mater. It currently manages major infrastructure upgrades, teacher welfare programmes and free education policies under a 25-year management MoU with the Oyo State Government.

From modern learning facilities and refurbished laboratories to sports infrastructure and improved accommodation, the Government College Ibadan Old Boys' Association is turning its shared heritage into investments for future generations.

The projects inaugurated by the Governor of Oyo State, Engr. Seyi Makinde, reflected the association's approach to sustaining the school's legacy through investments in education, sports, accommodation, technology and other essential facilities.

Among the projects were a 270-capacity Computer-Based Test (CBT) Centre for technical education executed by the 1976 Set; the GCI Green Renaissance Project, which includes improvements to the Agricultural Department and laboratory; a hockey pitch and pavilion donated by the Babalakin family; and a tennis and practice court provided by the 1986 Set.

Other facilities included the Jude Bademosi Cricket Oval, Imoyosi House, an expanded Lakeland Area Hall, a new dormitory and the Vice Principal's Lodge, a project of the 1966 Set facilitated by the Imoyo family through Tunde Imoyo.

The school also benefited from a refurbished National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) lodge, a campus-wide Wi-Fi network, a command and control centre, refurbished chemistry and physics laboratories, and a five-a-side football pitch.

For GCIoba President, Dr Wale Babalakin, the partnership between the association and the Oyo State Government has enabled the old boys to improve infrastructure, support learning and preserve the school's traditions for future generations.

In 2021, the 1983 Set of the Anglican Grammar School, Iju/Itaogbolu, Akure North, Ondo State completed the renovation of science laboratories for the school, as their first Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project to mark their second reunion.

President of the Set, Prof Christopher Rotimi Falegan, said the laboratory was picked as the first project because the building was in a dilapidated condition.

Falegan said: "The project was done owing to the immediate need of the school when the principal was contacted. The project cost N1.3 million."

## ALUMNI RETURN TO THEIR ALMA MATER...

Bridging gaps, restoring hope, for a better future.



Also, Festac Grammar School Class of 98 Alumni Association (FGSCAA) renovated and equipped a Senior Secondary School science laboratory at Festac Grammar School to support Biology, Physics and Chemistry practical learning. It commenced work in October 2023, and completed the project in 2024. The renovation included new furniture, laboratory apparatus, equipment and teaching charts and learning materials for biology, physics and chemistry practicals, spending about N2 million.

Similarly, the Annunciation Catholic College, Irrua Old Boys Association (ACCIOBA) Global President, Dr Joseph Ohens, recently said that the association has spent about N3.5 billion rebuilding infrastructure in the school, including classrooms, laboratories, hostels, and internal road networks. He disclosed that the institu-

tion had deteriorated significantly over the years, to the point of having only a principal and three teachers for more than 800 students.

Ohens said the intervention by old boys was driven by a sense of responsibility to support the institution that laid the foundation for their careers and personal development.

In addition, as part of activities celebrating 40 years it graduated from Lagos African Church Grammar School, Ifako, the 1983 Set presented and unveiled a N10 million modern Introduction To Technology Laboratory to the school.

Also, the alumni of the Ewutuntun Grammar School Old Students Association recently unveiled a new administrative building, principal's office, and four classrooms equipped with modern furniture for its senior secondary school

students.

President of the association, Adekunle Jaiyesimi, speaking on the interventions, stated that the alumni embarked on the projects after discovering the poor state of the principal's office during a visit.

He disclosed that the association raised about N65 million for the construction and furnishing of the new facilities. Jaiyesimi added that the association plans to provide laptops, desktops, and modern printers to enhance digital learning within the school.

Also, old students of Community Secondary School, Amachalla (CSSA), Enugu-Ezike, Igbo-Eze North Council of Enugu State recently handed over a fully refurbished hall to the school authority. The students, it was said, were particularly happy because it was feared that the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and the National Examinations Council (NECO) would have withdrawn the accreditation of the school as a centre for Senior School Certificate Examinations over the dilapidated state of the facility. This is because the refurbished hall serves partly as an examination hall for students. And before the Alumni embarked on the refurbishment, both examination bodies were said to have warned the school authorities of the impending withdrawal of accreditation on account of the poor state of the hall.

The infrastructure challenge exists alongside a

*In a report published in September 2026, UNICEF Nigeria found that education expenditure as a share of total government spending declined from 9.3 per cent in 2015 to 3.6 per cent in 2023. The report contrasts this with the internationally cited benchmark of 15-20 per cent. It also noted that Nigeria's earlier commitment to spend 4 per cent of gross domestic product on education by 2025 and maintain that level through 2030.*

# Feature

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## Funding For Education

wider crisis of access to education and foundational learning.

UNICEF Nigeria reported in September 2024 that 10.2 million primary-school-age children and 8.1 million junior-secondary-school-age children were out of school. The organisation also reported that 74 per cent of children aged seven to 14 lacked basic reading and mathematics skills. These figures underline the scale of challenges facing the education system: improving buildings and providing laboratory equipment are important, but schools also need adequate teaching, learning resources and sustained support to help children enrol, remain in school and acquire essential skills.

In a chat with *The Guardian*, the Chairman of the alumni association of Community Secondary School, Amachalla (CSSA) Enugu, Mr. Aniagboso Eze, revealed that the school was in a very deplorable condition, with the examination hall completely dilapidated, stating that it was the condition of the school that birthed the alumni association, because the association was not in existence before the intervention.

According to him, what prompted the project was that some old students heard the school was about to lose its status as a centre where WAEC and NECO examination are written because of the poor state of its hall and they escalated it.

"The association has raised about N25 million and has spent over N17 million over the period of six years. The alumni has successfully renovated the exam hall and is currently undertaking another project which is the fencing of the school."

He also revealed that the alumni has been awarding scholarship with 48 students benefiting from the gesture. "The funding for these projects and activities has been purely free will donations from members of the alumni," Eze stated.

The association's ongoing fencing project also reflects a broader school-safety concern.

According to UNICEF Nigeria, a 2023 assessment of the implementation of the Minimum Standards for Safe Schools found that states met an average of only nine out of 21 assessed standards.

Just 14 per cent of schools met basic safety requirements, including perimeter fencing and lockable gates. The figures provide a national context for the kind of infrastructure intervention being undertaken at Amachalla, although they do not establish the specific safety rating of the school.

Nevertheless, this also showed that the scale of the challenge extends beyond individual schools. Data on the Federal Ministry of Education's Nigeria Education Statistics portal for the 2024/2025 school year put the number of learners at about 39.8 million, with 725,778 classrooms reported nationwide. The portal recorded a learner-to-classroom ratio of 60.1, compared with the Universal Basic Education Commission's standard of 35 learners per classroom, while the ratio of learners to toilets stood at 65.9, compared with a benchmark of 30. This points to pressure on classroom capacity, although the figures should be interpreted with caution. This is because only 124,066 of the 230,844 schools listed on the portal had submitted data, representing a reporting rate of 53.7 per cent. The figures, nonetheless, provide a national context for the infrastructure challenges that alumni associations are attempting to address, but do not establish the condition of every public school.

Similarly, UNICEF reported that only 14 per cent of schools met basic safety requirements, including perimeter fencing and lockable gates, according to the 2023 Minimum Standards for Safe Schools implementation assessment. The assessment evaluated 21 safety standards across

states to ensure a protective environment, finding that states met an average of only nine standards.

A subsequent audit by the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) confirmed that 78 per cent of public schools still lack perimeter fencing and 65 per cent operate without security guards, making them vulnerable to security threats like mass abductions.

While the interventions by alumni groups reflect a powerful sense of gratitude and collective responsibility, behind these acts of goodwill lay a deeper concern: why are former students increasingly required to shoulder the burden of providing basic educational infrastructure that government should guarantee? Their generosity is helping schools survive, but it also exposes the consequences of prolonged underinvestment in public education and whether their generosity is increasingly becoming a substitute for government action, and what that means for the future of public education in Nigeria.

A public policy and advocacy specialist, Adewale Adeduntan, stated that when old boys and girls have to fix leaking roofs, buy desks, or employ teachers for the schools under the PTA teachers because the state has abandoned its constitutional duty, it is not "public-private partnership," it is public service's failure with private bandages.

He maintained that Alumni are not saviours; they are citizens forced to do government's abandoned homework.

Adeduntan also sees danger ahead if the trend continues unabated. "The danger is that we will start treating charity as policy. It lets government off the hook, creates dependency on the goodwill of a few successful graduates, and risks projects that look good on social media but collapse the moment the alumni lose interest or run out of money. Good intentions without systems become expensive photo-ops," he argued.

Adeduntan added that the constant alumni interventions reveal a government that talks loudly about "human capital development" while starving the classroom and the teachers or lecturers as the case may be. "Nigeria still limps along at roughly six per cent of the national budget for education which is far below UNESCO's 15-20 per cent call while many states cut education's share even as their revenues jumped astronomically lately. That is not commitment; that is calculated neglect dressed up in celebrated budget speeches."

The infrastructure challenges facing schools are part of a broader problem of education financing.

In a report published in September 2026, UNICEF Nigeria found that education expenditure as a share of total government spending declined from 9.3 per cent in 2015 to 3.6 per cent in 2023. The report contrasts this with the internationally cited benchmark of 15-20 per cent. It also noted that Nigeria's earlier commitment to spend 4 per cent of gross domestic product on education by 2025 and maintain that level through 2030.

Yet, the consequences of inadequate and inefficient financing extend beyond buildings. UNICEF's account of the 2022 National Assessment of Learning Achievement in Basic Education reported that 49 per cent of Primary 3 learners, 67 per cent of Primary 5 learners and 86 per cent of Junior Secondary 2 learners did not attain minimum proficiency in mathematics. In 2021, about 30 per cent of learners who reached Junior Secondary 3 lacked foundational reading skills expected to have been acquired in Primary 2 or 3.

Meanwhile, while renovating classrooms, providing equipment and awarding scholarships may address specific needs, proposals for alumni associations to assume a more direct role in

managing public schools have generated a different set of concerns.

Recently, there was a crisis at King's College, Lagos, following the Federal Government's proposed 35-year concession of the school's management to the King's College Old Boys' Association (KCOBA) under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement. The proposal is intended to enable the alumni association to finance, rehabilitate, modernise and maintain the historic institution, whose infrastructure has reportedly deteriorated. The plan sparked strong opposition from school workers, labour unions and some parents, who fear it could amount to privatisation and undermine public control of the institution. The old boys' association, however, insisted that the school is not being sold, rather promising to improve its facilities without increasing school fees.

The dispute escalated into protests and confrontations at the school gates disrupting school activities and triggering wider industrial action across federal unity colleges.

The Minister of Education, Tunji Alausa, explained that under the concession agreement, KCOBA would be responsible for financing, rehabilitating, modernising, operating and maintaining the school, while the Federal Government would retain legal title and its statutory, regulatory, monitoring, inspection and enforcement powers.

"The purpose of the arrangement is to mobilise the investment and management capacity required to strengthen this important national institution," the minister said.

Alausa said the concession was developed under the established PPP framework and subjected to technical, economic, financial, legal, environmental and social assessments, value-for-money analysis, fiscal-impact assessment, risk allocation and commercial structuring before securing the necessary regulatory and Federal Executive Council approvals.

Alausa said the concession was principally designed to address the significant infrastructure and operational requirements of the 117-year-old institution and secure its long-term sustainability.

While proponents may argue that such arrangements would improve efficiency, mobilise resources and introduce better management practices, critics fear they could allow government to evade its responsibilities further, weaken public accountability and open the door to the commercialisation of institutions established to provide affordable education for all. There are also concerns that schools under alumni-led management could eventually impose higher fees or adopt policies that disadvantage children from low-income backgrounds, while institutions without wealthy, influential or well-organised alumni remain trapped in deteriorating conditions.

Commenting, an Educationist and researcher, Dr Peter Ogudoro warned that policymakers risk creating more problems when they respond to institutional failures without properly examining their underlying causes.

"What we tend to do in Africa is create a bigger problem as we try to solve a small problem. And we are not very good at thinking through our problems and establishing their root causes before we start applying solutions," he said.

Ogudoro, therefore, questioned the reasoning behind proposals for alumni associations to take over the management of a federal school, arguing that changing the identity of those in charge would not necessarily resolve the weak-

nesses in school administration.

"The people who will manage it after the alumni have taken over are also Nigerians. So why do we think that the Nigerians who are managing it under the auspices of the government are inferior to the ones who will take over when the alumni people come?" he asked.

In his view, the more fundamental issue is whether those managing educational institutions possess the professional, administrative and leadership skills required to run them effectively.

Ogudoro acknowledged that school administrators often lack adequate professional management and leadership training. However, he argued that the appropriate response should be to strengthen their capacity rather than automatically transfer public institutions to alumni associations.

"If you think that the people running the school are not competent individuals, you provide them the skills. How do you provide them the skills? You send them for training," he said.

He added that individuals and corporate organisations within and outside Nigeria could help provide the expertise needed to improve school management without requiring a transfer of control from government to alumni bodies.

For Ogudoro, the distinction between supporting a public institution and assuming control of it is critical. He stated that Alumni can contribute funding, expertise, equipment and professional support while the government retains its responsibility for the institution.

He also questioned whether some proposed management arrangements might create opportunities for private interests to benefit from public assets under the guise of philanthropy.

Read the remaining part of this story on [www.guardian.ng](http://www.guardian.ng)



Education Minister, Alausa



Executive Vice Chairman/Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC), Tunji Bello (left) and Publisher/Editor-In-Chief, *Naija Times*, Ehi Braimah, where Bello received “Institutional Integrity & Public Service Award” given by *Naija Times* in Abuja ...on Friday



Wife of Deputy Governor and Vice Chairman, Committee of Wives of Lagos State Officials (COWLSO), Oluremi Hamzat (left); wife of Lagos State Governor's wife/Chairman of COWLSO, Dr Claudiana Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu; Erelu Kuti IV of Lagos, Erelu (Dr) Abiola Dosunmu; Chairman, 26th National Women's Conference (NWC), Dr Olayemi Oke-Osanyintolu, and Secretary, 26th NWC, Olajumoke Salu, during the 2026 NWC Walk, with the theme: “Blueprint in Motion, From Vision to Action”, held in Lagos Island Division.



Ondo State Governor, Lucky Orimisan Aiyedatiwa (right) and Muslim Ummah of South-West Nigeria (MUSWEN) President, Alhaji Rasaki Oladejo during a courtesy visit to the governor ...on Tuesday



Chief Executive Officer, uLesson Group, Iheanyi Akwitti (left); Managing Director, Nigeria Health Watch, Mrs Vivianne Ihekweazu; Assistant Director, World Health Organisation, Dr. Chikwe Ihekweazu; Founder and Chancellor, Miva Open University, Sim Shagaya and Pro-Chancellor, Miva Open University, Tunji Olowolafe during Miva Open University Matriculation Ceremony. PHOTO LUCY LADIDI ATEKO

Metronotes

Senator Adeola Delivers 12-classroom Block, ICT Centre In Ogun State

By Opeyemi Babalola

THE Ogun State All Progressives Congress (APC) governorship candidate, Senator Solomon Olamilekan Adeola, popularly known as Yayi, has delivered a 12-classroom block at Iju Ebiye Secondary School in Iju Town and a modern Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Centre at Lisabi Grammar School, Abeokuta, to strengthen educational infrastructure and improve students' access to modern learning facilities.

The newly constructed one-storey classroom block comprises 12 furnished classrooms and fully equipped offices for teaching and non-teaching staff while the ICT centre features 60 desktop computer systems with tables and chairs, two automated printers with scanning, printing and photocopying capabilities, a 30KVA generator, a 15KVA solar inverter, air-conditioning units and other supporting utilities to facilitate technology-based learning.

According to Senator Adeola, the provision of modern classrooms alongside digital learning facilities was essential to improving the quality of education, building students' technological capacity and preparing young people for future academic and career opportunities.

IGP Threatens To Prosecute Payers, Takers Of Money For Bail

By Eniola Daniel

THE Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Rilwan Disu, has said that both police officer that takes money for bail and the payer will be prosecuted, while calling on members of the public to trust police. The IGP spoke through Head of the Nigeria Police Force

Complaint Response Unit (CRU) Superintendent of Police (SP), Awu Fidelis Jonah, during the RoadWalk organised by Eagle Crime Awareness and Prevention Initiative (ECAPI)-Complaint Response Unit (CRU) rally. The rally, with the theme: “Say No To Impunity, Say No To

Crime, Police Is Your Friend,” was aimed at strengthening community and police relationship.

Jonah said: “This is an important event, considering that we are trying to rebuild the trust we lost with the members of the public. This is a good initiative by ECAPI. This will bring

back the confidence and accountability the public expects from the Nigeria Police Force (NPF). Bail is free and no one is expected to pay a dime whenever they or their loved ones are arrested. The GP has emphasised that nobody arrested is expected to pay anything.

Stakeholders In Dairy Industry Seek Clarity, Consistency In Product Standards, Classification

By Ogueji for Emmanuel

KEY stakeholders in Nigeria's dairy industry have called for greater clarity and consistency in product standards and classification following a national

roundtable convened by the Danish Dairy Board, the Royal Danish Consulate General and Dairy Business Partners, in commemoration of the 2026 World Food Day.

The event brought together the Minister of Livestock

Development, Idi Mukhtar Maiha; representatives of the Federal Ministry of Health, the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON), the Federal

Competition and Consumer, Protection Commission (FCCPC), the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), Lagos State, Consumer Protection Agency (LASCOPA) and dairy industry representatives.

Firm Unveils Flexible Alternative To Traditional Accounting Support For SMEs, MSMEs

By Opeyemi Babalola

BUSINESS leaders, entrepreneurs and industry stakeholders gathered in Lagos as TheWhy Consulting introduced a flexible alternative to traditional accounting

support for SMEs and MSMEs and financial advisory support whenever they need it.

The service was unveiled at an event with the theme: “Beyond the Shoebox: From Chaos to Clarity”. It brought

together the stakeholders to discuss why many businesses still kept financial records in notebooks, paper receipts, drawers and WhatsApp conversations, and why that made it hard for owners to

know their real financial position.

Managing Consultant of TheWhy Consulting, Adewale Adetunji Kehinde, said the idea came from his first role as a supervisor of bank tellers.

MUSWEN Visits Ondo Governor, Solicits Support For General Assembly, NIREC State Chapter

By Suliyat Tella

THE President of the Muslim Ummah of South-West Nigeria (MUSWEN), Alhaji Rasaki Oladejo, on Tuesday, led a delegation of the organisation on a courtesy visit to Ondo State Governor, Lucky Orimisan Aiyedatiwa, ahead of its 11th General Assembly scheduled for November 15.

The delegation comprised of

Alhaji Rafiu Ebiti, Deputy President I; Alhaji Wale Sonaike, Deputy President II; Prof Wole Abbas, Executive Secretary; Professor Muibi Opeloye, Executive Secretary of Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC); other senior officials of MUSWEN; leaders of Ondo State Muslim Community and clerics among others.

During the visit, Alhaji

Oladejo sought the governor's support for the successful hosting of the MUSWEN General Assembly, which will take place at the University of Ibadan Central Mosque Hall.

He also appealed to the government to support the establishment of a chapter of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) in Ondo State to strengthen interfaith dialogue and promote peaceful

coexistence.

Oladejo, who is also the Deputy President-General (South) of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), said the proposed NIREC chapter would provide a platform for Muslim and Christian leaders to address misunderstandings, prevent religious conflicts and promote mutual understanding at the grassroots.

Rotary Club Partners National Library To Inspire 200 Lagos Students With Literacy, Leadership Lessons

By Isaac Taiwo

THE Rotary Club of Ogudu GRA, in partnership with the National Library of Nigeria, has encouraged students of Ogudu Senior Secondary School to balance technology use with creativity while developing the skills needed to lead and make a positive impact.

The programme, organised with the theme “Read, Think & Lead: Building Young Minds for a Brighter Future,” featured a debate, spelling bee, interactive session, leadership election and the presentation of books to the school.

No fewer than 200 students attended the programme, according to the school's Principal, Mrs. Abiye E.U. The Principal expressed appreciation to the Rotary Club for its continued support and annual literacy and debate activities at the school.

She also highlighted some of the school's needs, identifying the library as a major priority and appealing for support to improve learning resources.

Responding to the requests, Impactful President of the Rotary Club of Ogudu GRA, Ayodeji Odumosu, thanked the school management and acknowledged the needs presented by the Principal.

Interview

*Senator Adams Oshiomhole is a former governor of Edo State and a former national chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC). Now representing Edo North Senatorial District in the Senate, Oshiomhole has continued in his trajectory of blending activism with politics. In a recent interview with Symphony TV, which was monitored by The Guardian's OLUDARE RICHRADS, the former president of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) spoke about what informed his choices as a labour leader and also shared his thoughts on issues in the polity, especially the forthcoming 2027 general election. Excerpts:*

**You were a labour leader and activist, then you became Governor of Edo State. How did you handle the transition from these two extremely divergent worlds?**

**I** think we have to properly define the concept of activism. It's not just being restless or mobilising protest. We have a set of policies and tendencies that we represent, and we have sets of socio-economic policies that we believe government should pursue such that we deliver the greatest good to the greatest number.

So, it is not just waking up and abusing somebody in power. We do have specific demands that are informed by certain values that prepare us to do what we do in organised labour. We are committed to a just society. We talk about pursuing policies that deliver the greatest good to the greatest number—policies that will be favourable to industry, because without industry there will be no employees; without employees there can be no labour, and so on.

Because all of these have to do with policy choices, when I became a governor I was very clear what I should do differently. Government is not value-neutral. Government is value-laden; it is management of biases. Your own choice of sets of biases is what defines who gets what when you wield and exercise power. Although it is more so at the national level, it is the same at the state level.

For example, I consciously decided I was going to invest more in infrastructure to reconnect the forgotten rural majorities to the urban city. I came up with a slogan: "To be rural is not to be inferior." Therefore any road that we do, I do not believe in so-called rural roads which are generally inferior. All the rural roads I did were as good as urban roads, and as I talk, there is no pothole in those roads.

If you hear where we got to, the place called Okpekepe, it was impossible to go there. For me, those were the forgotten majority. When their sons or daughters escape to the city and begin to become prosperous, they are not able to go back home. In the city you have those areas—the Lupeng area—where the poor live, where in one building you can have 20 people in one house, four in a room, as I once did.

I convinced myself that it is the road to those areas that would be my first priority, and I did. I think if you ask people from Benin they will tell you that the first area I addressed was the area they call Kostonoro Road, a community that was turned to dumpsite and we turned the dumpsite to a garden in Benin City. I renamed it Gani Fawehinmi Layout, because I said if Gani was to be a governor, the way he provided legal services to the poor is how we would review the instrument of state to address those localities where the poor live.

So, all of this is just to say that there's nothing that is objective. My own objectivity is your own subjectivity. And so I didn't have a problem translating. When I headed the sub-national government, I made sure that my priorities reflected those core values. So, I didn't

# Why Petrol Subsidy Is No Longer Feasible In Nigeria – Oshiomhole

go into government without clear-cut ideas of what I wanted to get done. Many Nigerians are totally baffled at what the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) as well as critical civil society organisations have become. It seems they have been either cowered into submission or compromised, or both. How do you respond to this?

No, no, let's move on, because as I said, I was not just president of NLC. Before then I was a local union, factory union chairman. From 1982 I have not worked for any employer. So, all my life has been in the trade union. So, I would not be able to join you in such a sweeping generalisation in condemning everything, because the danger is that even those islands of success are all grouped together. So, I'm not able to share those thoughts with you. **But look at NANS; look at ASUU. Democracy is not complete without pressure groups. They make democracy virile; they give it life. Every critical voice of dissent has been cowered into submission...**

(Cuts in) No, don't use that word cowardice. Because what are the tools? Who was detained? Who is in detention? I have told you, and don't take it from me, go and review Guardian headlines. When I was picked up in a guest house in Lagos in the night by DSS, I said DSS have arrested me. The people who want you is the Directorate of Military Intelligence, but I'm not a soldier. That was before I became NLC president. Why I say I'm afraid of generalization is you know this young man, Omoyele Sowore. He's still very much focused on those views that he has had as student union leader to date. I respect him for that consistency. When we dismiss everything and everyone, are you the angel? Am I the angel? I've done my part. I cannot join you here. We created what we call Labour Civil Society Coalition (LASCO). I had the honour of sharing a banner marching with Wole Soyinka and Beko Ransome-Kuti. Some people are still, by the way, fighting. Femi Falana is one. His voice is clear as before. I haven't seen any dilution.

**As NLC president, you protested against subsidy removal, but you now support it. What changed? Why are you supporting high price of fuel in this country?**

Ask Aliko Dangote. Ask Nduka Obaigbena. Ask the former Governor of the CBN, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, and even the then Minister of Finance, Okonjo-Iweala. When we were fighting against subsidy, we fought holistically. Kerosene, diesel, PMS and even LPFO. By the time we were discussing this item, after I have left the NLC, without any policy announcement, kerosene was deregulated. There was no protest by my successors. Diesel found its market level. The only thing under control was PMS. And when I look at the numbers, what government proposed to be spending in subsidising PMS, I couldn't reconcile them. It was now running to trillions for one item, PMS.

My real problem is not whether subsidy is desirable or not; it's no longer feasible, because those who manage the system have perfected different ways and means of stealing in the name of subsidy. What you cannot do away with you will learn to live with it is part of basic wisdom. There is no rational animal that will go for higher prices if you have

alternatives. So how can you open your mouth and say to me that I support high price? You go and show me where I have said so—that I support high prices. The duty of government, primarily all over the world, is to keep down prices, to fight inflation. There have been several counter-accusations against you over your recent criticisms of Mr. Peter Obi. In 2012, during your Edo State governorship re-election campaign, you invited Peter Obi to commission the Akpakpava Road and you publicly described him as the best governor in Nigeria then, on record. How do you square your past public acclaim of Peter Obi to you how you now criticise him?

I never said Peter Obi was a failure. If I say so, the burden of proof is on you. You are the one making the allegation. I didn't say Peter Obi was a failure. There are specific things he has said which are not correct. Yes, Peter Obi is not my enemy. We both suffered as opposition governors. I was ACN; he was APGA. We were both being oppressed by PDP federal might.

It is true I invited him to Edo to commission a project. But he's not the only one I invited.

And even today I do not dislike Obi.

Don't misunderstand me, but when Obi says things that are not correct... For example, Obi flew a private jet to Executive Jet Wing in Lagos

where private jets land. I also flew private jet from Benin. We happened to land at the same time. This happened at least twice. So when you now say you will never fly private jet, that's not true.

Number two, I see this debate about Obi saying he saved \$156 million. We were both members of the National Economic Council. At a point we all said our allocation should be given to us in dollars. But they insisted that the official currency in Nigeria is naira. And government flatly refused. So, all the allocations we received were in naira. So, I ask Obi: where did you get dollars to save? Did you receive naira from Abuja and went to bid for dollars to save for Anambra State?

I got approval of World Bank for 225 million U.S. dollars—what they call budget support—over a period of three years. By the time I left, about seventy-something million dollars had not been drawn. And so if I want to talk like Obi, I will say I saved 78 million dollars, which my successor inherited and spent.

Go and look at the first six months of Obiano, who took over from Obi. We all watched Obiano demolishing the houses of kidnappers. If Obi could not fix the security challenge in

Anambra, he cannot speak to being a Commander-in-Chief that can fix Nigeria's security challenges.

All Obi was doing, in a sense, was privatising education. I also faced that temptation. I never said that Obi was a failure. I wouldn't say so. The fact that I don't agree with one thing that you have said or did does not mean I'm writing you off. Obi is my friend, but politically I think he should not pretend to be an angel.

**As a sitting senator, critics suggest your energy is heavily displaced onto partisan attacks rather than legislative intervention. For instance, what concrete steps have you taken through the National Assembly to address the several dilapidated roads?**

When you say critics, what about admirers? This is the issue I have with my very good friend, the Minister of Works, David Umahi. I said during the budget hearing, these roads connecting Edo to Delta, Warri, Asaba, and others, I saw that he put N14 million at the budget and yet you are awarding contract for new roads when you have not maintained the old ones. I said so at the budget hearing.

You do not keep on building new houses where you can't maintain your existing house. It's common sense. He then replied that when he was governor he built federal roads and that the contracts for those roads were awarded in 2018 when I was governor of Edo State. He lied when he said I was the governor, because I left office in 2016. The issue is: does it make sense to say you should maintain existing roads? The minister should not drop his (President Bola Tinubu's) name to cover up their own mess.

**The 2027 presidential elections is fast approaching. How do you see it playing out? Is the President sleeping very well given the formidable opposition against his re-election bid?**

The president is sleeping very well. The only reason he's not snoring is that it's not in his habit to snore. What President Tinubu tolerates, no other politician in Nigeria will tolerate it. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is the only one that I know that I go to his house and the living room is full. He will order for food and we will eat in his bedroom. How many people can give their all to society like that?

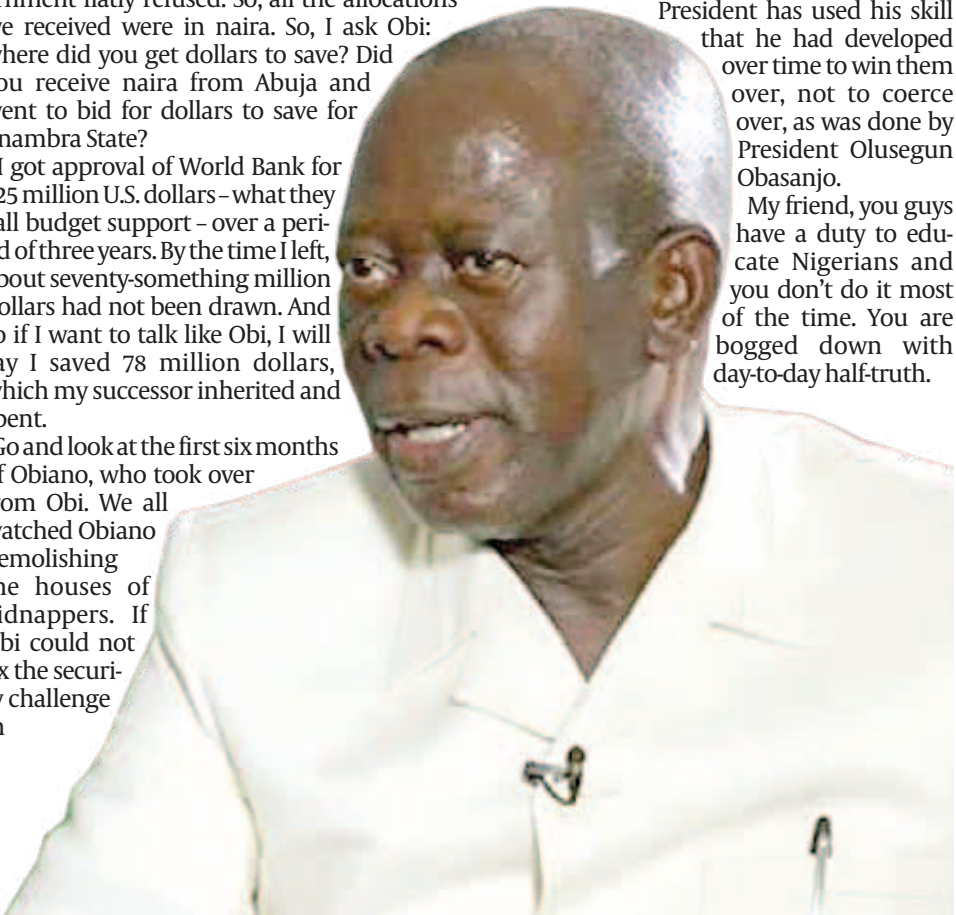
He was running what I call a national political clinic. Anybody with all sort of political diseases goes to Bourdillon for prescription and sometimes cure. For me, Asiwaju has given too much. I am Tinubu's man. I believe in his courage.

**Without mincing words, do you think President Tinubu will win next year's poll?**

He will win. You know why he will win? Those who were fiercely opposed to him, with time they found that first there's no vengeance. This

President has used his skill that he had developed over time to win them over, not to coerce over, as was done by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

My friend, you guys have a duty to educate Nigerians and you don't do it most of the time. You are bogged down with day-to-day half-truth.



# 2027: Dissecting The Re-match Between Mbah And Nnaji In Enugu Governorship Race

*As Enugu State Governor, Peter Mbah, and former Minister of Innovation, Science and Technology, Uche Nnaji, square up again for the 2027 governorship election in the state, political observers are watching how the re-match between the two Nkanu brothers will play out, LAWRENCE NJOKU reports.*

UNTIL the 2027 general election is done and dusted, there will likely be no *Uhuru* in the political battle between Enugu State Governor, Peter Mbah, and the former Minister of Innovation, Science and Technology, Uche Nnaji. The two Nkanu brothers are central figures in the tense political rivalry in Enugu State ahead of the 2027 governorship election.

Mbah is currently serving his first tenure in office as governor. He is interested in continuing for another four years should he win in the 2027 elections. Nnaji, on the other hand, is angling to replace him in office and has told anyone that cares to listen that he would serve for four years. His promise to serve for four years is based on the zoning arrangement in the state.

Currently, that arrangement has placed political power in the hands of Enugu East Senatorial Zone where he and Mbah hail from. By May next year, Mbah would have completed the first four years of the two terms leaving the zone with another four years.

At the moment, Mbah has made the final lists of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as the candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), while Nnaji has also been listed by the Commission to fly the flag of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the exercise.

Both men had battled for the governorship seat of the state before now. But at each level of the political battle Mbah had been the victor. One thing in the epicentre of their battle is that Nnaji is not dazed and has refused to give up.

The rivalry between the two had been there since 2023 when Nnaji picked the governorship ticket of the APC. He ran in the elections and lost to Mbah who was the candidate of the PDP. While Nnaji was beaten to a distant fourth position, Mbah was declared winner of the election. Nnaji polled 14,575 votes, representing about 4.5 per cent of the votes cast in the election, while Mbah secured 160,895 votes, about 44.88 per cent of the votes cast to win the election. This was the first defeat handed to Nnaji by Mbah.

But he was not perturbed about Mbah's victory. That was apparently why he refused to go to court to challenge him when others who were part of the race, especially the Labour Party and the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), which came second and third respectively, filed petitions against the process of the election and its outcome.

Reserving his strength to fight another day, Nnaji quietly picked up a ministerial appointment and began to nurture what was remaining of the APC in the state to reposition it as a strong opposition. As he was succeeding, rumours soon began to spread that Mbah was interested in joining the party. Nnaji, as leader of the party, was said to have opposed the move.

Unfortunately, he could not remain as minister to continue to nurture the party, as he was forced

to resign following alleged certificate forgery.

His fall from grace was a huge blow. He did not just lose the office he occupied; he also lost control of the APC in the state – a party he invested so much resources to revamp in the state after the 2023 general election with the hope of leveraging the platform for future elections.

Indeed, when Nnaji left as minister in October last year, Mbah, who was elected on the platform of the PDP, was ceremoniously received into the APC. He was also handed the party's structure, which Nnaji had nurtured. To make the platform safe for Mbah, the national leadership of the party dissolved the state leadership that was loyal to Nnaji and appointed a Caretaker Committee that was apparently composed of Mbah's men. The committee continued to run the party until March this year when an elected 36-member state executive emerged.

The emergence of the executive consolidated Mbah's grip on the APC structure in the state and finally nailed the aspiration of Nnaji to make a comeback at the leadership of the party. This was the second defeat.

Nnaji, however, accused Mbah of masterminding the allegation of certificate forgery levelled against him. He had described the allegation as a politically motivated witch-hunt aimed at discrediting him. He insisted that the forgery allegation arose because Mbah wanted to cross over to the APC but his (Nnaji) membership of the party was a serious obstacle.

Mbah denied the accusation through his aides, who stated that he neither had any hand in Nnaji's fall nor in the investigation of his certificates. He subsequently dared him to provide proof of the accusation. However, Nnaji has since approached the court seeking acquittal from the allegation but the matter is still pending.

## The 2027 Re-match

Nnaji appears poised to take his pound of flesh from Mbah. He seems to have realised that he has been exposed to public ridicule and believes the best way to redeem his image is a re-match with Mbah for Enugu's top seat.

Thus, at the start of activities for the 2027 general election, Nnaji quietly worked his way back to the PDP to the disappointment of those who felt he would remain in the APC. This was followed by rumours that he had his eyes on the governorship of the state, which have become reality. Nnaji has picked the governorship ticket of the PDP and will fly the party's flag next year. This has rekindled the political rivalry between him and Mbah.

The development has raised the political ante of Enugu State.

Like a man with a mission, his target is the seat of governance. Achieving it is enough pay back to Mbah for whatever he has suffered in his hands.

But to Mbah, Nnaji is attempting an uphill task. Not after all the battles he fought to reposition himself politically; not with the milestones he has made in reconstructing Enugu and placing it on the world map in the last few years. Will he watch his dream of "tomorrow is here" fizzle out in less than eight years?

To achieve his aspirations, Nnaji has capitalised on the gaps and mistakes noticed in the Mbah administration to woo support from the masses. At every forum he appears, he tells the audience how poorly the administration has performed since inception and reassures them he was ready to do better and serve wisely. He reiterates that he is seeking power to change things for good and that he joined the race to restore Enugu to the path of good governance and save the future of the children that are allegedly being mismanaged. His messages have continued to endear him to the people.

He has criticised the current tax regime in the state, arguing that "excessive taxation" has driven up the cost of living in a state heavily populated by civil servants and small holder businesses. Nnaji has pledged that he would review the taxes to relieve financial burden on residents. This singular pledge has continued to resonate in the minds of certain residents, especially the downtrodden who have now branded him, "Uche Nnaji no tax."

He recently signed a charter for one term to honour the zoning arrangement in the state during a civic reception held in his honour by his community and supporters. While signing the pact, Nnaji stated that the move was to ensure that the state's traditional zoning arrangement remained balanced.

He has insisted that four years is enough for any governor that is focused to deliver common good to the people, pledging to prioritise infrastructure and industrial revolution to create jobs and reduce poverty in the state. He claimed he employed several Enugu indigenes as minister.

He has maintained that he has not been found guilty or convicted of any crime, stressing that the fact that the court recently approved release of his passport which was earlier seized was an indication that he would emerge victorious from the case.

On the other hand, supporters of Mbah have continued to urge the public to disregard him, insisting that he should not be trusted with public office. They insisted that his governorship ambition is largely influenced by the ongoing legal challenges and investigations by the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC).

They maintained that he betrayed public trust when he allegedly lied about his qualifying certificates, adding that lying with something of such nature means he was capable of lying over everything.

Mbah's supporters also maintained that it was deceitful to claim "excessive taxation" in the state, stressing that only about 12 per cent of Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) comes from personal income tax. They also dismissed his party, PDP, as a "dead opposition party," saying no person with serious political ambition would like to pursue it through the platform.

However, Nnaji's public outings and statements present him as a strong candidate in the election, making the outcome of the re-match predictable. A school of thought holds strongly that his incursions are putting Mbah back on the drawing board. This school believes that certain recent pronouncements of the government such as appointments, gratuity payments, removal of tolls, among others were made to checkmate his campaigns.

As the situation stands, the coming months will either resolve the political feud between the two or escalate it to the next level.



Peter Mbah

Nnaji

# ‘2027 Presidential Election Will Be Easy For Tinubu To Win’

*Emmanuel Umohinyang is a constitutional lawyer, social commentator and human rights activist. Umohinyang, who was the convener of Re-elect Buhari Movement (RBM), played a pivotal role in the success of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the 2023 presidential election. In this interview with ENIOLA DANIEL, he spoke on the state of the nation, President Bola Tinubu's re-election bid and other issues.*

**Nigerians are groaning over the state of the nation. As a campaigner for President Bola Tinubu's election, what's your assessment?**

WE can say that there was no adequate preparation to deal with the challenge that will come, which is the excruciating poverty in the land. I agree that the government did not put strong structure in place to cushion the effect of the removal of fuel subsidy and the unification of the exchange rate. But I'm one of those who told President Tinubu that he will not be able to remove the subsidy if he failed to announce it on the podium.

The moment you come down from the podium, the mafias will feast on you, using the Nigeria Labour Union Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) to let you know that it's impracticable. Advisers will come to suggest that the four refineries can be fixed.

There were lots of problems before the President came into the office. So, where was he going to start if he did not remove the subsidy? Where was he going to get the money to fund the fuel subsidy?

There was a time when governors were not paying salaries. Adegboyega Oyetola, who is now a minister, was referred to as 'Mr Half Salary' as the governor of Osun State, but things are now different.

While the President has tried to solve the problem of lack and scarcity of resources in the federation, the President by his action created excruciating poverty in various homes. But who are those responsible to deal with the issue of poverty? They are state governors.

The President was speaking from the abundance of information he has when he told state governors to wet the grass they mow. This is the same Bola Tinubu who has been in the vanguard of dealing with poverty in his own capacity even after he left government in Lagos State.

A particular bishop said that the people around the President may not be telling him the truth about the reality in the country. I consider it as a repulsive argument because the President does not need the people around him to tell him that there's hunger in the land; he has his ears on the ground. So, even if they fail to tell him the truth, does it mean his wife will also refuse to bring it to the attention of her husband? Does the wife want the husband to fail?

It's the responsibility of the state governors in conjunction with the local governments to address the issue of

poverty. Addressing poverty is not giving people a cup of rice or a bowl of garri. The Federal Government is doing its best but most governors are not willing; most governors are happy that their people are in poverty. Most of them are sitting on the money and diverting it for their personal use and comfort. That's why most of them prefer building useless flyovers so they can get kickbacks from contractors.

Some governors are less interested in the security and safety of their people; rather they want white elephant projects so that they can make money from them.

The governors of Lagos, Abia and Enugu states have taken security as a duty but the charlatans among the state governors run to Abuja whenever there is a security issue in their states. Those governors claim that they are not in control of the Commissioner of Police (CP) in their state. No governor can say it before me.

Tunji Disu has corrected things Kayode Egbetokun was swimming in. Disu wants to leave a mark in the sand of time and that's why he analyses a CP for posting. Every governor wants a CP they can use, firstly against their opponents; secondly, to soft pedal electoral victory. But this IGP has shown capacity and addressed the ugly situation we witnessed under Egbetokun.

**How can you rate the level of security in the country?**

I think the government has tried to address insecurity. I am not saying that we have arrived; we still have people in the bush and in kidnappers' den.

The government can't do it alone. The Minister of Defence, Christopher Musa, said that citizens should play their roles but my objection to it is that if you ask the citizens to play their roles, you must convince them that their safety is guaranteed after they provide you information. We must also monetise information and that's what the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) should be doing.

**What is your take on State Police?**

I was one of those who opposed State Police but I had a change of mind. Kayode Egbetokun as the IGP made the police look ordinary; he brought the standard low to the extent that politicians were exploring Section 24 of the Cybercrime Act against innocent citizens. It was a case of 'if you can speak the correct language to the ears of the IG you can arrest whoever you want.' But I'm happy with Tunji Disu as an IG. He has transformed the office. We now have an IG that listens.

Now, I support State Police. State Police became a child of circumstance. The federal police have failed and it failed woefully under Egbetokun.

The issue of concern with State Police is how far some of the states can go with it. But I'm happy with the standard the committee is trying to set. However, I cannot assure that all the states will key into it. Some state governors have confided in me that they will continue to use the federal police even after the bill is passed.

**There are complaints that some state governors act with impunity because they have immunity. Should state governors continue to enjoy immunity?**

I will not advocate for immunity to be removed totally but I will support removal of immunity on criminal conduct of a governor and a president. That will put governors in check. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) will be able to check a governor found stealing.

For civil action, immunity

*Tinubu has not done everything right but I can see the structure and the foundation he has created. Nigeria has become a construction site under his watch; so, let's give him another opportunity in office to conclude the reform.*

should be retained so that we don't have a situation where someone whose goat has just been stolen goes to court for the governor to explain his inability to secure his environment, which has led to his goat being stolen.

Sadly, governors will still find a way to steal even if immunity on criminal action is removed. Some of them hold PhD in criminality.

There is no immunity after office. How many of the governors that left office in 2023 are facing trial now? So, it's about institutions and the political will of the president.

With a *padi-padi* president, even if you remove immunity, he can still control the hand of the EFCC. You must have a president who is not corrupt to be able to deal with corruption. In most cases, ex-governors arrested are mostly members of the opposition party. So, I will rather suggest the strengthening of our institutions. Anyone found guilty should be tried openly.

**What's your assessment of the three leading candidates for the 2027 presidential election: President Tinubu, Atiku Abubakar and Peter Obi?**

I think this is one election my candidate, Bola Tinubu, will win so easily. The President would have been worried if the expected coalition had found its feet. The APC would have also done what it can to make sure that the house scatters. I am not a member of the APC but I've always been supporting the progressives.

There are two opposition candidates with vaulting ambitions and this is their final hour. Peter Obi is close to 70 and he can say anything for Nigeria to make him a president.

People know that Obi cannot fulfil the promise of ruling for four years. The promise is what I call a political heresy of the century. He knows that he's not a man that can keep to his word. He told Odumegwu Ojukwu that he would never leave the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) but he defected to the PDP, then to Labour Party, to the ADC and now he has landed in Henry Seriake Dickson's water boat called NDC.

Obi doesn't know that Musa Kwankwaso is clever – a grand patron in the business of politics. Kwankwaso knows that they will not win the election but he has to remain in the NDC so that he can hijack the party after the 2027 elections and drive away Dickson the same way he did with the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) because his desire is to contest the 2031 elections.

I like Obi for his sonorous voice. I enjoy him when he tries to display his immaterial humility but he's polluted by his inability to stand by what he says.

I'm not saying that Tinubu is a saint; but having looked at the political turf, I may rather want to vote for a repented thief than to cast my vote for a deceitful priest.

Atiku is the worst hit in this election. Atiku's report card is littered with red inks. Atiku is not electable. I'm not saying that Atiku has been convicted of any offence but how do we describe a man who even the shadow around him is stained with criminality?

The third candidate, President Tinubu: here is a man who came into office in spite of the fact that the powers that be were not happy with his candidature. He's a man who came into office and said he acknowledged the pain and that he would have done something different if there were other options. Tinubu has not done everything right but I can see the structure and the foundation he has created.

Nigeria has become a construction site under his watch; so, let's give him another opportunity in office to conclude the reform.

Yes, we are still having issues with the micro area of our lives and I think that's the area the government wants to dwell in. Tinubu will spend the next four years to redefine prosperity in the lives of Nigerians.

I agree that things are not rosy but I can tell Nigerians that we are not going to hell with Tinubu's reform; rather, we may pass through hell towards heaven and we may be touched by the heat from hell but that's the worst that can happen. I can tell you that the President will further improve on the lives of Nigerians. I'm expecting that the President will be able to reform critical components that will reduce poverty. I can tell you that the difficulty is over and we are moving towards that Promised Land. The President may not rely solely on the state governors to end poverty because they are not interested in ending poverty but in what will benefit them alone.

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Emmanuel

*With deep gratitude to the Creator of all the worlds for  
permitting our Mother **100 years** of experiencing  
and service on this earth*



**CHIEF (MRS.) IBIDUNNI OLAGBENDE LAWSON**  
**BORN 24TH OCTOBER 1926**

|                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Her children<br/>Kolapo and Adeyinka Lawson<br/>Jaiye and Folasade Randle<br/>Olajumoke Akerele<br/>Adedapo and Olufunlola Harold-Sodipo<br/>Olufemi and Adebola Adefope</i> | <i>With Cassandra and Gabriella Momah<br/>on behalf of their mother Arinola.<br/>Together with all her grandchildren<br/>and great grandchildren.<br/>24th October 2026</i> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



JOSEPH • A NOVEL

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# Editorial

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## How To Make Lagos Public Transport System Reform Work

THE Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Lagos State Ministry of Transportation and Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA), National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and the Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) is an important step towards transforming the state's sprawling informal bus industry into a regulated system.

Implementation of the agreement will include commencement of the Bus Industry Transition Programme (BITP), which will cover eight Quality Bus Corridors, reorganisation of unions into cooperatives, and movement of fare collection towards a fully digital system. Lagos. LAMATA is to retain its regulatory oversight function. Laudable as it is, success will depend on whether the government will provide sustainable oversight and turn the MoU into a commuter-centred reform.

Already, the yellow danfo has filled a genuine economic need, reaching communities where formal mass transit has been lacking. Its predominance, owever, has also exposed some weaknesses. Routes, fares, vehicle standards and service quality have not been on par with the expectations of a modern metropolis. The BITP, therefore, is a step in the

right direction.

Lagos cannot afford another cycle of transport promises that leave commuters without remarkable improvement in their everyday experiences. The informal sector's enormous mobility value must be reconciled with the discipline of formal public transport, yielding demonstrable changes in waiting time, travel time, reliability, safety, fare transparency, vehicle condition and accessibility.

Despite its considerable investment in BRT, rail and other transport infrastructure, Lagos State needs a major bus reform. A 2025 World Bank blog post describes Lagos as a city of about 22 million people where the average commute takes about four hours. This reveals a city where hours that should have gone into productive work, family life, education and rest are lost in traffic. The new transport policy is, therefore, indirectly a revamp of the state's economic policy and should be viewed as part of the moves needed to sustain Lagos as Nigeria's commercial centre.

The World Bank's research shows that danfos accounted for 52 per cent of motorised journeys during the research period. It also found that the earlier Bus Reform Initiative generated an estimated \$1.84 million in monthly commuter value, while 10 per cent of the total

commuter benefit came from competitive responses among private operators. Yet danfo operators also experienced an estimated \$0.75 million monthly loss as competition increased. There must be a conscious effort to change the operating model without destroying the transport capacity that informal operators already provide. There can be no justification for replacing one class of operators with another while underserved communities remain without affordable options.

The legitimacy of the reform will depend partly on whether ordinary operators believe the process is transparent and whether commuters can see that regulation serves the public interest rather than the influence of organised transport interests. To this end, the same unions whose cooperation is essential to reform must operate within a framework where the government retains unquestioned regulatory authority. A modern transport system cannot have competing centres of authority. If LAMATA is to retain regulatory oversight, as the agreement provides, its authority must be adequately resourced and consistently exercised. The state should also make the rules public, including the criteria for awarding franchises and the obligations attached to them.

It is time Lagos moved away from the cycles of launching new schemes to delivering performance-based public administration. The state already has experience with franchised and regulated bus operations. The BITP must build on the lessons from those experiences. The eight Quality Bus Corridors identified under the new programme provide an opportunity to test the model carefully before expansion. Four corridors are currently being developed, including Iju-Ishaga-Abule Egba, Ketu-Alapere-Akanimodo, Iyana-Iba-Igando-Iyana-Ipaja and Ojuelegba-Lawanson-Cele. The state government should publish performance standards for each corridor and require operators to meet them before they receive or retain franchises.

Also, the proposed move towards fully digital fare collection must be designed around Lagos realities. There must be accessible payment infrastructure, clear fare displays, functioning customer-support channels and transparent mechanisms for resolving disputed payments. Commuters who lack sufficient data or whose preferred payment channels are unavailable must

still be able to travel. Digital fares should also be treated as part of a broader transport information system rather than as a revenue-collection technology.

From the data generated by electronic ticketing, LAMATA should be able to know which corridors are overcrowded, when demand peaks, where buses are insufficient and how fare changes affect ridership. While the bus reform is indispensable, the fact is that it cannot by itself resolve the state's mobility crisis. A realistic solution will require the integration of road, rail and water transport. Lagos has repeatedly set ambitious objectives for transforming its transport sector. The distance between plans and outcomes, however, must be bridged.

LAMATA reported in June 2026 that the Blue Line had carried more than six million passengers since operations began, while daily services had increased to 94. The Red Line, meanwhile, was expected to increase from nine to 24 daily services by the fourth quarter of 2026 following the addition of rolling stock. The BITP should connect these investments into one network whose routes and schedules complement one another.

Lagos is a convenient testing ground for initiatives that can be rolled out on a national scale. It has the population density, economic weight, institutional experience and transport demand that can be studied to implement reform. The BITP could, therefore, provide a model for other cities seeking to formalise informal public transport without excluding existing operators. However, it will be illogical to replicate the initiative if it fails to produce visible improvements in the lives of commuters and sustainable livelihoods for operators.

As citizens pay their hard-earned money to commute, in return, they deserve safety, reliability, dignity and reasonable access to the nooks and crannies of the city. The government, for its part, has a corresponding obligation to provide the regulatory discipline, infrastructure and oversight that make this possible.

The August 5, 2026 agreement has been signed by the parties. The fortune of the city's transport system and economy is at stake. It is time to enforce standards, finance the transition, protect passengers, discipline operators where necessary and publish the evidence. Only then will the danfo transition from a symbol of an improvised transport economy into part of a genuinely organised metropolitan system.

### LETTER

#### Obiora/Iwaji Obosi, A Festival At Threshold Of Modernity

SIR: The mere mention of the name, Obosi, evokes these memories, namely its globally recognized indigenes and its legendary war with Onitsha over land disputes. But Obosi is an ancient town, the provenance of which dates back to many centuries ago. Myths, legends, and stories regarding the origin of the town abound. But the commonalities in the stories about the town's origin are aggregated and weaved together as the history of Obosi.

However, it is an indisputable fact that Obosi is a well-known and important town in Nigeria and beyond because some of its indigenes have achieved global renown. And they had contributed in no small ways to the development of Nigeria.

Chief Emeka Anyaoku, the former Commonwealth secretary general; the late Chief Chimezie Ikeazor, the founder of the free legal aid in Nigeria; Chief Osita Chidoka, a former Nigerian aviation minister; and Chief Philip Ikeazor, CBN deputy governor are natives of Obosi, who did their best to leapfrog Nigeria to the acme of national development.

In addition to producing people, who are contributing to our country's development, Obosi town, which is bounded by Onitsha, Nkpor, and Oba, is known for its unique and colourful cultural festivals, which include Agwu festival, Idemili, Ito Ogbo festival, Obiora/Iwaji festival, and others. The Obiora/Iwaji Obosi festival, which is among the most widely celebrated Obosi cultural festivals, is celebrated annually. Obiora Obosi and Iwaji Obosi festival are used interchangeably by Obosi people for they are intertwined. As Iwaji Obosi is celebrated in Obosi so is it celebrated in other towns in the southeast of Nigeria. Iwaji festival is the occasion when the people of a town led by their traditional ruler gather to thank God for giving them bountiful agri-

cultural harvests. In most towns in the southeast of Nigeria, a traditional ruler's celebration of Iwaji festival will precede and herald his subjects' celebration of theirs. In Obosi, an ancient kingdom, the Iwaji festival is intertwined with Obiora Obosi. Both had blended to become one cultural festival. But Obiora Obosi festival makes us remember the week of peace in Chinua Achebe's anthropological novel, "Things Fall Apart".

During the period of Obiora, Obosi people are expected and enjoined to live peacefully with one another. Everybody is barred by the dictates of the town's culture and traditions from engaging in fights. Those who desecrate the sacredness of the period will cleanse the land by carrying out atonement rituals, as directed by the custodians of the Obosi culture.

The significance and importance of Obiora Obosi, which is an integral part of Iwaji Obosi, are not unknown to us. The observance of the Obiora Obosi festival reminds us of the fact that any society whose indigenes are not living peacefully with one another cannot achieve meaningful and sustainable development. Our celebration of the festival enjoins us to sink our differences with our relatives and neighbours so as to live in peace with them. In a nutshell, our observance as well as celebration of Obiora Obosi promotes good neighborliness and unity among the Obosi people.

Again, Obiora/Iwaji Obosi is evolving and assuming a modern hue. For example, during the annual Obiora/Iwaji Obosi festival, personages, who are from different parts of Nigeria, will attend the event to give gifts to the traditional ruler of Obosi. And when the festival takes place during electioneering period, political candidates vying for elective posts

will convert the arena of the Obiora/Iwaji festival to campaign ground. The electioneering will be done, covertly.

More so, on the day of the festival, members of the traditional ruler's cabinet, who will be dressed in their traditional regalia, will take turns to dance to the traditional drumbeats or music produced by the local drummers. Their entrance into the arena of the festival will elicit loud cheers from the people. As the people call them by their traditional title-names, they will dance, regally, and wave at them to acknowledge their greetings. It is a beautiful and riveting spectacle to behold.

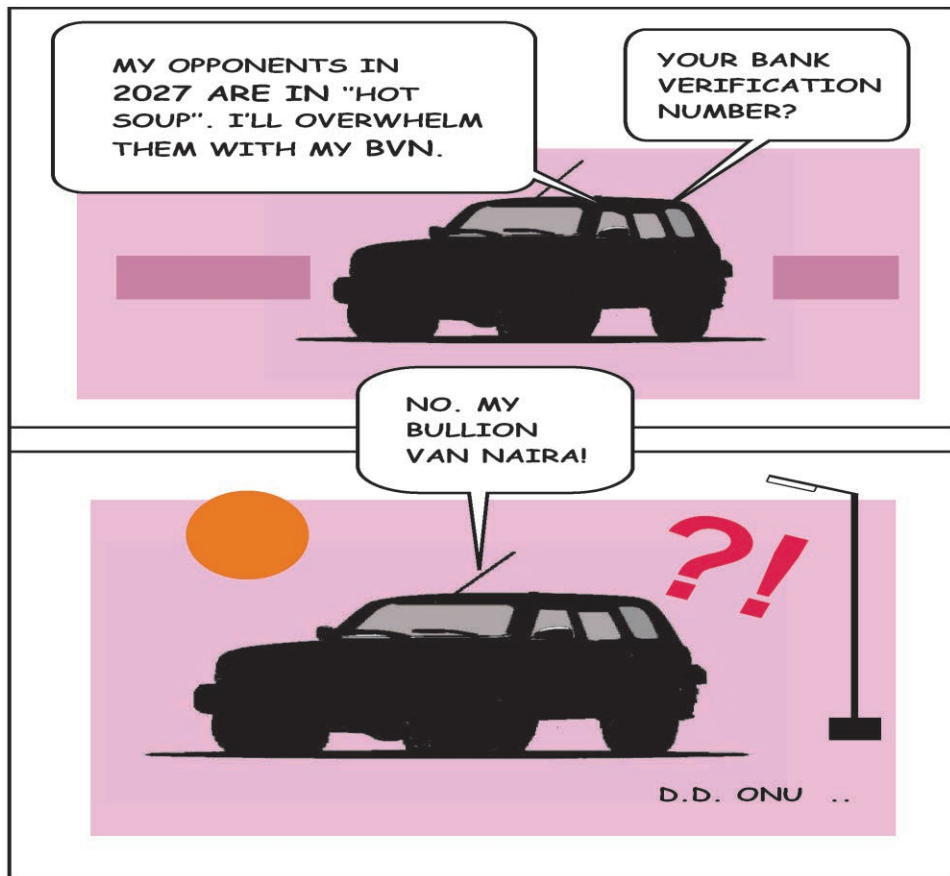
Aside the titled men, who are members of the traditional ruler's ruling cabinet, and personages, who will grace the occasion, masquerades from different villages that make up the town will perform for the people during the festival. And members of different age grades clad in their uniforms will dance round the event's arena, singing laudatory songs about Obosi people, Obosi town, and the town's traditional ruler, who is Igwe Chidubem Iweka (Eze Iweka III).

The event will reach its climax when the traditional ruler of Obosi will dip slices of roast(ed) yam in vegetable sauce and give to children. The feeding of the children with slices of roast(ed) yam sauce by the traditional ruler of Obosi is symbolic of the important place, which children hold in the festival.

Nowadays, the Iwaji/Obiora festival offers the traditional ruler of Obosi an opportunity to make pronouncements regarding matters, which have cropped up in the town.

The 2026 Obiora/Iwaji Obosi festival will take place at the Obosi township stadium on October 24, 2026. And the ceremony will be performed by Igwe Chidubem Iweka (Eze Iweka III)

• Chiedu Uche Okoye, a poet, wrote from Uruowulu-Obosi in Anambra State



# Opinion

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## Tinubu's Campaign Strategy And The Unnecessary Political Storm

By Tunde Rahman

THE inauguration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Presidential Campaign Council penultimate Wednesday in Abuja predictably generated talking points and criticisms. Two criticisms stand out: the inclusion of some opposition figures and the President's acceptance of the Hope Uzodimma-led Progressive Governors' recommendation that he should not campaign physically in all 36 states of the federation because of the exigencies of state duties.

On deeper reflection, both criticisms reveal more about our old politics than about the President's new campaign strategy.

Politics, at its most mature, is about inclusion, not exclusion. That is my interpretation of the inclusion of opposition figures in the APC Presidential Campaign Council, such as Osun State Governor Ademola Adeleke of the Accord Party, Anambra State Governor Charles Soludo of the All Progressives Grand Alliance, and Federal Capital Territory Minister Nyesom Wike of the Peoples Democratic Party. All three politicians will serve as President's Campaign Coordinators: Adeleke in Osun, Soludo in Anambra, and Wike in Rivers and FCT.

For those not well-versed in President Tinubu's politics, they should note the following: President Tinubu has always been a big tent builder, from the formation of the Action Congress to the Action Congress of Nigeria, and to the All Progressives Congress. The Renewed Hope coalition was never meant to be an APC-only choir. It is a national movement.

So the presence of opposition figures in the Campaign Council is not a sign of weakness in the APC as an election vehicle, as some claim. In my view, it is a sign of strength. It shows that the President's performance resonates even among those who once opposed him. In a democracy, when your opponents start seeing reason in your vision, you don't slam the door shut; you leave it wide open and welcome them.

Every major re-election in Nigeria's history, from 2003,

2011, to 2019, was won by expanding the tent. In 2003, former President Obasanjo, who lost his South-west base in 1999, had to ally with the Afenifere and governors of the defunct Alliance for Democracy to broaden his support base. However, the alliance turned out to be a deception and an onslaught against the AD governors. Former Ogun State governor, Aremo Olusegun Osoba, aptly captured all of that on pages 277 to 300 in his book "Battlelines-Adventures in Journalism And Politics."

In 2011, former President Goodluck Jonathan reached out to then ACN leader Asiwaju Bola Tinubu to win Lagos. In 2019, the alliance of legacy parties that gave birth to the APC and powered President Buhari's 2015 election was further strengthened for his re-election.

The point is straightforward: to win Nigeria, you must carry Nigeria along. The President's campaign council reflects that national character: progressives, technocrats, and former rivals now united by reforms already yielding fruit in economic growth, Naira stability, investor confidence, infrastructure development, NELFUND student loans, and CrediCorp, among others.

Importantly, President Tinubu's statement that he will not campaign in every state is neither arrogance nor disregard for states he would skip. It demonstrates honesty and strategic depth. In 2022, he went to every corner of this country, even visiting some states twice or thrice, asking for a mandate to reform. He got it. In the last three years, he has spent that mandate working - not politicking.

A sitting President campaigning in all 36 states for months would ground governance. The President has chosen to let his record campaign for him in many states, while deploying a robust council, surrogates, and grassroots structures to cover the field. This is what modern campaigns do globally. Barack Obama, Joe Biden and even our own President Buhari in 2019 did not physically visit every county or local government.

It's even unthinkable that a sitting President would visit every state in the United States. Barack Obama did not

campaign in person in every U.S. state during his presidential bids. According to Time Magazine and Reuters, in both his 2008 and 2012 campaigns, Obama's team famously used a "50-state strategy". This meant building a massive nationwide volunteer and office infrastructure across all 50 states to organise supporters, raise small-dollar donations and pressure opponents.

What matters is presence- not just physical presence, but the presence of campaign structures, party agents, projects, and benefits. What matters is building alliances and strategic partnerships.

President Tinubu will be on the campaign trail, but he will also be in the Villa, ensuring governance does not halt, FAAC allocations continue to increase for states, security operations are funded, and foreign dignitaries and key international investors get the attention they deserve.

Critics like the perennial presidential election loser, irre-dentist ethnic champion, and outgoing governor and presently misguided presidential candidate, as well as some rancorous television anchors, would rather have a campaign of noise and endless rallies. They are indulging in empty remonstrations. President Tinubu is offering a results-based campaign.

The inauguration of the campaign council marks a shift from emotional politics to evidence-based politics. The coalition is wider because the reforms are working and the results are clearer and more visible. The strategy is smarter because the President is already governing.

His successful reforms, projects across the six geopolitical zones, and his coordinators across states, local councils, and wards will spread the message: message of hope, message of reforms, results, and imminent prosperity.

In the end, elections are not won by who shouted in the most states, but by who delivered for the country's present and future, and who provided more money for states to cater for their people and build infrastructure.

• Rahman, Senior Special Assistant to President Tinubu on Media and Special Duties, is a Fellow of the Nigerian Guild of Editors.

By Victoria Ngozi Ikeano

SOME 26 years after Nigeria's Independence, a state named Nasarawa in the old northern region now in North Central zone of Nigeria was established by then Head of State, General Sani Abacha. Nasarawa thus, shares same birth day as Nigeria, October 1.

While Nigeria at 66 is a full, grown-up adult that is heading towards being an elder, Nasarawa State is now a young adult, well past adolescent age. The state itself is maturing gradually. Recall that time was when Lafia, its capital used to be referred to as a 'one street capital', defined by the very long stretch of Jos/Makurdi road.

Before the state came into being, Lafia, was a sleepy city renowned more as a transit stop for long distance travelers and as a food market (melon, rice, yam, etc.) for big-time traders from especially the eastern part of our country. Then on October 1, 1996 it suddenly found itself bestowed with the status of a state capital; the responsibility seemingly heavy for its apparently naïve shoulders then.

Findings showed that Akwanga which was considered more cosmopolitan at the time, was to be named the state capital but that General Sani Abacha brought his primordial links to bear in selecting Lafia for the prized crown. Whatever it is, I think the choice of Lafia is not misplaced because there is more value-added when a virgin or semi virgin land is developed than one that is already on the development highway.

Nasarawa State shares boundary with the Federal Capital Territory (FCT),

## The Changing Face Of Nasarawa At 30

Plateau, Benue, Kogi and Taraba states. It was carved out of Plateau state. Before then, it was part of Benue-Plateau state. It was one of the six states established by Abacha from Nigeria's six zones on that fateful day of October 1, 1996 while delivering his 36th Independence Anniversary speech. Others are Ekiti (South West), Ebonyi (South East), Bayelsa (South South), Gombe (North East) and Zamfara (North West). Wing Commander Abdullahi Ibrahim superintended over the new state in its early years.

On May 29, 1999 Nasarawa got its first democratically elected governor in person of Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu, Turakin Keffi. The sole administrator's main task was setting up administrative machinery for the new state. Notable is his construction of the Government House on Shendam Road. This was later completed by then Governor Adamu, enabling him to depart the two-bed-room flat at the Presidential Lodge that had served as his office.

Over the years Nasarawa's Government House which serves as both residence and office of the governor has undergone some touches and additions by the various administrations on its expansive land. It now accommodates a 1000-capacity banquet hall named after its second civilian governor, late Aliyu Akwe Doma. There is also now a Press Centre mainly for correspondents covering Government House activities, guest rooms, and more.

Each of the succeeding governments after the military administrator did the

best they could, adding their own unique building blocks to the now 30 year-old edifice called Nasarawa. Abdullahi Adamu laid the foundation stone. His efforts are most noticeable in construction of rural roads and education sector.

Some 30 years ago, Nasarawa State had no institution of higher learning save the College of Education, Akwanga, inherited from old Plateau State. Alhaji Adamu (later Senator) established the Nasarawa State Polytechnic (now Mustapha Agwai Polytechnic), College of Health Technology, School of Nursing and of course, Nasarawa State University. There have been additional tertiary schools since then. Among them, the Federal Polytechnic (to be converted to Federal Institute of Mining Technology), Federal University, Lafia (FULAFIA) and Federal University Teaching Hospital.

Unlike all other governors that completed two terms, the late Alhaji Aliyu Akwe Doma who took over from Adamu spent only one term. Nevertheless, he made a mark with especially his Badakoshi programme in which Nasarawa State was exporting yams to foreign lands, notably United Kingdom, thereby boosting the state's agricultural sector.

Enter Governor Tanko Al-makura (later Senator) after Doma's time. Alhaji Al-makura opened up the state's capital with infrastructure, especially roads, giving Lafia a semblance of a capital city. The modernization of Lafia started with him. Current governor, Engineer

Abdullahi Sule, a former managing director of Dangote Sugar Company is taking Nasarawa State to the next level which is industrialization. In this connection, he has attracted some industries to Nasarawa State, particularly in areas where the state has comparative advantage, namely agriculture. As a state that is endowed also with solid minerals (from where it derives the name, 'Home of Solid Minerals') Governor Sule is now turning attention to this sector. His legacy project here is the lithium factory built by investor.

It is said to be the biggest in Africa and is yielding the government humongous amount of money in revenue. Indeed solid minerals a.k.a. rare minerals, is the future 'black gold' that would replace oil which is now gradually losing its importance as nations seek for cleaner energy.

Lithium is used for the new technology of the 21st century as for example, chips of smart phones that are constantly evolving. Thus, states that are rich in various mineral deposits shall rank amongst the richest in future. Quite a number of states in northern Nigeria are so blessed. But the challenge is getting capable investors that would exploit these rare minerals for commercialization. And Governor Sule has set a precedent in this direction with establishment of the first and biggest lithium factory in Africa.

Nasarawa's landscape is changing from a mainly civil service state to one that is becoming an industrial hub with accompanying hustle and bustle of a thriving state.

• Ikeano writes through her e-mail victorian-gozii@gmail.com 08033077519

# CONGRATULATIONS!



**Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, MFR**  
**Comptroller-General of Customs**

The entire Board, Management and Staff of the **Nigerian Aviation Handling Company Plc** (nahco aviance) warmly congratulate you on your well-deserved award, the **International Public Relations Association (IPRA) Special Award of Excellence**, bestowed on you at the **2026 Golden IPRA Awards**, in **Athens, Greece**.

This prestigious international recognition reflects your strategic leadership and effective use of communication and stakeholder engagement in transforming the Nigeria Customs Service.

Your commitment to improved revenue generation, trade facilitation and national security has set a standard of excellence difficult to match in public service.

*Congratulations.*

By Gregory Austin Nwakunor

THE Life In My City Art Festival (LIMCAF) is preparing for its grand finale exhibition week in Enugu, and has its sights set on the younger artists who have been part of the festival as well as the older generation who have helped shape the art scene in Nigeria. This year's festival will have the theme, *Open Letter*. The festival will come to an end with a gala and awards, on Saturday, October 31, at the International Conference Center, Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Enugu.

Two personalities from both the creative and corporate worlds of Nigeria will headline the event. Obi Asika, Director-General of the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) will be the chairman of the gala night. He is very much knowledgeable about the music and creative industry. With his wealth of experience, he will bring a lot of insights that will complement LIMCAF festival, which for the last 18 years, has helped to stimulate and challenged the younger artist outside the established frameworks of Lagos and other cities in Nigeria.

Paul Usoro, SAN, former President of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), adds experience to this year's event.

He is the chairman of Paul Usoro & Co, a Lagos-based law firm, and is also a communications lawyer. Before that, he was the president of the NBA and chairman of Access Bank. His association with the festival celebrates a less-known side of an artist's life, the financial side. Artists have to find other ways to fund their work and the exhibition of their work. Often times works of art are sold even before a patron shows interest in making a purchase. "LIMCAF provides emerging artists the opportunity to exhibit their works and have interaction and engagement with established artists. The festival provides a broader audience, and helps raise the artists' profile," Usoro said. "The presence of such celebrities has a multiplier effect on the festival, as well as reaffirm the need for sustained support to the visual arts in Nigeria."

Adaora Oji-Ngwu, executive director of Life in My City Art Foundation, said the grand finale is the culmination of all activities for the year, a celebration of all partnering and supporting artists and organisations and their collective effort to support the festival.

"We have pulled together the best of the participating artists this year, partnering with and supporting organisations. It is an opportunity for all participants to strengthen and reawaken a dialogue that will advance the development of the visual arts," she said.

The national exhibition and awards ceremony are only a part of the scheduled activities. Others are an art and crafts fair, film screenings, festival lecture, artist tours of Enugu, spoken word performances, a fashion show and a party. The national exhibition opens on Wednesday, October 28.

One of the historically more resonant activities

## LIMCAF Heads For Its 19th Grand Finale With An Eye On The Future



Obi Asika, Director General, National Council for Arts and Culture

Paulo Usoro

in the programme is the celebration of the artist and co-founder of the AKA Circle of Artists, Obiora Udechukwu, which includes the unveiling of Iheanyi Onwuegbucha's *Kindred Spirits: The AKA Circle of Exhibiting Artists*, and a fireside chat on the history of artist-led initiatives in Eastern Nigeria.

The chat reinforces the period when artist frustration with the lack of opportunities to exhibit, pushed them to organise their own exhibitions rather than wait on galleries and institutions. This is a critical period in the history

of the arts that deserves to be remembered. The example of the AKA Circle shows that in the absence of opportunities, there is a need for self-reliance and resourcefulness by artists. Udechukwu and the AKA Circle, therefore, serve to fill a gap in the Eastern Nigeria art history of the 1990s. A festival such as LIMCAF that engages with emerging artists cannot only look ahead. Of course, the past holds lessons regarding the obstacles artists face and how they have historically confronted those challenges.

Now in its 19th edition, LIMCAF has proven to

be the only surviving art festival in Nigeria dedicated to showcasing young talent. With so many fairs and festivals related to the arts coming and going, LIMCAF has continued to thrive. What's more, LIMCAF provides a platform to interact with creatives for a long time, and, fortunately, this is beginning to attract the interest of the corporate world.

Apart from Rocana, who has helped sponsor LIMCAF, along with the French Embassy and the Alliance Française, the festival has attracted the interest and solidarity of many prominent personalities of the Nigeria/Africa art world, such as Bruce Onobrakpeya, El Anatsui, Obiora Udechukwu, Ola Oloidi, Okwui Enwezor, Bisi Silva, and Kolade Oshinowo.

Anatsui, for one, funds the annual all-expenses-paid trips to the Dakar Art Biennale for the festival's top six winners. Others who have supported LIMCAF in the past include Jerry Buhari, curator of the grand finale exhibition; Kunle Filani; Sani Mu'azu; Peju Layiwola; Joe Musa; Frank Ugiomoh; Sam Ovrati; Blaise Gundu Gbaden; Chijioke Onuora; the late Nsikak Essien; Tonie Okpe, and some international consultants.

The activities related to the competition and exhibition stretch beyond the biennial festival. The Nigerian non-profit organisation, The Life in My City Art Foundation spearheading the initiative, has conducted art workshops for children, youth and persons living with disabilities.

There are attractive monetary category prizes. The Elder K. U. Kalu Grand Prize of 2,000,000 is awarded to the Young Artist of the Year. Other category prizes are the 1,000,000 Capt. Everest Odengene Nnaji Prize for Painting, and the 500,000 Tayo Adenaike Prize for Watercolour.

Some of the components that have ensured the festival's longevity include the goodwill of a diverse range of supporters including cultural institutions, businesses, art foundations and private donors. These include the Alliance Française network, the Institut Français, the French Embassy, Clam Lab in Paris, the Honeywell Group, FBN Holdings, the Pan African Circle of Artists, Enugu State Council for Arts and Culture, Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos, Thought Pyramid Art Center, Abuja, and many others.

Special donations and prize endowments have come from the Justice Anthony Aniagolu family, Vin Martin Ilo, Mfon Usoro, the Pius Okigbo family, Art Is Everywhere, and Professor El Anatsui and Engr. Gesi Asamaowei, among others.

The growing number of participants from across Nigeria, and the progress made by past winners, shows how LIMCAF has developed over the years. However, it makes us consider the following. An initiative that has proven its worth, over nearly two decades, should be able to gain sustained support to continue identifying and fostering young artists.

By Gregory Austin Nwakunor

THE Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art (YSMA), Pan-Atlantic University, and SMO Contemporary Art are collaborating to present *Chika Okeke-Agulu: Freedom Bird*, a major survey of the Nigerian artist and scholar's practice spanning more than three decades, from November 1, 2026 to January 31, 2027. The title, *Freedom Bird*, is drawn from a recurring motif in Okeke-Agulu's visual and poetic vocabulary and speaks to freedom as an aspiration continually negotiated through political struggle, personal memory and artistic expression.

Across works produced from the late 1980s to the present, the exhibition traces an evolving artistic language through which the artist reflects on Nigeria's postcolonial experience, from military dictatorship and democratic aspiration to civic fracture, migration and the continuing movement of Nigerians in search of new futures.

Curated by Iheanyi Onwuegbucha, with Sandra Mbanefo-Obiogo as associate curator, the retrospective show will bring together paintings, drawings and sculptures alongside selected poems, diary entries, photographs and archival materials that illuminate the intellectual, political and personal contexts behind the artist's work.

The show offers a rare opportunity to encounter Okeke-Agulu first and foremost as an artist, whose more than three decades of studio practice have evolved alongside his influential work as a scholar,

## Okeke-Agulu's *Freedom Bird* Explores Art, Memory, Migration

ar, critic and curator of African art.

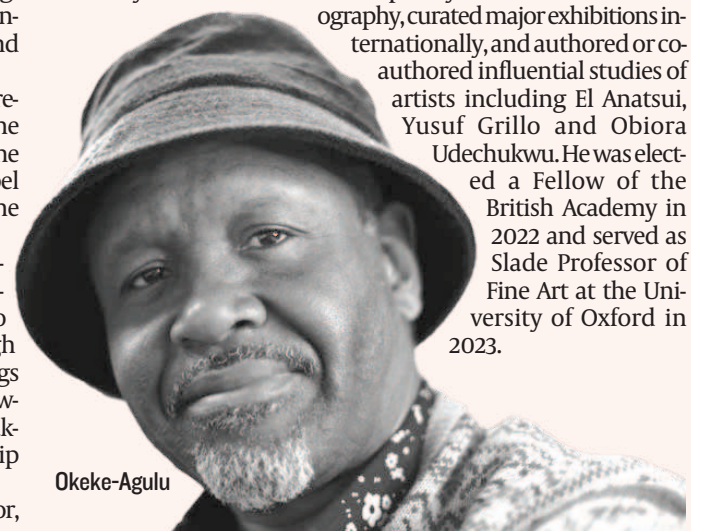
His artistic practice emerged during the military rule in the 1980s and 1990s, engaging questions of repression, civic life, democratic struggle and the position of artists and intellectuals in a changing Nigeria. His subsequent migration to the United States introduced further questions of exile, memory, displacement and belonging into his artistic vocabulary.

Since the early 1990s, Okeke-Agulu's artistic practice has been presented in solo, collaborative and group shows across Nigeria, the United States, Europe, Africa and Asia, including exhibitions at the National Museum in Lagos, Goethe-Institut Lagos, Whitechapel Art Gallery in London, the first Johannesburg Biennale and the Newark Museum, among others.

For YSMA, the decision to host *Freedom Bird* is deeply connected to the museum's identity as an educational museum – an institution committed not merely to displaying artworks, but to creating opportunities for audiences to encounter art through research, context, critical inquiry and dialogue. The show brings together artistic practice and scholarship in an especially powerful way: Okeke-Agulu has spent decades simultaneously making art and producing some of the most influential scholarship on Nigerian and African modern and contemporary art.

An artist, art historian, critic, curator, published poet and educator,

Okeke-Agulu is currently the Robert Schirmer Professor of Art and Archaeology and African American Studies at Princeton University and Director of its Africa World Initiative. He has taught extensively on modern and contemporary African art and historiography, curated major exhibitions internationally, and authored or co-authored influential studies of artists including El Anatsui, Yusuf Grillo and Obiora Udechukwu. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2022 and served as Slade Professor of Fine Art at the University of Oxford in 2023.



Okeke-Agulu

## Broadcast Content Across Borders

Compiled by Shaibu Hussein

## AFRIFF Names Jury For 2026 Edition

**T**HE Africa International Film Festival (AFRIFF) announces the international jury for its 15th edition holding from November 1 to 7, 2026 in Lagos, Nigeria, under the theme *Frames of the Future: Africa's Creative Intelligence*. Bringing together filmmakers, producers, critics, researchers, performers and entertainment strategists, the jury offers a wide range of perspectives on narrative craft, artistic originality, cultural authenticity and the international reach of African storytelling. Zimbabwean-born film curator and programmer Keith Shiri joins AFRIFF as Festival Programmer and Jury Coordinator. His experience includes the London African Film Festival, programme advisory work for the BFI London Film Festival and Venice Film Festival, and service on international festival juries. Joining Shiri are Jean-Pierre Bekolo, Fibby Kioria, Blessing Uzzi, Jerry Chiemeké, Michel Tabet, Tshepiso Chikapa Phiri, Femi Elufowoju Jr. OBE, Dr Ahmed Al Othman and Jemilah Alghali. Tshepiso Chikapa Phiri is Founder and Group CEO of Known Associates Group and Chairperson of the Independent Producers' Organisation. Her credits include *uBettina Wethu*, *Wild Is the Wind* and *The Umbrella Men*, alongside production executive work

and *The Woman King*. Blessing Uzzi is Founder of Bluhouse Studios and filmmaker behind *Freedom Way*, which premiered at Toronto in 2024, won the AFRIFF Jury Prize and received Best Movie and Best Writing at the 2025 AMVCA. She also produced and served as showrunner of the Zikoko Life Series. Dr Ahmed Al Othman is an AFRIFF 2025 jury alumnus and member of the Oman Film Society, supporting international relations and cultural exchange. He champions opportunities connecting Omani filmmakers with the global film community. Jean-Pierre Bekolo is Internationally recognised for *Quartier Mozart* and *Les Saignantes*. He has taught at Duke University and was a Harvard McMillan-Stewart Fellow in 2024. The other jurors on this diet of AFRIFF are Fibby Kioria, founder of Mucii Pictures and former Program Director of Mira Nair's Maisha Film Lab, Jerry Chiemeké, a Berlinale Talents and Talents Durban alumnus, Michel Tabet is affiliated with CNRS and the French Institute for the Near East, Femi Elufowoju Jr. OBE is Founder of Tiata Fahodzi, and Jemilah Alghali is BET Media Group executive.

## Berlinale Retrospective Marks Anniversary

**F**OR the 100th anniversary of Fritz Lang's groundbreaking film *Metropolis*, the *Retrospective* of the 77th Berlin International Film Festival will be dedicated to cinematic visions of the future and of rebellion. The film dystopias hover between post-apocalyptic, cyberpunk, and political allegory, creating alternate worlds in which freedom, identity, and self-determination are subject to renegotiation. The *Retrospective* films spin that subject matter across a range of focal points: urbanism, artificial intelligence, feminism, and capitalism – much like the Deutsche Kinemathek exhibition *The Metropolis Century: Dystopia and Rebellion* (March 18 through September 26, 2027). The Berlinale programme includes American blockbusters like Paul Verhoeven's *RoboCop* (1987) in addition to underground films such as *Decoder* (1984, dir: Muscha) and anime like *Metropolis* (2001, dir: Rintaro). Germany's film legacy is represented with *The Last Days of Gomorrah* (1974) by Helma Sanders-Brahms, alongside international films that focus on viewpoints from society's margins. One of those is Ngozi Onwurah's *Welcome II the Terrordome* (1995), the first feature length British film directed by a Black woman,

which the *Retrospective* is screening in a new restoration. Berlinale Director Tricia Tuttle: The Deutsche Kinemathek has long been an excellent partner for the Berlinale's archive programming, and we're really looking forward to this second *Retrospective* under artistic director Heleen Gerritsen'. Rebellion is the leitmotif in all the films: the struggle against machines, systems, and artificial intelligence; the feminist revolt against patriar-

chal power structures, opposition by individuals and oppressed groups to the state, ideology, and social control. Heleen Gerritsen, Artistic Director of the Deutsche Kinemathek and head of the *Retrospective* and *Berlinale Classics* sections, says, "One hundred years after *Metropolis*, the focus is on directors who created their own worlds and visions of the future. The aesthetic spectrum is broad, ranging from big-budget mainstream movies to underground films. The *Retrospective* will present some 20 films, the complete run-down will be published in December 2026."

## Tokyo International Film Festival To Host Academy Officials

**T**HE 39th Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF), to be held from October 26 through November 4, during the week announced that it will present Academy in Tokyo, a special programme welcoming top executives from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the organisation behind the Oscars®. Academy CEO Bill Kramer, President Lynette Howell Taylor, and Chief Membership, Impact and Industry Officer Meredith Shea will visit Japan for the occasion. On October 28, the three will participate in a panel discussion, followed by the presentation of a leadership award to Kramer and a gathering for Academy members. On October 29, Kramer will participate in a conversation with Hiro Matsuoka, President and CEO of Toho Co., Ltd., a leading figure in the Japanese film industry. This panel will offer a behind-the-scenes look at the Oscars as well as insights into the Academy's global initiatives and membership programmes. The discussion will also explore the Academy's perspective on the current state and future of international cinema. Following the panel discussion on October 28, Bill Kramer, making his first visit to Asia, will receive the Global Cinema Leadership Special Award in recognition of his significant contributions to the development of the global film industry and the advancement of film culture.



## NGE Donates Book On Journalism To UNILAG's Communication Faculty

By Opeyemi Babalola

**T**HE Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) has donated copies of its recently published book, titled 'Truth, Trust, and the Future of Journalism in Nigeria' to the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, University of Lagos.

The book, edited by a team of scholars and professionals including Prof Chinyere Stella Okunna, Dr. Tony Onyima, Dr. Iyobosa Uwugiaren, Dr. Kabir Alabi Garba and former General Secretary of the Guild, Angela Agoawike, has contributions from distinguished voices across print, broadcast and digital media, examining the critical challenges confronting journalism in an era

of declining public trust and contested truth.

In her foreword, the Director, Institute of Continuing Education and former Head, Department of Mass Communication, University of Lagos, Prof. Abigail Ogwezzy-Ndisika, described the book as an urgent emergency response to address a critical void in contemporary media literature by asking how journalism preserves its democratic soul when truth itself is under siege.

She commended the Guild for bringing unassailable institutional authenticity to the book.

"Without doubt, when the Guild

speaks on truth, public trust, ethics and sustainability, it speaks with collective weight of centuries of combined newsroom leadership, historical memory and moral authority," she said.

Receiving copies of the book alongside faculty members, the Dean of the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Prof. Oloruntola Sunday, described the donation as a meaningful bridge between the industry and the academia. He said the book offers a clear-eyed vision of journalism's future and reaffirmed the faculty's commitment to making full use of the resource, particularly in teaching professional ethics.

He described the gesture as a form of collaboration between the town and gown, urging more of such efforts to assist the students of journalism and those practising in sustaining the integrity of the profession in the society.

He said: "So this one will go a long way in helping our students, especially in the area of ethics, and I promise that we are going to make very good use of it."

Earlier, the Guild's Vice President (West) and Editor of weekend titles of *The Guardian* who led a team of the NGE to the faculty, underscored the professional body's role as a defender of truth and promoter of ethical standards.

He expressed confidence that the book will serve academics, students and practising journalists alike by confronting the pressing issues facing the profession today.

In *Apata Boys*... Omeje Interrogates Power, Loyalty In 1980s Ibadan

By Ruth Ononye

**A**LL is set for the launch of *Apata Boys: Syndicate Rising* by the novelist and storyteller, Paul Omeje. It will be released on November 3, 2026.

A cinematic crime novel set in 1980s Apata and Ibadan, it is rooted in brotherhood, betrayal, ambition and the pursuit of power.

Apata and Ibadan are central to the novel, shaping the characters' relationships, ambitions and conflicts while grounding the story in a distinctly Nigerian reality and deepening its exploration of loyalty, power and consequence.

In the novel, Omeje turns his attention to a community where relationships, competing interests and the pursuit of influence collide. At the centre is brotherhood: a source of loyalty and protection that comes under pressure as ambition, power and survival begin to demand different things from those bound by it. He is interested in the choices people make when power, loyalty and survival intersect.

"Crime creates the pressure, but people are what interest me," Omeje says. "I wanted to explore what happens when loyalty, ambition and survival begin pulling people in different directions. Those choices reveal character, and those choices sit at the heart of *Apata Boys*."

Omeje's creative journey began with screenwriting. After studying Mass Communication at Auchi Polytechnic, he began writing film scripts, which are registered with the Writers Guild of America West. That foundation continues to shape his fiction, particularly the way he constructs scenes, builds tension and lets conflict unfold through character and action.

Raised in Aguda, Surulere, Lagos, his understanding of people and everyday life continues to shape the characters and conflicts he brings to the page.

More than two decades of work, travel and encounters across cultures have sharpened Omeje's eye for human behaviour and the choices people make under pressure. This novel marks his entry into long-form fiction while continuing a storytelling practice shaped by visual narrative, character and conflict.



Dr. Rasheed Buhari (left); an official of the NGE, Dr. Olabisi Deji Folutile; Professor Tayo Popoola; Professor Oloruntola Sunday; Professor Ismail Ibraheem, Professor Theresa Amobi; Dr. Kabir Alabi Garba; and Dr. Ebony Oketunmbi during the event.

# Exploring Nuances Of Colours In Aderinsoye's *Voice In Pigment*

By Sunday Aikulola

FOR the art teacher at Yaba College of Technology (Yabatech), Lagos, Dr Aladegbongbe Aderinsoye, it is important to interrogate the hidden voices behind colours to appreciate manifold power of nature.

Addressing journalists recently in Lagos on his show, titled, *Voice in pigment*, he observed colours speak and engage individuals.

Saying the exhibition is a journey of over four decades, he recalled, "I had an exhibition last year, one in Yabatech and another one at The National Museum Lagos about the history of my arts."

To the don, "I said this year, I want to investigate the voice that is in pigment, because pigment speaks. Pigment is colour. But colours can only speak where there is light. The light reveals the colours before they begin to talk."

In addition, he said, "the paintings are on flat surface and a two-dimensional object. The colours help you determine whether it is a figure or an ordinary object. The messages are also embedded in the images on the canvass."

Speaking on one of his work, titled, *Maiden dance*, the don recalled childhood memories in the village where maidens come out nude, but only have traditional beads on their waste to cover their private parts.

He recounted the maidens engage in acrobatic dance, twisting of the waist, but the dance is only meant for maidens that have not been defiled.

In the village, the don noted those are the ladies parents want their children to marry.

Aderinsoye also spoke about another work titled, *The inner eye*. He said the inner eye sees better than the naked eye, adding it is with the inner eye that one sees God and also know people in need.

Describing himself as a spiritual person, he dis-

closed there are seventy-two works that would be exhibited.

On his part, the curator, Moses Ohiomokhare, said *Voice in pigment* is the ultimate celebration of colour as a living force in arts, a voice without words, yet full of meaning.

Speaking in a similar vein, Chief Executive Officer, Auxilia Media Limited, Olufunke Fajusigbe, recollected childhood memories where her father was a great collector of local and international art work.

To her, "one of my father's biggest quote was, 'nature is kind, every creativity and thinking comes from nature.' I'm very excited about the exhibition. The theme resonates with me."

For art lovers, *Voice in Pigment* offers an opportunity to encounter Aderinsoye's work in person and discover what stories emerge when colour takes centre stage.



Aderinsoye

## Odigbose, At Premiere, Gives Colour To Slave Trade Narrative

By David Emokpae

WHEN the much-anticipated premiere of *Odigbose - The play*, made its debut at the MUSON Centre, Onikan, on Saturday, October 17, 2026, it didn't disappoint, as all the elements of theatre, came together to give colours, vibrancy and true meaning to the historic narrative of the theme of the dramatic production based on the slave trade story.

The Agip Hall on this fateful Saturday night welcomed a mixed gathering made of Nigerian and international audience: all lovers of theatre, music, dance and rich entertainment,

The audience was enraptured by the beauty of *Odigbose - The play*, written and directed by Otunba Wanle Akinboboye, a renown tourism investor and developer. He is also the creator of the La Campagne Tropicana Beach Resort to you brand, a multiple-awards winning African themed resort, known for its promotion of a mixed blend of iconic African cultural heritage and hospitality motifs, amidst a splash of elegance and modern opulence.

The dramatic piece took the audience back to the period between the 16th and 19th centuries. An unravelling of the tragic moment that is better forgotten in the history of Africa.

An era of betrayals, enslavement, suffering, and pains inflicted on an innocent generation and people by brutish and heartless slave merchants, who offered all forms of inducements to the unsuspecting leaders to betray the trust and confidence of their people in selling them out for peanuts to the merchants who subjected them to some of the most inhumane treatments under hash conditions, weathers and environments.

For Akinboboye, who has added another stripe to his growing armour of creative ferment and investment in humanity, *Odigbose - The play* was more than an historic and entertaining piece..

It was a creative and literary work that explored an alternate narrative from the perspective of an African, who knew the pains and sufferings that his forebears were subjected to and has through the years committed himself to not just repudiating it but reversing it by investing in the promotion of the best of Africa through his Continent Building and Motherland Beckons platforms and of recent, his IPADA Initiatives.

He noted on the night that the dramatic piece was inspired by his desire to reverse and correct what he described as the misrepresentation of the African side of the story by outsiders.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT 2020  
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OF INCORPORATED TRUSTEES

The general public is hereby notified that **LEADERS TO THE NATIONS MINISTRIES** has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission, Abuja, for registration under Part F of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020.

#### TRUSTEES:

1. Chinedum Azuh - Chairman
2. Chinedum-Azuh Oluchi Blessing
3. Onyemaobi Chidinma Nancy

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. To raise, train and equip leaders with Christian values for service in the church and society.
2. To preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in Nigeria and to other nations.
3. To organise conferences, seminars and leadership programmes.
4. To carry out charitable and humanitarian activities.

Any objection to this registration should be addressed to the Registrar-General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 420, Tigris Crescent, Maitama, Abuja, within 28 days of this publication.

SIGNED:  
Gloria Idoko  
Secretary

### CELEBRATING INSPIRING AND AWARD-WINNING AMAZONS IN NIGERIA

## With LITACO, BMACA Awele Ilusanmi Deepens Publishing Enterprise, Motivates Authors To Succeed

DR Awele Ilusanmi (FANA) is a prolific and cerebral writer, whose works are at different levels impacting lives. As a leader of thought, she has continued to empower emerging writers through mentorship, professional training and innovative publishing initiatives that is strengthening Africa's storytelling ecosystem.

For the love of writing, books, publishing and mentorship, the lady generally referred as Queen of Books birthed the Book Marketing Class Africa (BMACA) to equip authors with practical strategies for book promotion, marketing excellence, and sustainable literary careers. Emerging as the President of the Literary Authors Cooperative Multipurpose Society of Nigeria (LITACO), the scribbler upped her advocacy for books and reading culture, using the platform as an avenue to advocate for literary growth, resilience and creative empowerment.

Speaking about LITACO, she disclosed: "LITACO is the first of its kind in Nigeria. The society is established to help members become successful authors by supporting one another. These include financial and moral support via helping to edit/proofread scripts; promoting and marketing books on Amazon and other platforms; attracting international companies to buy our books locally and internationally; advertising our books in local and international trade fairs; print books; do team promotion of our books on social media platforms; get publishing deals, among others.

"The body has a financial and informative supportive system that enables authors to pursue their writing careers successfully without any financial stress. Here, authors can get support to build up their book ideas, do proper editing, printing, book signing, book launches, book marketing and author branding," she added.

Apart from this, the body is actively promoting reading culture across the country and working to minimise piracy to its barest if not totally eradicate it.

On the reasons for embarking on such a noble venture, the Queen of Books, revealed, "most Nigerian authors do not know that they can get support from the Literary Authors Cooperative with proper planning," she continued, "I am passionate about publishing, books, marketing and people reading for development, growth or even for leisure. I am also committed to seeing Nigerian authors succeed across the global," she intoned.

Ilusanmi had worked as a Literary Agent with Publisher, an award-winning literary crowdfunding company in New York, USA. She previously served in the role of Nigeria Chapter President of Association of Publishers for Special Sales, Denver, Colorado, USA.

Currently working as Assistant Editor, Journal of Human Services: Training, Research, and Practice, Stephen F. Austin University, Texas, USA.

She has over 12 books to her credit, among are "Comforting Arms," and "Launch Money", the author has been on different platforms and literary communities to speak about books, marketing strategies, reading culture and how authors can succeed in their writing.

At the 2019 edition of Connect Nigeria's Writers' Conference, Ilusanmi was a speaker and panelist. She spoke on "Successful Book Publishing and Marketing." She was also on the panel of the Lagos Books and Art Festival (LABAF) 2023, where she shared her

expertise on the topic "Winning With Book Publishing and Marketing."

As a keynoter at the event organised by Booksellers Association of Nigeria on October 17, 2024, she spoke on: "Creative, Innovative and Aggressive Marketing Approaches For Selling More Books." On November 16, 2024, she was also on the panel of the Writers Interactive Network Literary Festival 3 tagged, ArtsLiveLagos, where she spoke on "Book PR for the 21st Century."

Disclosing some of the things she has done through LITACO and the various organisations under her, she said, "we have supported over 100 Nigerian authors to go through training programmes in publishing and in the marketing of their books," adding that LITACO has also introduced some authors to improve their writing skills through international online trainings and as well helped to build website for authors and organised mini-book launch for them.

With a master's degree in publishing studies from Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas, USA, the Queen of Books is currently undergoing a doctoral programme in school psychology and health service, while working as Graduate Research Assistant at her alma mater. She is a fellow of the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA). She is a member of the Board of Trustees (BOT), Trinity Writers and Publishers Network and also a member, Board of Trustees - The Fodio Reading Foundation.

To celebrate Ilusanmi's contributions in Nigeria's literary community, FAMBI Group in December 2025, organised a yearly writing contest tagged, "Awele's Heart Short Story Peace Competition" with a winning prize of N50,000 and also to publish the best entries in an anthology.

As a testament to her excellence and impactful works, Ilusanmi has been recognised and given different awards including, the Connect Nigeria Award (2019) in recognition of her support, and contribution to the Nigeria Literary Space; the African Writers Tribe Transformational Leader Award (2025); the Trinity Writers and Publishers Network Award for Excellence in Education; Rotary Club of Ikate, for her contributions to child literacy and youth development.

In 2025, she was given 100 Prudent Women Compendium and Laureate of Enterprise, Growth and Organisational leadership award. In May, 2026 she received International award as one of 100 reputable women of African Descent in Tanzania.

Further demonstrating her commitment to educational advancement and literary development Dr. Awele Ilusanmi, FANA, has awarded scholarships to two undergraduate members of Authors' Hub, Oyelade Adeyemi Testimony and Celina Chinwemmeri Ikechukwu, providing annual support of 150,000 and 100,000 respectively to sustain their education.

In a related effort to promote reading culture and literary appreciation among youths the

Literary Authors Cooperative (LITACO), under the leadership of Dr. Awele Ilusanmi, FANA, has launched its Literary Read-Aloud Project in Lagos secondary schools, beginning at Valuecrest International School, Shasha, with author Olumide Adeganmi and his book Archive of Scars.



Awele Ilusanmi

# Felabration 2026: New Generation Of Artistes Keeps Fela’s Legacy Alive

By Daniel Anazia

FROM emerging performers to established stars, Felabration 2026 once again demonstrated that Fela Anikulapo-Kuti’s influence extends beyond his music, inspiring new generations to reinterpret his sound, style and spirit of social consciousness.

The week-long festival, held from October 12 to 18 at the New Afrika Shrine in Lagos, ended on Sunday with performances by Femi Kuti, Kcee and other artistes, bringing together different generations of Nigerian musicians in celebration of the Afrobeat pioneer.

Themed ‘Who Are You?’, the event explored Fela’s enduring relevance through music, fashion, visual art and public debate. The festival opened with activities that extended beyond the concert stage.

The Fela Debates on October 12 brought Lagos governorship candidates together to discuss governance and public accountability, while the art competition recognised visual artists interpreting Fela’s cultural influence. The wider programme also included fashion and dance activities, rein-

forcing the festival’s position as a celebration of Nigerian creativity.

As performances gathered momentum, emerging acts shared the spotlight with more established names. On October 13, Tobi Majek and the Da Seed Band performed alongside Scott Martins and the Electrified Band, among other performers.

Their appearances reflected the festival’s continuing role in creating space for younger musicians to introduce their sound to new audiences while drawing inspiration from Afrobeat’s rich musical heritage.

One of the week’s notable mu-

sical moments came on October 15, the date that would have marked Fela’s 88th birthday. Femi Kuti joined Fuji star Abass Obesere for a performance that brought two distinct Nigerian musical traditions together. The collaboration illustrated how Fela’s legacy can remain alive through musical exchange rather than being confined to reproducing the past.

The festival’s closing weekend further highlighted its generational and stylistic range. On Saturday, October 17, Daddy Showkey, Ice Prince, Ruggedman, Peruzzi, Barry Jhay and Shodan were among the artistes who performed. The mix of veteran entertainers and contemporary acts connected different eras of Nigerian popular music, giving audiences a broad view of the country’s evolving sound



Femi and Made

# AFFRICUFF Returns To Houston For 4th Edition

By Ruth Ononye

THE African Cultural Film Festival (AFFRICUFF) has returned to Houston for its highly anticipated fourth edition, which began on October 23 and ends October 25, 2026, at Star Cinema Grill, Richmond, Texas.

Founded by award-winning filmmaker and film scholar, Dr. Emem Isong Misodi, AFFRICUFF continues its mission of celebrating African and culturally diverse cinema, amplifying underrepresented voices and creating meaningful connections between filmmakers, audiences and communities.

Now in its fourth year, the festival has grown into an important cultural gathering in Houston, bringing together storytellers, creatives, film enthusiasts and cultural ambassadors from different backgrounds to celebrate the power of cinema to connect people across geographical and cultural boundaries.

This year’s theme, “New Voices. New Visions,” it shines spotlight on emerging filmmakers, fresh perspectives and innovative storytelling while celebrating the rich cultural heritage that continues to inspire cinema across Africa and its diaspora.

Dr.



Misodi

Shaibu Hussein, who has been a regular judge since inception, is returning as Head of Jury, with Tanya Price, Uche Macauley, Simon Chibuzor Emeke and Onimisi Adaba as members of the jury.

Festival goers can look forward to three days of engaging film screenings, filmmaker conversations, cultural exchanges, networking opportunities and special festival experiences, culminating in a closing celebration recognising creativity and cinematic excellence.

More than a showcase of films, AFFRICUFF is a platform where cultures meet, stories are shared and new connections are formed.

For Dr. Misodi, AFFRICUFF represents a deeply personal commitment to the arts, cultural identity and community building.

With more than three decades of experience in the film industry and a PhD in Film and Media Studies specialising in cultural hybridity, Dr. Misodi believes cinema has a unique ability to bridge cultural differences and foster understanding.

“AFFRICUFF is much more than a film festival to me. It is a celebration of who we are, where we come from and the beautiful possibilities that emerge when different cultures meet. My passion has always been to tell stories, promote the arts and create spaces where people can connect through culture. Even when the journey is challenging, I believe this vision is worth pursuing. We want people to come, experience different cultures, discover new voices and leave inspired,” she said.

The 2026 edition promises a vibrant gathering of filmmakers, actors, cultural ambassadors, industry professionals and film lovers, reflecting Houston’s rich multicultural identity.

Through its carefully curated film selections and accompanying conversations, AFFRICUFF seeks to encourage dialogue around identity, heritage, migration, cultural exchange and the shared human experiences that unite people across borders.

# Olamide Sets November 16 As Release Date For New Album, *Time And Space*

By Daniel Anazia

RAPPER and music executive Olamide has confirmed November 16, as the release date for his forthcoming album, *Time and Space*, raising anticipation among fans eager for his next full-length project.

The announcement, made on October 20, comes as the YBNL Nation boss prepares for another major phase in his career, following the release of his self-titled album, *Olamidé*, in June last year. The an-

nouncement has sparked excitement among fans eager to hear new music from the award-winning rapper.

Olamide gave fans an early taste of the forthcoming project with the release of *Burukutu*, a new single unveiled alongside a music video directed by TG Omori. The track serves as the lead release from *Time and Space*, offering an early glimpse into the sound of the upcoming album.

Although details about the album’s tracklist, guest appear-

ances and overall direction is yet to be fully disclosed, the announcement has already put the project on the radar of listeners following the rapper’s next musical move.

Over the years, the *Shakiti Bobo*, *Science Students* hit-maker has built a formidable catalogue spanning Nigerian hip-hop, street-pop and Afrobeats. Beyond his recordings, his influence extends through YBNL Nation, the label he founded in 2012 and which has helped shape the

careers of several Nigerian artistes.

The new album also follows a period in which Olamide continued to feature on other artistes’ records while maintaining his presence in the music industry. Its arrival will give listeners another opportunity to assess how he continues to evolve as a rapper, songwriter and music executive.

The project carries added significance because Olamide had previously suggested that

Unruly, released in 2023, might be his final album. Subsequent projects, including *Ikigai Vol. 1* and *Olamidé*, showed that he was still willing to return to the album format.

With the scheduled release, attention will now turn to its eventual tracklist, possible collaborations, and the musical direction Olamide chooses to pursue. For an artiste whose career has been defined by reinvention and a strong connection to Nigeria’s street culture, the forthcoming release represents an-

other chapter in a journey that continues to shape the country’s contemporary music scene.



Olamide

# TEETH 4 TEETH ... With Justin Akpovi-Esade

Did That Yoruba Actress Organise Birthday Or Fundraising?

T4T has been bombarded with videos online of the seventh year birthday anniversary of the son of Nollywood actress, Wunmi Toriola.

It was a grand celebration. All the top movie and music stars of Yoruba extraction were present, all the top stars. Ms Toriola was seen dancing excitedly while being pelted with wads of naira notes (hope the EFCC won’t see this part of the story here, not for fraud o, but you know, ‘inhuman treatment’ of the naira).

From the video, one could see that the venue where the party held was top class, in fact, one would have mistaken the event for a box office premiere, but no, it was the birthday of a year old child!

Now, the question T4T wants to ask is, when the boy gets to 10 or even 15 years, na for Aso Rock aunty Wunmi go for do the birthday be dat na! The funny part of the whole thing was, of all the videos

T4T saw, he only saw the boy feature in one, just one! It was Wunmi dancing or being sprayed money or welcoming fellow stars we all got to see. One would have thought that the seven year old Zion and his peers would be seen jumping on bouncing castles, drinking mineral waters and even ‘Bobo’, but whoosai, na adults drinking Hennessy and eating from big bowls of amala and gbegiri full everywhere.

This brings us to ask a crucial question: was the little boy aware it was his birthday party and was it a birthday of Zion or a fundraiser that aunty Wunmi organised? **Kanayo O Kanayo Is Angry!**

NOLLYWOOD acting legend, Kanayo O Kanayo is very angry. He is so angry he does not care anymore whether you accuse him of attacking the ‘body of Christ’ (that is the familiar emotional blackmail line anytime one criticises the activities of some Pastors in Nigeria).

And so, T4T was snooping around online some couple of days ago when he came across a

visibly angry K.O.K in a video tearing into a popular Pentecostal Apostle who has been making frightening and ridiculous claims about Jesus crying by his side, walking along a beach with him and going to heaven like who goes to Ikeja daily, and other rather unbelievable tales.

This was what K.O.K said in case you have not seen the video: “If you’re a follower of Christ, what happened to Jesus? He died and ascended into heaven. Pastor Arome (Osayi) is still alive and telling you people that he went to heaven, and then his members are there clapping. Many are going to hell with their eyes open.”

This is T4T’s position. Apostle Osayi knows what he sees every time he closes his eyes, that, T4T cannot independently verify. If he says he goes to heaven every night, then it is true, as T4T is not in his eyes and does not have the intention of entering his eyes either. As long as the large crowd in his church believes and even hails him every time he drops a rather unbelievable tale, then, it is fine

with T4T.

And this is to bro’s K.O.K. “Touch not my anointed and do my prophet no harm”. Abi nor be wetin Christians dey tell us anytime we talk about dia Daddy G.O.s?

To God be the Glory!

**That Kenyan Pastor Has Been Served Justice**

T4T has always screamed about the dangers of religions, all of them. His fears were confirmed with the recent conviction and sentencing to death of a Kenyan Pastor who murdered 191 people. Yes, 191 human beings, not cows! While convicting Paul Mackenzie, the Judge, according to the BBC, said his followers believed he was “Jesus’s mouthpiece”.

Mackenzie ordered members of his church to starve their children to death so they could “meet Jesus”. His doctrine said that education was forbidden and modern medicine was “evil”.

Twenty-eight other leaders of his cult (that is right, a cult, not church) were also convicted of murder. They had all pleaded

not guilty, repeatedly insisting that nobody was forced to die. Delivering her eight-hour judgement in the port city of Mombasa, Justice Diana Mochache said Mackenzie’s followers believed he was “Jesus’s mouthpiece”.

One of his co-accused said Mackenzie had told his followers that anyone who “resisted the directive to fast must be forced to go to heaven through kicks and blows”.

This is where the story got weirder. Burials inside the forest where the cult was based were called “weddings”. Those who died “were celebrated as having wedded with Jesus”, the judge said. A witness stated that a pregnant woman had been barred from nursing her new-born baby, who died 12 days later. “She was instructed to fast to death and follow her children,” the witness said.

Mackenzie established Good News International Ministries in 2003. Over the next 16 years, the church grew in popularity to draw thousands of followers in

the church’s branches across Kenya.

Rev Kings, the Nigerian version of this Kenyan evil who is on death row for killing two of his church members is a ‘saint’ compared to Mackenzie.

Now, this is T4T’s position: How did people allow themselves to be so manipulated, controlled and stupid to the extent they killed themselves or their loved ones in their eagerness to “meet Jesus”? None of them could for a minute ask why the Mackenzie was not ready to join them abi im nor wan meet Jesus? At least that bigger evil in America, Jim Jones and his about a thousand followers drank poison and all went to meet Jesus same time in what is the biggest mass suicide in the world.

By the way, how did the Kenyan authorities allow an evil like Mackenzie go on unchecked for over two decades?

Every day, the “Religion is the Opium of the people” quote by Karl Marx continues to make sense.

# Sokoto Climate Readiness Assessment A Major Milestone – Achida



Sokoto State Commissioner for Budget and Economic Development, Dr. Bashir Muhammad Achida at the workshop

THE Sokoto State Government has described the 2026 Climate Finance Readiness Assessment as a major milestone towards building a climate-resilient state.

The Commissioner for Budget and Economic Development, Dr. Bashir Muhammad Achida, stated this while declaring open the Validation Workshop on the Assessment Report.

The workshop was organised by the state government in collaboration with Partnership for Agile Governance and Climate Engagement (PACE) and United Kingdom (UK) International Development.

Achida said the report would strengthen the state's capacity to access, mobilize and effectively manage climate finance for sustainable development. He commended PACE, UK International Development and the Technical Task Team for their support and called on relevant MDAs to ensure Sokoto benefits maximally from the initiative.

Commissioners for Water Resources, Alhaji Aminu Abdullahi Iya, and Environment, Alhaji Nura Shehu Tangaza, as well as the SSA on Irrigation, Alhaji Kabiru Muhammad Sani, all pledged commitment, noting that Sokoto is among frontline states implementing climate resilience programmes.

Earlier, PACE National Team Leader, Mr. Ifenyi Peters Uguoke, presented key findings on institutional, legal, policy and public finance frameworks, calling for increased funding and commitment, while Platforms Manager, Mr. Josiah Aramide, presented the report for validation.

The event was attended by Directors of International Cooperation and M&E of the Ministry, Musa Muhammad Wamakko and Hayatu Abdullahi, and some staff.

# The Waiting Game (2)

Continued from GUARDIAN WEEKEND, October 17-18, 2026

THE night that Bolu jetted out to the U.S.A was a memorable and unforgettable one for Yetunde. It was a night that she couldn't forget in a hurry.

The first year of Bolu in the U.S. was fascinating with regards to his relationship with his sweetheart. Yetunde was always happy. He always called her and even sent e-mails to her on a regular basis. This gladdened the heart of the young lady. He wrote her memorable letters that further cemented their relationship and kindled the flame of love in her soul. There was this poetic prose he wrote to her, that filled her with so much passion and joy. It went thus: *'It was a day like every other day, and people were doing their normal businesses. Time was running out, until late in the night, and I was lucky to have got you this time around. You sat beside me, like never before. It was like a carnival of lovers. I held you and pecked you like a baby, and you in turn smiled like a paragon. The place was cool and serene. Once again you smiled like a paragon among paragon; a paragon of virtues, a paragon of physical anatomic grace, a paragon of broadness of heart. You held on to me tightly, but when I was about to leave you, you said "No" and smeared me with your love scent. And this continued for a while but behold an alarm rang. It was 6 a.m.; and surprisingly it was only a dream! Oh Yetunde, I was dreaming! I got up from my bed and prepared to go out for my lecture. Without you there is no light. . . all is darkness. Your presence brightens my day like sunshine. . . even dreams of you makes my day beautiful and complete. . . Oh, Yetunde. . .'*

Most times, Yetunde would pick his letters and read them aloud to feel his presence. That was how it went for the first year.

Gradually the challenges of academics and the social pressure of American way of life

took the better of Bolu and communication between him and Yetunde reduced. The communication gap started expanding as the years rolled by. Somehow, it happened that for the next five years all the letters she wrote him were not replied. She became so worried. Thus, the waiting game had begun. She wondered why her letters and e-mails were not replied by him.

At times she called his number with her meagre income and she got no response. This further devastated her and made her feel worthless and sad.

'Would Bolu dump me?' she thought, "I don't think he'll break my heart. . ." she concluded pensively. This hurtful and unwholesome experience continued for 12 years. Age was definitely not on her side. She was now 31 years old. A lot of men had approached her for the past years, begging for her love and she turned them down, telling them that her fiancé was in faraway America, that he would come for her not so long. A lot of men wondered at her baseless hope and longing for a lover she had not seen or heard from for the past 12 years. Some called her a fool, living in dreamland or fools' paradise. All her peers and friends had been married for a long time with kids in their respective families.

They mocked her and taunted her so much that at times she would break down and cry like a little kid denied food. She became too sad and withdrawn that it affected her legendary beauty; moreover she was now in her early 30s.

She decided to end it all on December 24. She must have had enough for her feminine frame to bear. She made up her mind to commit suicide by falling on her kitchen knife. . .

To be concluded .

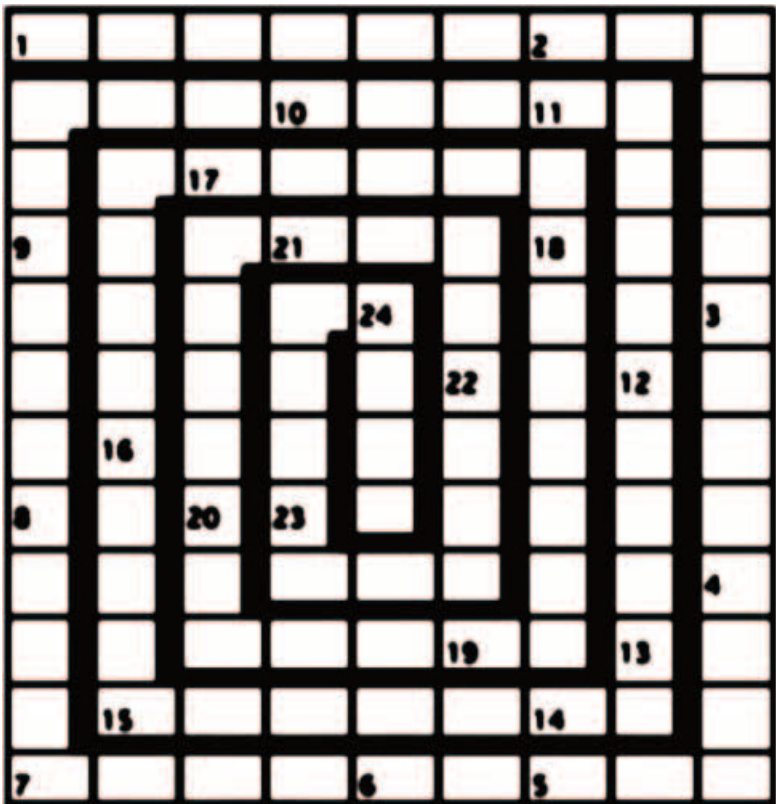
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## Overlapping Word Game

with OLULANA KAYODE 08023183727  
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### Solution

- 1 Hayatou
- 2 Universe
- 3 Senate
- 4 Teacher
- 5 Err
- 6 Revoke
- 7 Kettle
- 8 Legato
- 9 Tonsure
- 10 Revel
- 11 Eldest
- 12 Teller
- 13 Ergo
- 14 Goitre
- 15 Eskimo
- 16 Morsel
- 17 Lobster
- 18 Eradicate
- 19 Terrier
- 20 Erasure
- 21 Refine
- 22 Needful
- 23 Lawal
- 24 Lost



### Overlapping Word Game

- 1 2014 African Footballer of the Year, (4, 5).
- 2 Tube for discharging urine, (7).
- 3 Chest pains, (6).
- 4 Conforming with nature, (7).
- 5 Highest man's voice in music, (4).
- 6 Wig worn to cover a bald area, (6).
- 7 Unnerving, (5).
- 8 Made somebody very happy, (6).
- 9 Well taught, (8).
- 10 Toy bear, (5).
- 11 Succession of hereditary rulers, (7).
- 12 Somebody powerful in business, (6).
- 13 One time, (4).
- 14 Equidistant from other points, (7).
- 15 Nearly, (6).
- 16 Individual's standing, (7).
- 17 Offer respite to somebody, (8).
- 18 At all times, (9).
- 19 Communication in speech, (7).
- 20 Participated in by many, (7).
- 21 S. American mammal, (6).
- 22 Cross River State capital, (7).
- 23 Restore relationship, (6).
- 24 Town in Osun State, (4).

### Word Search

#### Types of Medication-1

|      |          |            |
|------|----------|------------|
| Pill | Elixir   | Tabloid    |
| Drip | Drops    | Drench     |
| Herb | Tablet   | Placebo    |
| Balm | Balsam   | Portion    |
| Shot | Capsule  | Lozenges   |
| Dose | Infusion | Medication |

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D | N | G | H | Y | W | T | O | H | S | P |
| R | D | O | S | E | E | E | I | L | O | N |
| E | N | B | I | Y | R | L | K | H | L | O |
| B | R | E | H | T | T | B | M | C | O | I |
| E | C | C | O | D | A | A | D | N | Z | S |
| R | H | A | M | L | R | T | R | E | E | U |
| B | A | L | S | A | M | O | I | R | N | F |
| C | A | P | S | U | L | E | P | D | G | N |
| B | N | O | I | T | R | O | P | S | E | I |
| R | I | X | I | L | E | J | E | D | S | M |
| W | E | D | I | O | L | B | A | T | C | S |

(c.) Olukayode Olulana

## Birthdays

**AKIOLU**, Oba Rilwan Akiolu, Oba of Lagos will be 83 on October 29, 2026. Born on October 29, 1943, he attended Ansar-Ud-Deen College, Surulere, Lagos (1961-1965) and studied Law at the University of Lagos.

He served for 32 years in the Nigerian Police Force, entering the force in 1970. He served in various capacities and was promoted to the rank of Assistant Inspector-General of Police in 1999.

He was active until his retirement in 2002. He is a member of the Nigerian Institute of Management and a fellow of the Nigerian Law School.

On May 23, 2003, Akiolu was selected by the kingmakers of the Lagos traditional kingdom and confirmed by the Lagos State Government as the 21st Oba of Lagos; he was crowned the next day, and was crowned

on August 9, 2003.

He has served in this position since May 2003, when he succeeded Oba Adeyinka Oyekan.

The monarch courted controversy when in April 2015 in a meeting with Igbo leaders in Lagos swore that any of the Igbo representatives who went against his will during the poll will be thrown inside the lagoon.

**OBADINA**, Venerable (Emeritus) Dr. Johnson Olukunle, Surgeon, Senior Consultant and cleric is 83. Born on October 24, 1943 at Arogunjo village, Ewekoro Local Council, Ogun State, he had his primary education at the United District Central School, Arigbajo, from 1950-1954. He then proceeded to Owu Baptist Day School, Itayalode, Abeokuta in 1955 to complete his Primary education in 1956.

He sat for an entrance examination to the high school of



Akiolu

his dream – the Baptist Boys High School Abeokuta (BBHS) in 1956, but did not meet the cut-off mark, so, he went to his second choice – the African Church Grammar School Abeokuta in 1957. While there, he sat again for the entrance examination to the high school of his dream. He was at BBHS Abeokuta from 1958 to 1962.

He passed the Cambridge West African School Certificate Examination in Grade 1 with Six Distinctions and two credits. In 1963, he proceeded to St Gregory's College, Obalende,



Obadina

Lagos for his two-year Cambridge Higher School Certificate Course in Physics, Chemistry, and Zoology. Of the 18 students on the course at that time, he was one of the only two students that passed the three main subjects and the general paper at a sitting, thus qualifying for the full certificate.

In 1965, he returned to BBHS as a teacher after higher school at the invitation of Baba Akisanya. He taught forms IV, V and III Chemistry and Mathematics respectively. He thereafter proceeded to

the University Of Ibadan College Of Medicine in September 1965 to study Medicine and graduated in June 1970. He had his internship at the Ogbomosho Baptist Hospital (Now Bowen University Teaching Hospital), under seasoned and articulate American missionary medical specialists.

He returned to UCH Ibadan for a year of surgical registrar job before proceeding to Homer G Phillips hospital, St. Louis Missouri USA for his residency training programme in general surgery between 1973 and 1978. He returned to Nigeria in December 1978 after passing the surgical board examinations of both the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada and the American Board of Surgery.

As a Senior Consultant and Chief Consultant General and Trauma Surgeon, he has worked in various hospitals and medical centres across three continents – North St

Louis General Hospital Missouri, USA; Christian Hospital North West, Florissant Missouri USA; Ogun State Hospital, Ilaro; SIM Hospital Egbe, Kogi State; Hosannah Specialist Hospital Ilaro; Tathleeth General Hospital, Saudi Arabia; King Fahad Hospital Hofuf; Al Hasa Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital, Stephenville; Newfoundland Canada; Trauma Surgeon at level 1 OSF; St. Anthony Hospital Trauma Centre, Rockford Illinois, USA; Medical Director, Jefferson City Correction Centre, Missouri USA. He was the Medical Director Pinckneyville Correctional Centre, Illinois USA.

He is currently the Chief Medical Director of Hosanna Specialist Hospital, Ilaro.

Compiled by Gbenga Akinfenwa, oluwagbenga.akinfenwa@guardian.ng or gbengaherkin@yahoo.com

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

## Events



Former Minister of Health, Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi (left); celebrant's husband, Kola Sodipo; celebrant/Deputy Director, Public Affairs Unit, Lagos State Ministry of Agriculture and Food Systems, Adenike Sodipo, and Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Systems, Lagos State, Emmanuel Audu, during Sodipo's retirement and birthday thanksgiving at Archbishop Vining Memorial Church Cathedral, Ikeja. PHOTO: MARVELLOUS OBASA



Members Of Lutheran High School, Obot Idim Old Students' Association: Mr. Dianabasi Okon Effiong (left); Prof. Dianabasi Eduwem; Idorenyin Udi, an engineer, (President G-74); Helen Umoh (nee Eyoh), a lawyer; Pastor Emmanuel Emediong (Ekenyong); Mrs. Idongesit Obasi (Uwah); Christopher Ekpo, an architect; Mr. Smart Ekanem (alias Seaman); a guest, Dr. Effiong Etuk (alias Bishop) and others during their 2026 Annual General Meeting (AGM) / Reunion week in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State...

## The Two Musketeers: Dokubo-Asari Visits Oluwo



Dokubo-Asari (right) and Oba Akanbi during the visit

**RENOWNED** Ijaw leader, Alhaji Mujahid Abubakar Dokubo-Asari (Dabaye-Amakiri I) visited the Paramount Ruler of Iwoland, His Imperial Majesty, Oba Abdulrosheed Adewale Akanbi. The visit centred on strengthening Nigeria's national cohesion and integration. Dokubo-Asari commended Oluwo for his digital approach to monarchy, noting the dare need to attract young ones to traditional institution.

Oluwo stated the discussions at the meetings went beyond traditional institution and extended to national unity, cohesion and integration.

The two personalities agreed to continually use their respective offices to promote Nigeria's oneness and greatness. Dokubo-Asari will be crowned the king of Elem Kalabari Kingdom, Amanyannabo of the source, Elem Kalabari of the Source, Torusarama Piri, in Rivers State in December, 2026.



Area Business Executive Union Bank Plc., Mr. Eno Ukpe (left); President, Sale BlooClouf Tek Consult, Mr. Orobong Udo; Chief Executive, EUPremium Power Solutions, Ejigbohen Udu; Managing Consultant, TheWhy Consulting, Adewale Adetunji Kehinde; Finance Executive and Master of Ceremonies, Chris Madu during Unveiling Ceremony organised by The Why Consulting Ltd held at Yaba, Lagos recently



Legal and Corporate Relations Director, Guinness Nigeria, Rotimi Odusola (left); Human Resources (HR) Director, Guinness Nigeria, Ayodeji Ajibola; Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Guinness Nigeria, Girish Sharma; grand prize winner of the Guinness "Open For More" promotion, Queen Thompson; and Head of Division, East 4, Guinness Nigeria Plc, Jonathan Chukwunyeri, during the official presentation of the 2026 Toyota Land Cruiser Prado to Thompson at Guinness Nigeria's headquarters in Ogba, Lagos.



Group Managing Director, Arco Group, Mr. Alfred Okeigun (sixth left) with other members of staff and National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members during the 2026 Arco Morning of Movement, Wellness, Team Spirit and Connection tagged: 'Stronger together, Healthier together, Arco together', held in Lagos...

## Islamic Scholars Warn Early Marriage Threatens Girls' Education, Future Opportunities



Facilitators at the event organised by the Lateefah Modupeola Okunnu Foundation at the Lagos Central Mosque... recently

By Opeyemi Babalola

**ISLAMIC** scholars have called for urgent action against child marriage, urging parents and guardians to protect girls' rights, prioritise their education and allow them to pursue their aspirations before marriage.

The scholars spoke at an event organised by the Lateefah Modupeola Okunnu Foundation (LMO Foundation) to mark this year's International Day of the Girl Child. They warned that early marriage could deny many girls the opportunity to complete their education and develop the skills needed to secure a

better future. They advocated a rethink of the practice, stressing the need for greater awareness of its dangers, particularly around consent and the emotional, intellectual and financial readiness required for marriage.

Deputy Head of Crescent School, Mrs. Rekia Etiko, cautioned that reaching puberty did not necessarily mean "a girl is physically, emotionally or intellectually prepared for marriage." She identified poverty, limited education, cultural practices, social pressure and insecurity as major drivers of child marriage, especially in Northern Nigeria.

## Axxela Celebrates Customers, Reaffirms Commitment To Quality Service

By Ogueji for Emmanuel

**AXXELA** Limited, a leading gas and power portfolio company in sub-Saharan Africa, has reaffirmed its commitment to quality service and strong customer relationships. The company gave the pledge at its 2026 Customer Appreciation Forum, with the

theme: 'Energy for Progress, Partnerships for Growth', held in Lagos recently.

Its yearly Customer Appreciation Forum forms part of the company's broader commitment to fostering open communication, strengthening customer relationships, and creating value across its mar-

kets. The event provided an opportunity to celebrate customers and explore ways to enhance service excellence through reliable, energy solutions that support business growth.

The Group Chief Executive Officer of Axxela, Moshood Olajide, expressed appreciation to

the customers for their confidence and partnership, emphasising their importance to Axxela's growth and long-term ambitions. "This forum is more than an opportunity to express our appreciation; it is also an avenue to reaffirm our commitment to building enduring partnerships..."

# Guardian Fashion

● STYLE

● ELEGANCE

● LIFESTYLE

## Slaying In Breathable Clothing

... Oversize Shirts And Open Leg Pants/Shorts Are Your Go-to

By Maria Diamond

**H**AVING a good dressing sense is to know what to wear for all seasons and weather conditions. Fashion is never really just about wearing any beautiful clothing that comes to mind; it is mostly dressing healthy by wearing the right clothing that protects you from the weather conditions at all times.

### Wardrobe Tour for Breathable Clothing

It is blazing hot in this part of the world right now, and from the weather forecast available at this moment, the chances of the heat-wave abating any time soon is slim.

For those in Lagos under about 27-degree centigrade that feels like 31-degree centigrade, with approximately 91% humidity that makes the air feel much hotter and stickier, hereby making it impossible for sweat to evaporate from the skin easily and your body stops cooling itself, you may want to do a little wardrobe tour for breathable clothing before stepping out for each day while the hot weather last.

This applies to every other part of the country where the weather is currently threatening to set the skin on draining hotness – breathable clothing is your best bet, especially for women who have a number of other 'biological body condition' factors (that can't tolerate excess heat) to consider.

You need to breathe to function as a human being and the hot weather usually threatens that. But with the right clothing which starts from the fabric, to how it made and then worn, you will breathe just fine.

### Healthy Hot Weather Fabrics

Wearing clothing made with breathable fabrics during the hot and humid weather season allow airflow and circulation while absorbing sweats gently on your skin.

**Loose Weaves 100% Lightweight Cottons:** This includes Voile, Batiste, Lawn and Muslin cotton variant. These fabrics are soft and absorb sweats while the loosened weaves allow airflow without retaining moisture.

**Linen:** It is made from hollow flax plant fibers that allows air penetration into the skin and does not indulge dampness.

**Tencel:** It is made from regenerated cellulose fibers. Its soft and fluid texture expel dampness.

**Hemp:** This is a natural UV ray protective fabric. It also allows air penetration into the skin.

### Oversized Shirts with Open Leg Pants/Shorts

An oversized shirt with open leg pants or shorts remains a fashion staple for both men and women that have come to stay. And when made with breathable fabrics, they become your hot weather wardrobe go-to.

However, it is imperative to combine your oversized shirts with open leg trouser pants when attending former/corporate events or going to the office. But if it's a social gathering or an informer event, you can slay it with your shorts but ensure to do a good application of sunscreen on your thighs and legs before setting out.



# Seinde Signature Celebrates Six Years Of Discerning Luxury Fragrance Culture In Nigeria

## • Unveils N50M Car Giveaway Campaign

By Maria Diamond

LIVE-GOOD-SMELL-GOOD is a culture that should be upheld by every human being with a decent living standard, and with Seinde Signature, one of Nigeria's leading destinations for luxury and niche fragrances, real standard is a deserving luxury scent and lifestyle.

Thus, when Seinde Signature sets the 2026 Yuletide season in an early motion with the announcement of its end-of-year 50million car giveaway prize for fragrance enthusiasts, in commemoration of its sixth anniversary, luxury indeed becomes a standard showcased in details.

For the founder of Seinde Signature, Olaseinde Olufemi Olusola, a passionate fragrance connoisseur and entrepreneur, unveiling the brand-new car campaign underscores the brand's commitment to rewarding customer loyalty while making the festive season memorable for fragrance enthusiasts and luxury consumers.

"This luxury prize invites fragrance lovers to turn their passion for exceptional scents into a potentially life-changing reward. It's been six years of greatness and heartfelt patronages. We couldn't have gotten here on our own as a brand without our clients. This is why we are giving back to customers who spend at least 1million on perfumes at Seinde Signature. From October 25 to November 30, 2026, they will receive a raffle ticket for a chance to win the luxury car," Olusola revealed.

**Celebrating Six Years of Exquisite Niche Fragrance**

With Seinde Signature, 'it is luxury or nothing', and in the last six years, the brand had delivered on this mandate, as the founder built the brand from a personal love of perfumery into a distinctive fragrance retail organisation with a strong focus on niche, artistic and luxury scents.

Reminiscing, Olusola said: "Seinde Signature was established in 2020 around a vision to introduce more Nigerians to the world of niche perfumery, offering access to distinctive fragrances and encouraging customers to appreciate the artistry, individuality and craftsmanship behind them. The offerings include a fragrance Experience Studio and Salon de Parfum retail network, alongside an expanding

experiential approach to fragrance discovery."

Seinde Signature has also introduced innovative retail concepts, including Senbar, which combines fragrance exploration with lifestyle and leisure.

Under Olusola's leadership, Seinde Signature continues to champion a more immersive and discerning fragrance culture in Nigeria, placing emphasis on quality, personal expression and the customer experience.

When asked the ideology behind the car prize and eligibility, he said: "It's our way of giving back. It's been six years of exquisite fragrances, unforgettable experiences and our growing community of fragrance lovers deserves a truly extraordinary celebration. With a car valued at 50 million as the grand prize, the end-of-year promotion gives our customers an added incentive to shop for their favourite fragrances, discover new scents and explore the brand's extensive selection. So whether they are purchasing a signature scent, expanding a personal collection or selecting fragrances as gifts for loved ones, eligible customers can participate in the promotion and stand a chance of driving home a brand-new car."



Founder, Seinde Signature Olaseinde Olufemi Olusola

*'The focus is to champion a more immersive and discerning fragrance culture in Nigeria, placing emphasis on quality, personal expression and the experience of the artistry and craftsmanship of niche perfumes'*

## Shakarasquare Promotes Nigerian Culture With Ankara Kids Fashion Show

By Adaku Onyenucheya

AS part of efforts to promote local culture and fabric, Shakarasquare held its 2026 Ankara Kids Fashion Show in Lagos, where children within age bracket of five and twelve showcased their modelling talents on a runway, in beautifully-styled ankara clothes made by seven different fashion designers.

The event, third in the series, was done to showcase the beauty of the ankara fabric on children, thereby promoting cultural wears among Nigerians and upholding indigenous culture above foreign ones.

Speaking on the inspiration behind the event, the convener of the show, Ijeoma Ude, said the need for local wears to take centre stage in everyday activities in Nigeria, the desire to promote different indigenous culture in Nigeria, and the intention to promote creativity and confidence among the children, prompted her to organise the show.

She said the fashion event is also an opportunity for them to showcase confidence, creativity, and being proud of themselves as Africans and Nigerians.

"Ankara is part of our culture. Contrary to the clothes of the western world, we also have our own fabrics and designs. The kids are promoting our ankara. With this, we are sure that their love for native wears will increase, thereby promoting love for their culture," she said.

Ude also urged government at all levels, corporate bodies, institutions, and private individuals to support the initiative and enable it achieve what she described as "a massive campaign for the enthronement of true African culture over imported ones."

In her speech, the Chief Tourism Officer, Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Lagos State, Funke Olumakinde, said the government sees the platform as a viable one to promote the cultural heritage and values of the various ethnic groups in the Nigeria.

"I want to assure you that the Lagos State government is interested in promoting our culture and I am impressed that you are strengthening the vision of promoting our fabric through children," she said.

Similarly, the Executive Chairman, Lagos State Universal Basic Education Board, Dr Akeem Shittu, praised the conveners of the show for their ingenuity to create a platform where children can showcase their talents, engage in team work, develop self-confidence, and have a great love and understanding of the Nigerian culture.

Shittu noted that learning can also be enabled through social activities that help in mental and physical development of an individual.

"Arts and culture develops a child, builds confidence in them to face the world without fear, promotes cultural identity among them, enables unity and teamwork, and makes learning fun. We believe that this show teaches the children to appreciate our wears and provides them with life skills to be confident and navigate their world," he said.

He commended the organisers for their dedication to ensure involvement of children in cultural promotion.

# Fatai Okoya Seeks Reconciliation With Billionaire Father After Decades Apart

By Suliya Tella

FATAI Okoya, who identifies himself as the first child of billionaire industrialist, Razaq Akanni Okoya, has appealed to his father for forgiveness and reconciliation after decades of estrangement. In an open letter circulating on social media, Fatai expressed regret over their separation, urging the founder of Eleganza Group to give their relationship another chance. “More than four decades have passed, and today, I write with a humble heart, putting aside all pride to say: Dad, I am truly sorry. Please, find it in your heart to forgive me,” he

wrote. Fatai said the years spent apart had weighed heavily on him, adding that he did not want them to lose more opportunities to rebuild their relationship. The appeal was followed by a TikTok Live session with popular blogger, Yeye Kudi Court Room, during which Fatai spoke about his relationship with his father and the events he believes contributed to their estrangement. Appearing alongside his wife and a man he introduced as his maternal uncle, Fatai recalled he was once close to his father and travelled around the world with him.

He said their relationship deteriorated after disagreements over money and his decision to marry a woman his father had advised him against. According to him, he may have mishandled some money while working with his father's business but maintained that the amount was not substantial. Fatai said he was young and in love when he decided to marry his first wife against his father's wishes. He suggested that these disagreements contributed to the prolonged breakdown of their relationship and said he had made several attempts to reconcile with his father.

He also recounted an incident at Chief Okoya's 86th birthday celebration in January, alleging that he was prevented from approaching the industrialist. Fatai said he attended the celebration hoping to see his father but was unable to speak with him despite being present at the event. In the letter, Fatai acknowledged that the past could not be undone but urged his father to allow them to begin again. “I am not asking for the past to be erased overnight. I am simply asking for a chance — for a chance to heal, to make peace, and to rebuild the bond between a father and his child,” he wrote

## Pharmaceutical Groups Hold Valedictory Session For Professor Udeala

By Suliya Tella

ACADEMICS, colleagues, mentees and family members have paid glowing tributes to late Professor Oleka Kelechi Udeala, celebrating his contributions to pharmaceutical education, innovation, mentorship and university administration. The tributes were delivered at a valedictory session titled “A Life of Scholarship, Service and Legacy,” held in his honour recently. The Founder and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy, Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi, who said he had known Udeala for about 48 years, described him as a remarkable scholar and friend who believed in patience, perseverance and making meaningful contributions to society. He said Udeala had left the world better than he found it, urging Nigerians, particularly young people, to remain hopeful despite the country's challenges. The President and Chairman of the Governing Council of the Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy, Prof. Lere Baale, described Udeala as a “quiet giant” whose influence was demonstrated through his work rather than self-promotion, praising his humility, integrity, diligence and commitment to professional excellence. He noted that his legacy included the students he taught, scholars he mentored and institutions he helped strengthen. He also described Udeala's emergence as Nigeria's first pharmacist to serve as a vice-chancellor as a milestone for the profession. According to him, Udeala received an honourable mention associated with the Rolex Award for Enterprise in 1990 for his invention and was named Man of the Year twice by the American Biographical Institute.



The Chairman of the Board of Fellows of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, Pharm. Uchenna Apakama, described Udeala as a mentor, friend and compassionate father figure. Drawing from his experience as a student and professional colleague at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Apakama recalled Udeala's service as Head of the Department of Pharmaceutics, Head of the Drug Production Unit, dean and vice-chancellor. In a separate tribute titled “A Great Father Has Taken a Bow,” the President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, Alhaji Tanko Ayuba, celebrated Udeala's contributions to pharmaceutical education and institution-building. Udeala served as vice-chancellor of the

University of Nigeria, Nsukka, from 1992 to 1995. In 2004, he established the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Port Harcourt, serving as its pioneer head until his retirement in 2016. Ayuba said Udeala's career demonstrated that professional success should be measured not only by positions attained but also by the people and institutions developed. Udeala first son, Chinasa, said: “As his son, I am deeply proud of what he accomplished and the lives he touched. Losing him is painful, but there is comfort knowing that his life meant so much to so many people. But beyond his titles, his fellowships and professional achievements, he was my father. And that is the part of him that I will carry with me most deeply.”

## Mental Health Education Loud For Underserved Rumuosi Community

By Moyosore Salami

RESIDENTS of Rumuosi in Obio/Akpor Local Council of Rivers State were enlightened on how to access free mental healthcare during an awareness programme to mark World Mental Health Day in the community, themed “Lived Experiences Heard: Real Voices, Real Change”.

The outreach took mental health conversations to market women, mothers and men in an

underserved community, where stigma, cultural misconceptions and limited information often stop people from seeking help. The programme was supported by Edvance Consulting, Bobtech Services, DFC Africa MMA, The Night Nurse and the Rumuigwe Royal Family. It was held at the community town hall and built around the community itself, with stakeholders in the community providing some logistic support to make the event a success.

The facilitators used Pidgin English as tool of communication for better impact so that residents could understand the discussions. One of the facilitators, Awele Anetor Valerie, explained each topic to the audience. She also spoke on mental health problems in children, which she said can begin with conditions such as dyslexia, including how parents' attitudes and favouritism could leave children feeling sad and hopeless.

One of the panelists, Ogechi Okparah spoke on lived experiences, focusing on women who push themselves through heavy domestic work, which could lead to mental stress and exhaustion. President, Danamye Fighting Champions, Chief Henry George Nkoro, spoke on access to care, aside sharing how grief after losing his wife left him sad and depressed. He also talked about how local support helped him recover.

## Group Celebrates With Girls In Ondo, Nasarawa, Advocates End To Child Marriage

By Freedom Onobrara

THE Christian Widows and Widowers Empowered Initiative Nigeria (CWWE Nigeria) has commemorated the 2026 International Day of the Girl Child with activities in Ondo and Nasarawa states, reaching 500 girls and advocating stronger action to end child marriage and protect girls' rights, education, and future. The celebrations, in Akure, Ondo State, and Akwanga, Nasarawa State, were organised around the United Nations theme: “End Child Marriage and Invest in Girls' Rights.” The Akure celebration took place at Fiwasaye Girls Secondary School, Alagbaka, Akure, with students and representatives from other schools participating in the programme. The participating schools at the Akure centre were Fiwasaye Girls Secondary School, Alagbaka, Akure; Winners College Worldwide, Faninibi, Ondo Road, Akure; Ijo Mimo Oluwa High School, Oluwatuyi, Akure;

Brilliant Brain Private Schools, Akure; and All Nations School, Akure. The participation of these schools provided an opportunity to engage girls on their rights, education, personal development, and the importance of creating a safer future for every child. A major highlight of the Akure celebration was an inspiring address by Mrs. Ademuyiwa, who emphasised that every girl deserves education, protection, dignity, and equal opportunities to fulfil her potential. She warned that child marriage can deprive girls of their childhood, interrupt their education, and expose them to health risks, emotional distress, and economic dependence. Ademuyiwa encouraged girls to pursue their dreams, stressing that their futures should not be limited to marriage. She called on parents, teachers, government institutions, religious leaders, and community stakeholders to work together to keep girls

in school, protect them from abuse and exploitation, and promote their rights. She also encouraged the girls to take their education seriously, resist negative peer pressure, recognise their worth, and seek help from trusted adults when necessary. CWWE Nigeria expressed profound appreciation to the Ondo State Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for its support and cooperation in making the Akure celebration successful. The organisation also expressed heartfelt gratitude to its longstanding partner, Sisters Journeying Together USA, for its consistent commitment to supporting and empowering girls in Africa. Delivering a goodwill message on behalf of CWWE Nigeria's founder, Beatrice Omowumi Yesufu, the Ondo State Coordinator, Elder Ajayi Akinmolade Samuel, reaffirmed the organisation's commitment to girls' education, protection, and empowerment.

## At 20th Anniversary, OCL Mobilises Fund For Community Hall

By Gbenga Salau

OBIMO Community in Lagos (OCL) has marked its 20th anniversary with a call for greater unity, community development and youth empowerment, alongside a N100 million fundraising drive for the construction of a community hall. The association's Chairman, Comrade Gabriel Onyeisi, in his welcome address at the anniversary celebration, reflected on the organisation's two-decade journey of promoting unity, mutual support and development among Obimo indigenes living in Lagos. Onyeisi said the idea of bringing Obimo people in Lagos under one umbrella was conceived in 2006, culminating in the association's first meeting in October of the same year at the residence of Chief Lookworld in Festac Town, Lagos. He said the association had overcome disagreements and internal crises through dialogue, patience and sacrifice, emerging as a platform for collective progress. A major milestone, he noted, was the merger of the former town union structures with OCL in 2025, describing the development as a significant step towards strengthening unity among members. According to him, the association has also supported members facing difficulties, assisted families in times of need and extended help to vulnerable members of the community. The chairman, who is the association's fifth chairman, urged members to sustain the spirit of togetherness while prioritising youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, care for the elderly and sustainable development. He called on all sons and daughters of Obimo to regard the association as their collective home, irrespective of their differences. In his address, the Coordinator of the 20th Anniversary Planning Committee, Godwin Ugwoke, said the celebration was also an opportunity to mobilise resources for the proposed community hall.

## Firm Powers Young Talents At Felabration 2026

By David Emokpae

FEARLESS Energy Drink, Rite Foods Limited's flagship energy drink brand, brought excitement to Felabration 2026, supporting emerging artistes and energising performances at the week-long festival held at the New Afrika Shrine in Lagos. The festival, which ran from October 12 to 18, celebrated the life and legacy of Afrobeat legend Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, attracting music lovers and entertainment enthusiasts to honour his contributions to music, political activism and cultural expression. This year's theme, “Who Are You?”, reflected Fela's advocacy for individuality and self-expression, aligning with Fearless Energy Drink's brand philosophy, “I CAN I AM,” which encourages people to embrace their uniqueness with confidence and courage. The brand, comprising Fearless Classic and Red Berry variants, supported a series of musical performances, rap contests, and dance and music challenges designed to showcase emerging talents and engage festivalgoers. The Fearless Rap Battle featured contestants including Albright, Owocha, TonyCanon, Kashvegas, Ihuneyo, Marshal and Evergreen, who entertained the audience with diverse rap styles and thought-provoking lyrics. The winner received a cash prize of N50,000. Other performers included Tobi Majeek, Aremo KSi, Shanko Rasheed, Flexx B, Tope Nautical, Lufemi & D Afrikanas, Da Seed, Scott Martins and The Electrified, Afroblackish Band, Tonio, Onlyson, AB Dollar and Da Smart, among others.

# Interview

**Bosede Laide Noah-Akindele** is an entrepreneur, professional caterer, and women empowerment advocate with over 18 years of business experience. She is passionate about women's development, leadership, entrepreneurship, and financial empowerment. She is the Convener of Rising Beyond Limits Conference 2.0, a platform dedicated to inspiring women to discover their purpose, prepare for opportunities, position themselves for growth, and achieve personal, professional, and financial advancement. Noah-Akindele is a graduate of Economics from the University of Ibadan, she has strengthened her entrepreneurial expertise through professional training, mentorship, and development programmes in entrepreneurship, catering, and food safety. She is the Founder of Deluxefoodie & Events, a premium catering and hospitality brand known for its commitment to quality, creativity, excellence, and exceptional packaging. In this interview with **GBENGA AKINFENWA**, she shares her vision of building a lasting business legacy and goal of raising and empowering a generation of women who thrive in purpose, leadership, and enterprise.

How has your academic background influenced your approach to entrepreneurship, business management?

**S**TUDYING Economics has significantly influenced how I approach business. It taught me the importance of minimising costs, maximising profit, allocating resources wisely, and making informed financial decisions. One of the most valuable lessons I learnt was negotiation and the importance of standing firm during negotiations. These principles have helped me make better business decisions, negotiate with clients and suppliers, and manage resources effectively, while maintaining the quality of our services.

What would you describe as the turning point in your journey, and what lessons did it teach you about building a sustainable business?

One of my defining moments was making my first Ntmillion in business in 2010. It was a significant milestone that showed me that the business I had started could grow beyond my expectations. It strengthened my confidence and motivated me to think bigger. That experience taught me the importance of consistency, patience, and reinvesting in the business. I also learnt that making money is one thing, but building a sustainable business requires discipline, good financial management, customer satisfaction, and the ability to deliver value consistently.

The catering and hospitality industry is highly competitive. What is your unique selling point?

We understand that catering is not just about preparing food; it is about creating an experience. We pay attention to taste, presentation, hygiene, professionalism, and the little details that make an event memorable. This is what makes us stand out. Our goal is to ensure that every client receives value for their investment and that every food experience reflects the premium standard our brand represents.

What have been the most significant challenges in running your business in the past 18 years, and how have you navigated them?

One of the major challenges I have faced is relocation. My business journey began in Ibadan, Oyo State, but after marriage, I relocated to Ile-Ife in Osun State to join my husband. It was a difficult transition because I had to keep the business run-

## ‘Women Can Thrive In Family And Business When They Build Right Support Systems, Give Themselves Permission To Grow’

ning despite the distance, and at some point, I travelled to Ibadan almost every week to attend to business activities. When my husband was transferred to Abeokuta, I relocated again and had to rebuild and reposition the business in a new environment. These transitions tested my resilience, but my passion and determination kept me going. Other challenges include staffing, financial management, and the continuous process of attracting and retaining customers. Like many businesses, we have had to learn how to adapt, manage our resources, build relationships, and remain consistent even during difficult periods. These experiences have taught me that entrepreneurship requires more than passion; it requires resilience, flexibility, and the willingness to keep moving forward even when circumstances change.

Tell us about the experiences in your career path that have the greatest influence on your business philosophy?

The greatest impact has been the opportunity to network, learn from people who have gone ahead of me, and gain exposure to new ideas and ways of doing business. These platforms have reminded me that there is always room for growth, regardless of how long one has been in business. They have also broadened my perspective on professionalism, innovation, collaboration, and the importance of positioning a business for greater opportunities. I have learnt that success is not just about what you already know, it is also about your willingness to learn, connect with the right people, and apply new knowledge to improve your business.

From your experience in the food industry locally and internationally, how do you think food entrepreneurs can compete globally?

I believe Nigerian caterers need to focus on presenting our indigenous foods in ways that appeal to international markets without losing their originality and cultural value. We have a rich food heritage, but we must be intentional about packaging, presentation, consistency, hygiene, preservation, and standardisation. For example, Chinese cuisine has local expressions, as well as versions adapted to international tastes. As

*‘Women should make time for personal development, rest, and their wellbeing.’*

*‘No matter how experienced you become, there is always something new to discover. Never stop learning.’*

Nigerian food entrepreneurs, we should ask ourselves how we can introduce delicacies such as *moi moi*, jollof rice, and other traditional dishes to a global audience while preserving their identity and authentic flavours. We must learn to make our food attractive and accessible to people from different cultural backgrounds. Our goal should not be to change who we are but to improve how we present what we have to the world. Nigerian cuisine has enormous potential, and with the right standards, innovation, and investment, we can compete more effectively in the international hospitality market.

What are the major barriers preventing women entrepreneurs in Nigeria from achieving financial independence and what roles should government, financial institutions, the private sector, and families play in addressing them?

Some of the major barriers include limited access to affordable funding, the pressure of balancing business with family responsibilities, inadequate business support systems, and the difficulty many women face in separating business finances from household expenses. Women entrepreneurs must learn to treat their businesses as independent financial entities by keeping proper records, maintaining separate business and personal accounts, and planning their finances strategically. However, the responsibility does not rest on women alone. Government should provide a more enabling business environment, improve access to funding, and introduce policies that support women-owned businesses. Financial institutions should develop accessible financing options with reasonable terms, while the private sector can provide mentorship, training, partnerships, and market opportunities.

Families also have an important role to play by sharing responsibilities and supporting

women's ambitions. When women receive the right support and have access to the resources they need, they can build sustainable businesses, achieve financial independence, and create opportunities for others.

How can women balance family responsibilities, business demands, personal development, and leadership without sacrificing their wellbeing or business ambitions? I believe the key is prioritisation, effective time management, and delegation. Women must learn to identify what is most important, set boundaries, and understand that they do not have to do everything themselves. Delegation is essential, both at work and at home. In business, we must learn to trust capable team members with responsibilities, while at home, we must embrace support rather than carrying every burden alone. Women should also make time for personal development, rest, and their wellbeing. Motherhood is beautiful, but it comes with responsibilities that require proper planning and support. If these responsibilities are not well managed, they can become overwhelming for a woman pursuing professional or entrepreneurial goals. I believe women can thrive in both family and business when they build the right support systems, organise their time wisely, and give themselves permission to grow without feeling guilty about their ambitions.

As a member of the Association of Professional Food Service Providers of Nigeria (APFSPN), what more can professional associations do to promote standards, protect consumers, and support the growth of the food service industry?

Professional associations such as APFSPN, can make a significant impact by organising regular seminars, workshops, and conferences that educate members on best practices in food preparation, hygiene, food safety, service delivery, and business management. They should also expose members to modern catering equipment, emerging technologies, innovative food presentation techniques, and international industry standards. Beyond training, professional associations can promote quality assurance, establish and enforce ethical standards, encourage collaboration among members, and advocate policies that support the growth of the industry. By equipping caterers with the right knowledge, tools, and professional standards, these associations can help protect consumers, improve public confidence, and position Nigerian food service providers to compete both locally and internationally.

If this version of you had the opportunity to speak to your younger self at the beginning of your career, what lessons would you share?

First, acquire the necessary skills and never stop improving. Almost everyone cooks at home, but professional catering requires much more than everyday cooking. You must develop the skills to create exceptional meals, deliver consistent quality, and offer something different from what people eat at home or can easily purchase on the street. Professionalism, creativity, and continuous improvement will distinguish you. Second, stay focused and build expertise in your chosen field. Do not try to do everything at once. Identify your strength, develop it, and become known for excellence in that area. At Deluxefoodie & Events, our focus on catering has helped us build a strong identity and reputation. We have gained visibility in Ogun State, including through Google Business, because we have consistently worked to establish our brand in our field. Focus helps you build authority, trust, and long-term customer loyalty. Third, never underestimate the value of training, seminars, and continuous learning. Investing in knowledge is never a waste of time. Innovation is not limited to the technology industry; every sector evolves, including catering. The way I prepared jollof rice five years ago is not exactly the way I prepare it today because I have continued to learn, experiment, and improve. No matter how experienced you become, there is always something new to discover. Never stop learning. A final thought: My entrepreneurial journey has taught me that building a lasting business requires resilience, continuous learning, discipline, and a commitment to excellence. Beyond business success, I am passionate about seeing women become financially empowered, build sustainable enterprises, and create opportunities for others. For me, that is part of fulfilling purpose through excellence.

*‘Entrepreneurship requires more than passion; it requires resilience, flexibility, and the willingness to keep moving forward even when circumstances change.’*



# Burden Of Teenage Pregnancy, Motherhood

... How Would A Child Raise A Child?

By Suliyat Tella

**M**OTHERHOOD is one of the hardest and most enduring responsibilities bestowed on women by God. From the exhausting three main stages of pregnancy to labour, then nursing and raising children at all levels of upbringing: welfare, healthcare, education, morals, religion, values, culture, etc, nothing beats the fear of not getting it right with your children in the course of raising them as a mother.

While a lot of women would say motherhood is the most rewarding part of womanhood: getting pregnant, giving birth and having to watch them grow and become great, the reality is different.

The thought of easy scale through the phases always look good in every woman's imagination – it makes being a mother feels simple, easy and desirable until she wakes up to the reality of her role from day-one till the rest of her life, one that if not properly played becomes a plight that she lives with every day wondering where she got it wrong.

Motherhood is definitely not a child's play – it is a responsibility for properly grown and groomed adult women who have gone through all the phases of womanhood, learnt every needed lesson and are certified for motherhood. Then, she knows the drill and understands what is expected of her in all ramifications as a mother.

Unfortunately, approximately one in seven girls aged 15-19 years in Nigeria, according to the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey 2023-2024 report, has begun childbearing.

Thus when a girl child who is still being raised and nurtured by her mother suddenly takes a detour from her mother's bosom of being cared for as the child that she still is, becomes pregnant and a mother herself, what happens to her? How would a child raise a child?

**Who takes responsibility for early pregnancy?**

More often than not, teenage girls are impregnated by either another boy-child or a grown adult man with zero morals and baggage. So these male figures are usually not readily available to support the girl except for a few cases.

Cynthia Ayoola was 15 when she became pregnant. Her family struggled to pay for her medical care during childbirth. She was impregnated by a married man. According to her, the pregnancy brought shame. "People accused me of trying to ruin the man's marriage. Even the man refused to take responsibility."

Her family was already struggling. Their father had died, and their mother did not earn enough to provide for everyone. So how does a 15-year-old whose mother still struggles to care for her be a mother to a child that needs more care?

Eventually, when Cynthia went into labour she developed complications. The family needed about 300,000 for her treatment and did not have it. They feared she might die. Neighbours eventually helped them raise the money.

That money only covered the emergency. It did not cover what came after. According to Cynthia, the baby's father offered little or no help, so she began selling fried meat in front of the house to earn money while caring for her child.

Several months passed and she was still living with their mother, no independent income and could not support herself and her child without help. When the child became old enough to start school, Cynthia could not afford it, so the child stayed with her without education.

For 17-year-old Fatima Olanshile, when she became pregnant, she left home because she was afraid of how her father would react. The family went through the agony of searching for her and when they did, she summoned the courage to tell her aunt what had happened.

At the time, Fatima had moved in with the mother of her boyfriend who was also an 18-year-old teenage boy when he got her pregnant. His mother initially accepted her, and Fatima accompanied her to the shop, helping her with sales. But the relationship quickly deteriorated as it started. Her boyfriend's mother could not continue to cater for her from the little income from the shop after she gave birth to the baby – there were too many mouths to feed. Her boyfriend tried to support with his shoemaker work but the living conditions became increasingly difficult. There was never enough money or food for her and the baby.

Fatima eventually decided to leave when the child was 4-year-old and they could not afford to enroll him in a school. She packed her belongings and travelled to Lagos to return to her father's house.

Unsure of how her father would receive her after she had left home years earlier but to her surprise, he

welcomed her. He enrolled her son in school, while Fatima began learning fashion design. Now, she hopes to complete her training and build a life for herself and her child.

Adeshola Abimbola was 18 and in her third year at university when she became pregnant by her boyfriend who lived in her neighbourhood in Ikorodu, Lagos. She usually saw him during school holidays. He accepted the pregnancy and agreed to take care of her and the child. Her siblings wanted her to stay in school. They knew she was close to finishing her degree. Her sister, in particular, urged her to complete it before deciding what comes next.

However, Adeshola was ashamed to go back to campus with a protruded stomach. The thought of facing other students and being ridiculed for being pregnant at such an early age and out of wedlock weighed on her. So she dropped out of school. "I dropped out of school, gave birth to my child, and moved in with my boyfriend," she said.

Shortly after, she got pregnant again and later had a second child, a boy. She now regrets not taking her sister's advice.

*'Motherhood is definitely not a child's play – it is a responsibility for properly grown and groomed adult women who have gone through all the phases of womanhood, learnt every needed lesson and are certified for motherhood. Then, she knows the drill and understands what is expected of her in all ramifications as a mother'.*

*'Teenage motherhood should not be treated as the end of a girl's prospects. A young mother can still finish her education, learn a skill and work towards the future she wants. Support makes that easier'.*

Her boyfriend's support did not remove her shame.

For girls, who leave school when they get pregnant, going back can require a lot of childcare, money and flexible arrangements. Without these, a break can become the end of a girl's education.

**What teenage pregnancy and motherhood do to a young mother**

Silver Peniel Lale, a lecturer in psychopathology and substance use at the University of Calabar, said an unexpected pregnancy can overwhelm a teenager who is still going through the changes of adolescence. She may feel unready for the responsibilities, and the changes to her body make the pregnancy hard to keep private.

"She may feel anxious and confused as she watches her teenage years pass while she prepares for motherhood and her friends move on with their lives," Lale said.

Shame, criticism from relatives and neighbours, and the sense of being left behind can wear down her confidence.

Some teenagers withdraw from other people or struggle to picture their future. The strain is greater when the pregnancy interrupts school or vocational training and her peers carry on without her. "Family rejection and isolation make it worse. Without the people she trusts, a young mother

may not talk about her difficulties or ask for help," Lale said.

She listed warning signs: difficulty concentrating, frequent mood swings, withdrawal from other people and constant regret. "This does not mean a mother has a mental health condition, but persistent or worsening symptoms should not be ignored.

"Persistent sadness, hopelessness and a feeling of worthlessness may need professional attention. There is need for immediate professional help if there is a threat of suicide or self-harm, including threats to harm the baby

"Support should combine emotional care with practical help. Postnatal counselling and medical check-ups can help young mothers after childbirth. Parenting programmes, support groups and visits from trained health workers can offer guidance. Family members can help with childcare and encourage a mother to go back to school or training. Severe distress can also affect how a young mother responds to her baby's needs and how confident she feels as a parent," Lale said.

She stressed that this does not mean the teenage mother will struggle to bond with her child. Support and parenting guidance can help both mother and baby.

She advised that teenage motherhood should not be treated as the end of a girl's prospects. A young mother can still finish her education, learn a skill and work towards the future she wants. Support makes that easier.

**The role of family**

What happens to a girl after she becomes a mother depends heavily on the support around her, her family's financial status, and the opportunities available to her.

Family can make the difference in some cases. But a family can be willing and still unable to provide sustained support.

Where a pregnancy involves sexual abuse, violence or the exploitation of a child, there are formal channels for seeking help in Lagos. The Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA) handle reports of domestic and sexual violence, child abuse, rape and related offences.

In October 2025, the Lagos State Government announced the reintroduction of the USSD short code \*6820# for MTN users to seek help and report cases. The agency also operates a 24-hour toll-free helpline, 08000-333-333. Its services include medical intervention, counselling, psychosocial support, legal assistance and referrals to safe shelters.

These services address important needs, but they do not cover everything a teenage mother may require. A girl who wants to return to school may need help with fees and childcare. Another may need vocational training or a reliable source of income. Those experiencing emotional distress may need counselling and continued support beyond the immediate period after childbirth.

**Returning to school/vocational training**

Education is particularly important in considering what happens next. For girls who had to leave school, opportunities to return to school or acquire vocational skills can help keep their futures from being defined by that phase of their life.

Teenage motherhood does not lead to one inevitable outcome. A girl may continue her education with help from her family; another may struggle to provide for her child while trying to build an independent life. Some may later regret leaving school, while others may find a different path.

The question then is not just what happens when a girl becomes a mother, but what opportunities remain available to her afterwards.

Support must extend beyond childbirth to include healthcare, education, childcare, skills training and the means to earn a living.



Akinade Ibuoye, popularly known as Gaise Baba, is a Nigerian singer, songwriter and culture architect. His music is a blend of gospel with afrobeats and urban contemporary styles. History was made when Gaise Baba teamed up with Pastor Lawrence Oyor to release the viral anthem, 'No Turning Back.' In this chat with **ENIOLA DANIEL**, he speaks on the impact of the viral anthem on his career as a musician.

What has it been like seeing international audiences connect with your music?

It has been encouraging and humbling. It reminds me that music can communicate beyond language. People may not understand every lyric immediately, but they can connect with the rhythm, emotion, joy and spirit of the song. It also confirms that the message is not limited to one geography. There is an audience beyond our immediate environment, and that creates both excitement and responsibility. The opportunity is not simply to export songs. It is to communicate kingdom culture and values across borders.

Looking at how you started, what has been the most defining moment of your career so far?

To be honest, what I see as the most defining moment of my career thus far was not public. It was a private encounter around 2017. This was the moment God gave me a picture of what I was called to do. This understanding or revelation of my mission was accompanied by a strong burden on my heart, which I have run with ever since. That is what, over time, has given birth to the faith-focused yet unconventional music, the ideology-driven podcast—Black Flame and culture-shaping experiences like Aramanda Festival.

Projects such as the *God Is Cooking* album have also been significant because they represent watershed moments for the whole community and movement of Afrogospel.

How has the year been for you, musically?

It has been a significant year. I have seen my music reach more people, travel into new spaces and connect with audiences all over the world. I've experienced some really interesting moments, like strangers walking up to me to say hello and express gratitude for the music—for example, at a restaurant in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; a train station in the UK or in an hotel foyer in Kampala, Uganda. Randomly meeting people who have been impacted by my music and work is a feeling I'm not sure I can sufficiently explain. It's a privilege, really. With *God Is Cooking* album, the heart has remained the same: to serve what God has prepared and to make an indelible kingdom impact through the music.

You recently expressed frustration with inspiration music taking the back seat at The Headies. What did happen really?

I need to correct the notion: it is not frustration. I spoke because institutions matter. The Headies is an important institution in the music industry, and institutions function better when stakeholders who care bring necessary conversations to the fore.

Awards are not only about trophies. They influence visibility, legitimacy, investment, public perception and the kinds of careers that receive support. The Headies has since responded, explaining that the inspirational category was created to give more gospel and inspirational artistes a guaranteed place on the stage, and not to put gospel music in a box.

It also explained that, because the awards have grown to about 35 categories, some categories are rotated during the live broadcast, and its omission from the live stage should not be interpreted as disregard. The point is that faith-based music should not be treated as an afterthought, especially when it is contributing meaningfully to the culture, audience and wider music ecosystem.

Also, the existence of an Inspirational category should not mean that faith-based music is excluded from wider genre and general awards when the work meets the criteria.

As a stakeholder in the industry, tell us some of your background work to ensure alternative music is celebrated and not only Afrobeats

Afrobeats is an important part of our cultural export. Our music ecosystem is, however, broader in scope, and we should therefore pay cognisance to the wide array of sounds, stories, messages and communities that are contributing meaningfully. My work has been to use my music, conversations and

# Gaise Baba... Variety Is What Stands African Music Out

platforms to create room for kingdom expression and perspectives within popular culture.

For instance, with the podcast, *Black Flame*, we have created space for ideological conversations with strong thinkers and people carrying light across Africa. I believe the industry becomes stronger when we do not reduce African music to one sound or one commercial formula. There should be room for different genres, convictions, languages, communities and forms of expression to thrive.

Inspiration songs used to be the ones with cool beats that require little energy when sung. Why did you tailor your inspiration songs towards a danceable one?

If the music is inspiring, the music is inspiring, whether the tempo is slow or fast. The gospel doesn't stop being the gospel just because the beat is a vibe! The message of a song and the energy of its sound are two different things. A song can carry a deeply spiritual message and still make people dance, celebrate and participate physically.

For me, the goal is to communicate the message in a way that people can receive. If a danceable rhythm helps the message travel further and allows people to engage with it more freely, then there is no contradiction.

The gospel is not weakened because the beat is energetic. What matters is that the message remains true and intact, and that the music serves the purpose. The sound is the vehicle, but the message remains the message.

How do you strike the perfect balance between high-energy Afrobeats rhythms and a deeply sacred message without watering either down?

The underlying problem with this question is the unstated premise that a rhythm can water down a message. I don't align with that. Once the message is clear, then communication between creator and listener is achieved. My conviction is solid, my consecration is in place, and the sound simply carries the message to the intended listeners.

Who are the musical pioneers, both within gospel and mainstream Afrobeats, that have most heavily influenced your artistic direction?

Oliver Mtukudzi, Bob Marley, Rev. J. J. Ransome-Kuti, Fela Kuti, Tope Alabi and Kenny Kore.

How do you define your mandate as an artiste?

Simply put, it is to superimpose kingdom culture and values on popular culture to penetrate and influence society with the gospel and the values of God's Kingdom. This is what it means when I'm referred to as a

culture architect. Isaiah 42:6, Isaiah 49:6 and Isaiah 41:14–16 are the scriptural passages that underpin this. Music is the vehicle; however, the assignment is bigger than music. I see myself as someone entrusted with a message, a platform and an opportunity to influence culture.

Take us through a day in the studio when you are working with your producer

My approach to recording in the studio depends on the song. Sometimes, the producer plays a beat, and I write to it. In this case, the sound and rhythm of the beat guide how I channel the lyrics, the direction and the overall feeling of the song.

At other times, I already have a topic, concept or some lyrics in mind. In this case, the producer creates a beat that fits the topic, mood and message I want the song to communicate. So, the process is flexible. Sometimes the music inspires the message, and other times the message directs how the music flows.

No Turning Back became a song played in nightclubs where alcohol and smoking reign supreme. How do you feel about that?

For people to believe, they must hear. For them to hear, someone must reach them. For someone to reach them, he or she must be sent.

I am very, very glad and grateful that my music is reaching those to whom it is sent. The music is going where it needs to. Let the people dance to it, let them sing it and be confessing the lyrics thereby; the Spirit and power behind the music will handle the rest.

I see music as a vehicle; a vehicle carrying a message. Once a record is released, it will travel into spaces and reach people we may never physically meet.

The fact that No Turning Back is being played in spaces where people may not share the same faith or lifestyle does not make the message less meaningful or powerful. In fact, it creates an opportunity for the message to encounter people outside the usual church environment.

I do not make music to condemn people from a distance. I make music to communicate truth, hope and kingdom values. If the song enters a space where those values are not usually being discussed, that is progress. The responsibility is to remain clear about what the song says, carries and stands for.

How do you define your call to ministry through upbeat and danceable music?

Like I already said, music is a vehicle. Another analogy is to see it as language. You have to speak to a people in the language they're fluent in. Hymns reached a people, a generation. Classical music served a generation. The predominant sound of congregational worship today is CCM, which is actually soft rock. Upbeat, groovy African rhythms offer us another language with which to communicate the same truth. Sacred truth can be expressed through contemporary African sounds without losing its substance. I am expressing it through a sound that people understand and can engage with.

Jesus operated in mainstream spaces. He engaged people where they were, and I believe the message of the kingdom was always meant to go beyond religious walls. The important thing is that the music remains truthful and that the sound serves the assignment.

What has been the most surprising part of seeing Afrogospel gain a massive global audience?

I think what has surprised me the most is how much the music resonates with children, toddlers and even babies. Even I can't explain it. They really love the sound, and it is quite refreshing to see, because what that means is that God is already giving us the ears and hearts of the next generation.

This is a takeover, and we are still seeing only the beginning. There is also the part of people from other cultures connecting with the sound, even when they may not understand every word or share the same cultural background. It shows that music can create an entry point for a message across borders.

What is next for your career, and what major projects should fans look out for?

There's a lot coming, so let me break it down. First, this festive season, get your tickets for God Is Coming Live on December 19. I want you all to be there. There's also an Easter celebration coming in 2027, so Aramanda is very much active.

On the podcast side, Black Flame Season 3 is already underway.

Honestly, the lineup this season is beyond your expectations. We recently had Kenny Kore, who had been away for several years, and that episode was a bang.

Black Flame now has its own dedicated channel, so subscribe and turn on your notifications, because you don't want to miss what's coming.

Visually, look out for video and collaboration projects with some of our favourite cooking influencers and restaurants near you. Yes, cooking, tied directly to the album, God Is Cooking. That's going to be a fun side of Gaise Baba.



# RMD To Give Keynote At PAO Nigeria Digital Content Regulation Conference

By David Emokpae

**C**ELEBRATED Nigerian actor, filmmaker, media entrepreneur and former Delta State Commissioner for Culture and Tourism, Richard Mofe-Damijo, popularly known as RMD, will deliver the keynote address at the 6th International Peace Anyiam-Osigwe (PAO) Nigeria Digital Content Regulation Conference (PAO-NDCRC), scheduled for November 18 and 19, 2026, at the MUSON Centre, Onikan, Lagos.

RMD's appointment marks a significant moment in the conference's history. He will be the first male motion-picture practitioner to deliver the keynote, following media entrepreneur Mo Abudu in 2024 and filmmaker and producer Bolanle Austen-Peters in 2025.

The 2026 conference is themed, 'Film and Content Production in the Digital Era: Balancing Regulation and Innovation'. It will convene filmmakers, content creators, distributors, exhibitors, streaming platforms, policy-makers, academics and other stakeholders to examine emerging opportunities and challenges in digital content production, distribution and regulation.

With over three decades of experience spanning film, television, journalism, entrepreneurship and public service, RMD has featured in more than 60 film and tele-



vision productions across Nigerian and international markets. He began his career as a journalist with leading Nigerian newspapers, including *The Guardian* and *Concord*, before founding *Mister*, described in his biography as Nigeria's first all-gloss men's lifestyle magazine.

He is the founder of White Water Limited, a public relations firm, and RMD Productions. He also served as Special Adviser and later as Commissioner for Culture and Tourism in Delta State. Through the Richard Mofe-Damijo Foundation, he supports initiatives aimed at building capacity, creating opportunities and developing emerging talent and communities through the creative and cultural industries.

RMD has received numerous continental and international awards and is widely regarded as a stabilizing presence at the intersection of culture, media, governance and capital. His involvement signals credibility, longevity, and disciplined leadership in African creative ventures.

The Executive Director/Chief

Executive Officer of the National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB), Dr. Shaibu Husseini, expressed delight at RMD's acceptance of the keynote invitation, describing his professional journey as particularly relevant to the conversations the conference seeks to advance.

"We are delighted to have Richard Mofe-Damijo deliver the keynote at this year's PAO Nigeria Digital Content Regulation Conference. RMD represents a distinctive blend of creative excellence, entrepreneurial experience and public service. His journey across film, media, business and cultural administration offers valuable perspectives on the opportunities before Nigeria's creative industries and the policy conversations required to sustain their growth. Indeed, RMD's appointment marks a milestone in the conference's history as the first male motion-picture practitioner to deliver the keynote, following Mo Abudu and Bolanle Austen-Peters," Husseini said.

He added that the conference would provide an important platform for stakeholders to explore how regulation can support, rather than hinder, innovation in the rapidly evolving digital environment. "As the boundaries between film, television and digital content continue to evolve, our challenge as regulators is to create an environment where innovation can flourish while protecting audiences, promoting responsible content and supporting the sustainable development of the industry. The theme of this year's conference captures this responsibility. We look forward to meaningful conversations on how we can collectively build a stronger, more competitive and sustainable Nigerian screen industry," he said.

## TFAA: Organisers Announce Jury Members For 20th Edition

By Daniel Anazia

**T**HE Future Awards Africa (TFAA), the continent's most prestigious awards platform celebrating young African excellence, has announced the Jury and Independent Audit Committee for its 20th edition, themed, "Celebrating the Redefiners: Africa's AI Generation."

According to the organisers, the two panels will help guide the selection of young Africans whose work is creating impact across the continent. For two decades, TFAA has recognised young Africans aged 18 to 35 whose work is influencing their communities, industries, and the wider continent.

The awards celebrate emerging leaders across fields including entrepreneurship, technology, creative industries, media, public service and social impact. What distinguishes TFAA is its rigorous, transparent, and multi-layered selection process.



features accomplished professionals from across different sectors: Lanre Olusola, life coach, behavioural change psychologist and executive coach; Obi Asika, creative industry entrepreneur, founder of Storm 360, co-founder of Social Media Week Lagos and Director-General of the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC), and Olufemi Oguntamu, founder and CEO of digital media and talent management agency Penzaarville Africa.

They are joined by Dapo Otunla, a human resources and business leader whose work spans organisational development and talent assessment; Ayo Mairo-Ese, broadcast journalist and co-anchor of *The Morning Show* on Arise TV, and Ayodeji Razaq, Executive Director of TFAA, whose work spans marketing, media, and technology.

Reflecting on the responsibility of the jury, Lanre Olusola said, "Being part of this process means recognising more than achievement; it means paying attention to the ideas, courage and impact behind the work of young Africans."

"At a time when a new generation is

redefining what is possible, our responsibility is to look closely, judge fairly and give due recognition to those whose contributions are helping shape Africa's next chapter," he added.

The Independent Audit Committee, which maintains transparency throughout the process, comprises respected professionals with experience across public policy, marketing communications, development, media, technology, gender advocacy, civic participation, and business.

The members of the Committee for this year are Adejoh Idoko Momoh, public policy and development professional; Dipo Adesida, marketing communications professional with two decades of experience across brand strategy, advertising, digital content and media; Seun Akinyemi, development practitioner working across digital democracy, governance and civic participation; Solape Akinpelu, CEO and Co-founder of HerVest, with expertise in technology, financial services and women's economic empowerment; and Yinka Obebe, Founder and CEO of Popcentral.

## Gbenga Adeyinka Brings Laffmattazz 2026 Tour To Lagos For Grand Finale



**T**HE grand finale of the 2026 *Laffmattazz* with Gbenga Adeyinka & Friends tour will hold on Sunday, November 15, 2026, at the Balmoral Convention Centre, Federal Palace Hotel, Victoria Island, Lagos.

The finale will close a tour that has held editions in Ibadan, Akure, Calgary, London, Ontario, Toronto and Abeokuta.

For Adeyinka, the Lagos

finale is also a homecoming. The city played a major role in the development of his entertainment career more than 30 years ago, providing the stages and audiences that helped shape his work.

Themed, *The Next Chapter: A New Season of Laughter*, will bring together comedy, music, culture and fashion. It will also mark the close of the *Laffmattazz* tour's 15th anniversary year, alongside more than three decades of Adeyinka's career in entertainment.

## KAP Unveils Vision For ITAN

By Daniel Anazia

**A**S African cinema enters an increasingly important period of global growth, creatives and stakeholders in the film industry believe the continent needs not only more films, but stronger institutions, better skills, deeper professional networks and platforms capable of bringing the industry's diverse stakeholders together.

Against this backdrop, a landmark Nigeria-Benin collaboration aimed at strengthening the next generation of African filmmakers will culminate this week as 20 young Beninese creatives take the stage at the iconic KAP Film Village & Resort in Oyo State, alongside some of the continent's leading film and cultural voices.

The KAP-SOPA Pan-African Filmmaking Bootcamp, a partnership between KAP Film & Television Academy and the Government of the Republic of Benin, through its audio-visual agency, SOPA, will conclude with a three-day programme from September 17 to 19, featuring the premiere of original short films produced by the participants, their graduation and an awards night celebrating their achievements.

According to the organisers, the gathering is set to be about much more than the conclusion of a training programme.

With filmmakers, producers, government representatives, diplomats, cultural leaders and other industry stakeholders travelling from within Nigeria, Benin, across

Africa and beyond, the gathering will also provide the setting for the unveiling of ITAN, The Screen Gathering & Awards, a new Pan-African initiative scheduled to launch in October 2027.

The KAP-SOPA Bootcamp was conceived around a fundamental challenge facing Africa's rapidly expanding film industry: the need to build the professional skills, capacity and networks required to transform the continent's extraordinary storytelling potential into a sustainable global creative industry.

The fully sponsored 12-week programme has equipped 20 talented young Beninese creatives with filmmaking knowledge and practical industry experience while strengthening cultural collaboration between two neighbouring African nations.

Following four weeks of theoretical training in Cotonou, the participants have spent the final eight weeks undertaking an intensive, hands-on filmmaking residency at KAP Film Village & Resort in Nigeria. The result of that practical experience will be presented to the public when the participants premiere original short films created during the programme.

For KAP Film & Television Academy, however, the films are only part of the outcome. The larger objective is to create filmmakers who understand not only the craft, but the professional realities of the industry and the importance of collaboration, networking and cross-border knowledge exchange.



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*Signed:*  
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# From The Rector

Ibru International Ecumenical Centre, Agbarha-Otor Delta State. [www.ibrucentre.org](http://www.ibrucentre.org)

By Stephen Wolemonwu

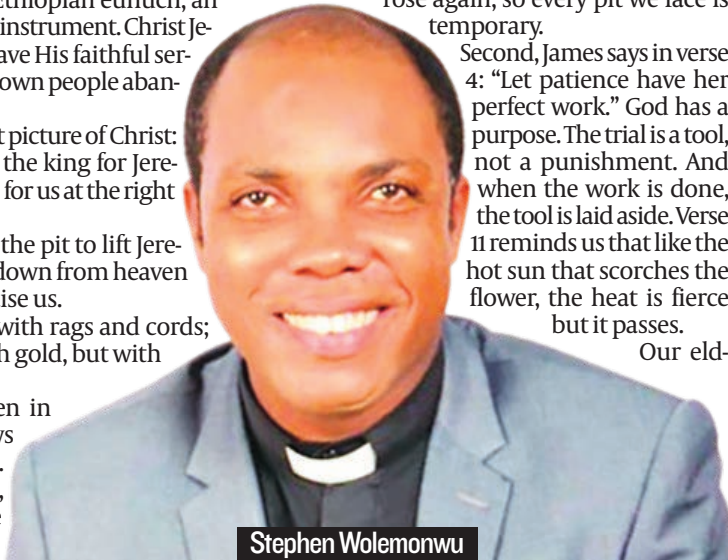
Jeremiah 38:1-13; James 1:1-15

**G**OD raised up one man and by name Ebed-Melech, an Ethiopian, a stranger, and not even a Jew. He touched his heart. While the princes sat in the palace, God positioned His servant at the gate. The same God who allows the pit also provides the Ebed-Melech as the unlikely deliverer. An Ethiopian eunuch, an outsider, became God's instrument. Christ Jesus likewise is able to save His faithful servants, even when their own people abandon them.

Ebed-Melech is a perfect picture of Christ:

- He interceded with the king for Jeremiah; Christ intercedes for us at the right hand of God.
- He went down into the pit to lift Jeremiah up; Christ came down from heaven into our sinful pit to raise us.
- He saved Jeremiah with rags and cords; Christ saves us not with gold, but with His own torn body.

You are not forgotten in your pit. Christ knows you are there. He is able. Hebrews 7:25 declares, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost



Stephen Wolemonwu

## The Cost And Crown Of Truth (2)

that come unto God by Him." As Jeremiah was lifted from the muddy cistern with ropes and old rags. It was a picture of tender care of how Christ was lifted from the grave, and He lifts us. Our Saviour entered the ultimate pit of death and rose again, so every pit we face is temporary.

Second, James says in verse 4: "Let patience have her perfect work." God has a purpose. The trial is a tool, not a punishment. And when the work is done, the tool is laid aside. Verse 11 reminds us that like the hot sun that scorches the flower, the heat is fierce but it passes.

Our eld-

ers say, "No matter how long the night lasts, morning will come." The pit was Jeremiah's night, but morning came through Ebed-Melech. Whatever you are enduring has an expiry date. Do not make a permanent decision in a temporary pit. Do not abandon your faith because of a passing trial.

- The Crown Of Our Endurance (Jer 38:13; James 1:12, 15)

The Bible does not say, "Blessed is the man who enters temptation," but rather, "Blessed is the man who endures." Many begin faithfully, but few endure faithfully. Endurance is the mark of true discipleship.

James speaks of two crowns. The crown of life is promised to those who endure (James 1:12). This crown is not something beyond eternal life, but it is the crown of enduring, the honour given to those who prove their love for God under pressure. Endure truth and live; follow sin and die (v.15). Jeremiah endured and remained in the court of the prison (v.13). He lived, and his ministry continued after the pit. His persecutors were judged, but his word came to pass exactly as God declared. God vindicated him.

A soldier does not receive a medal for wearing a uniform in the barracks. He receives it for holding his ground in battle. Your trial is your battlefield, and your endurance is your medal. The crown of life is reserved for those who refuse to quit, but remain steadfast when tested, and who prove their love for God by standing firm in the fire.

Conclusion

So, child of God, where are you today? Are you in the palace of the princes, tempted to compromise just to remain comfortable? Step out and stand for truth. Or are you in the pit, sinking in the mire because you dared to stand for truth?

Hold on. The trial is temporary. Your Deliverer lives. He has already sent help, and will pull you out with tender hands. Your faithfulness will not end in shame, but ends in a crown. The pit is not your grave; it is only a passage. The palace is not your refuge; Christ is. And the crown is not for those who avoid the battle, but for those who endure it.

• The Venerable Stephen Wolemonwu is the Rector Ibru Ecumenical Centre, Agbarha-Otor, Delta State (08035413812)

By Charles Ighele

**I**t is commonly said that men are like predators hunting for their prey, the woman. In a sense, this assertion is not far from the truth. God created men in a manner that makes them have a high drive to conquer things. This is not to say women do not have this ability, but God put men in rulership over the family.

This is why men are the ones who look out for the lady they admire and go after them in full force. Men are the ones who search for a

## Chasing After A Man As A Lady

wife because the Bible explicitly says He who finds a wife finds a good thing.

Women are being encouraged to go after the men they want, instead of waiting endlessly for the men to come to them.

Any lady who goes after a man or forces herself on him for any reason at all is like a dead animal. She has lost all self-pride and her sense of shame. She is like a dead animal and no lion will eat dead

food. It would rather hunt down a living prey.

If a lady thinks that forcing herself on a man will earn his love or respect, she cannot be any farther from the truth. Statistics have shown that eight out of ten marriages or relationships where the woman made the move or wooed her partner, end up crashing on issues that are related to respect. Those relationships that do not crash are just surviving.

No man will ever respect a woman who forced herself on him. He will treat her like a cheap article. Lions do not go after dead animals. They chase after living ones. Men are like lions. They enjoy it more when they pursue who they want to marry and not the woman who is forcing herself on them or pursuing them for a relationship or marriage.

Some may say, "but should I die in silence? Can't I make a

move for the man I really love?" My advise is that "do not make any move at all." In fact, in most instances such moves do not work out well. In case it does, they hardly work as I already stated above. Many men just end up sleeping with such women who they regard as "stray animals" that strayed into their paths. Love you!

• Bishop Charles Ighele is the General Superintendent of Holy Spirit Mission, Lagos.



Ighele

## CAC Honours Abiara With Legacy Award At Anniversary

By Chris Irekamba

**T**HE Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) North and South America Hashem Mission has conferred the prestigious CAC President's Legacy Award on retired General Evangelist, Prophet Samuel Kayode Abiara, in recognition of his decades of sacrificial service and pioneering leadership in global evangelism.

The historic conferment held recently during the golden jubilee celebration to mark the 50th anniversary of the church's expansion across North and South America.

The CAC President, Pastor Samuel Oladele alongside other leadership of the church's Americas mission presented the award to the awardee to honour and celebrate the elder statesman and former General Evangelist as a cornerstone of CAC's global growth.

Church leaders praised his foundational work in

church planting, passionate soul-winning, and relentless dedication to mentoring generations of believers worldwide.

The organisers noted that the award reflected a life-

time dedicated to advancing the gospel, establishing enduring spiritual and administrative structures, and shaping the future of the Christ Apostolic Church globally.



CAC President, Pastor Samuel Oladele (left) presenting the award to the retired General Evangelist, Prophet Samuel Abiara (second left) during the golden jubilee celebration to mark the 50th anniversary of North and South America



Former Worthy Supreme Knight of the Order of the Knights of St. Mulumba (KSM) Nigeria, Sir Charles Mbelede (seventh left (front row)); Worthy Supreme Knight, KSM, Sir Steve Zakari Adehi (eighth left); Deputy Supreme Knight (WDSK)/Chairman, KSM Endowment Fund/Resource Mobilisation Committee, Sir Dan Egwu and Metro Grand Knight, Lagos Metropolitan Council, KSM, Sir Nosa Ehigiator (sixth right) during the event at St. Leo Catholic Church, Ikeja, Lagos.

## At Unveiling Ceremony, Martins, Hamzat, Others Rally Support For KSM N2bn Endowment Fund

• Hamzat Calls For KSM's Charity Works To Be Replicated Across Nation

By Chris Irekamba

**A**RCHBISHOP of the Metropolitan See of Lagos, His Grace, Most Rev'd Alfred Adewale Martins and Lagos State Deputy Governor and gubernatorial aspirant of the All Progressives Congress (APC) for 2027, Dr Obafemi Hamzat have rallied support for the N2bn Endowment Fund and Charity Initiative of the Order of the Knights of St. Mulumba

Nigeria (KSM), Lagos Metro Council.

The event, titled: "Investing Today, Sustaining the Mission, Empowering Generations," was unveiled recently at the Archbishop Alfred Adewale Martins Hall, on the premises of St. Leo Catholic Church, Lagos.

Martins in his homily said the Order made history by unveiling such a gigantic project of N2bn for the sake of hu-

manity, noting that the initiative was an act of faith in the future of the Order.

He quoted Proverbs 13:22, which says, "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children."

The Archbishop, represented by the Metro Chaplain, The Very Rev'd Fr. Emmanuel Ayeni, praised the Order for setting aside the fund to cater for the needs of the vulnerable and unborn generation.

# Is Your Name Written In The Book Of Life?

*“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” — Revelation 20:15 (KJV)*

**B**ELOVED, among all the questions a man can ask himself in this life, none is greater, more serious, or more eternal than this: Is my name written in the book of life? Many people are concerned about their names being written in earthly records. Some want their names written among the rich, the famous, the powerful, or the educated. Others desire recognition in politics, business, or religion. But there is one book that matters above all books and that is the book of life.

At the end of life, earthly titles will not matter. Your wealth will not matter. Your social status will not matter. What will matter is whether your name is found in the Lamb's book of life. Revelation 20 reveals the final judgment before God. The dead, small and great, shall stand before Him. The books shall be opened. Another book shall be opened, which is the book of life. Those whose names are absent from that book shall be cast into the lake of fire. This is not imagination; this is the word of God.

Many people live carelessly as if eternity does not exist. They pursue pleasure, sin, money, and worldly ambition without considering where they will spend eternity. But one day, every man shall appear before God.

*“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” — Hebrews 9:27 (KJV)*

Death is certain. Judgment is certain. Eternity is certain. Heaven is real, and hell is real. Whether people believe it or not does not change the truth of God's word.

The book of life contains the names of those who belong to Jesus Christ. It contains the names of those who have repented of their sins and received salvation through the blood of the Lamb. It is not enough to attend church. It is not enough to bear a Christian name. It is not enough to claim religion outwardly while living in sin inwardly. God is not deceived by appearance.

*“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” — 2 Timothy 2:19 (KJV)*

Many people know about God, but they do not truly know Him. Some sing in the choir yet live in secret sin. Some preach in public but are spiritually empty before God. Some appear righteous before men but are unclean before heaven. On the last day, many shall be shocked.

Jesus said: *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” — Matthew 7:21 (KJV)*

Again He said: *“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?” — Matthew 7:22 (KJV)*

But hear the fearful reply from the Lord: *“And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” — Matthew 7:23 (KJV)*

What a terrible thing it will be to stand before Christ after spending years in religious activity, only to discover that one's name is missing from the book of life. Beloved, salvation is personal. Your parents cannot save you. Your pastor cannot save you. Your church denomination cannot save you. You must personally surrender your life to Jesus Christ.

Sin is the great barrier between man and God. From the Garden of Eden until today, sin has separated man from his Creator.

*“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” — Romans 3:23 (KJV)*

Sin may appear sweet for a moment, but its end is destruction.

*“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” — Romans 6:23 (KJV)*

Today many people mock holiness and laugh at righteousness. They celebrate immorality and call evil good. But God has not changed. His standard remains holy. Heaven is a holy place, and nothing sinful shall enter there.

*“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.” — Revelation 21:27 (KJV)*

Friend, examine your life. Are you living in secret sin? Are you holding bitterness, unforgiveness, adultery, fornication, lying, pride, drunkenness, hatred, or hypocrisy in your heart? Do not deceive yourself. God sees all things.

*“Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” — Hebrews 4:13 (KJV)*

The good news is that God still saves sinners. No matter how

## Living Waters

By Pastor Lazarus Muoka

Founder/General Overseer  
The Lord's Chosen Charismatic  
Revival Ministries Worldwide

• For more messages and testimonies visit: [www.tlccrm.org](http://www.tlccrm.org) 08056889396



And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works.

And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

far a man has gone in sin, the mercy of God is still available through Jesus Christ. Christ came into the world to save the lost.

*“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” — Luke 19:10 (KJV)*

At Calvary, Jesus shed His precious blood for the remission of sins. He suffered, bled, and died so that your name could be written in the book of life.

*“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” — Romans 5:8 (KJV)*

Salvation is not obtained by human effort. It is received through genuine repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

*“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” — Romans 10:9 (KJV)*

To repent means to turn away from sin completely. It means to surrender your life fully to Christ. True salvation produces a changed life. A man cannot genuinely meet Jesus and remain the same.

*“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things*

*are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” — 2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV)*

Some people once walked with God, but they have gone back into the world. Once they prayed, but now they are cold spiritually. Once they loved holiness, but now compromise has entered their lives. This message is also for you. Return to God before it is too late.

*“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works;” — Revelation 2:5 (KJV)*

No one knows when death will come. No one knows when the trumpet shall sound. Many people planned tomorrow but died today. Many who were healthy yesterday are gone today. Eternity is nearer than many realise.

Jesus is coming again. *“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” — Revelation 22:12 (KJV)*

When He comes, there will be separation. The saved and the lost shall be divided forever. Those whose names are written in the book of life shall enter eternal joy. Those whose names are absent shall face everlasting punishment.

Jesus described hell as a place: *“Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” — Mark 9:44 (KJV)*

Hell was not prepared for man. It was prepared for the devil and his angels. But all who reject Christ shall share that terrible destination.

God is speaking to you today because He loves you. He does not desire your destruction.

The door of mercy is still open today, but it will not remain open forever. One day grace will end. One day the final trumpet shall sound. One day judgment shall begin. Then it will be too late to repent.

Beloved, do not postpone your salvation. Do not say, “I will repent later.” Later may never come. The devil has destroyed many souls with the lie of procrastination.

If your name is not written in the book of life, nothing else truly matters. You may gain the whole world and still lose your soul.

Make peace with God today. Forsake sin and give your heart completely to Jesus today. Walk in holiness, obedience, and faithfulness. Live every day prepared to meet the Lord.

And when the books are opened on that final day, may your name be found written in the Lamb's book of life. **Amen.**

## Testimony Of The Lord's Doing

### Hallelujah! God Raises Landlady's Only Child To Life

**M**Y name is Pastor IrenOkechukwu and I'm here to testify the goodness of God.

Recently, a son of a landlady had convulsion and was rushed to the hospital for treatment, but he eventually died as a result of that sickness. This boy happened to be the only son of the widow woman.

Before this time, my wife who is living in same compound with this landlady, bought sticker of The Lord's Chosen Charismatic Revival Ministries and gave it to her to paste on her door. She collected it, and squeezed it inside in her bag. As this thing happened it became an instrument that God used to bring the

life of her only son back to life.

So, as they were bringing the corpse home for burial, the mother who was looking for something in her bag, saw the sticker and with anger, flung it away, and the sticker fell on the dead boy and his hand moved. The next thing that surprised people around, the child woke up and opened his eyes. P-r-a-i-s-e the Lord!

God of Chosen is so great. The Lord's Chosen is the pool of Bethesda. I pray that God will continue to protect our Daddy G.O. and grant him heaven at last hereafter. Also, I pray for all members of the Church worldwide in Jesus name. . Amen.



Brother Kingsley Nworgu and his wife, Sister Chikodi Nworgu with their child, appreciating God for answering their prayer and blessing them with a baby boy after four years and six months of looking unto God for the fruit of the womb, at The Lord's Chosen Charismatic Revival Ministries in Ijesha, Lagos.

**T**HOUGHTLESS people backslide, compromise and corrupt themselves. The Bible reveals how the Israelites who journeyed through the wilderness compromised their faith and corrupted themselves many times because they were thoughtless of God's provisions, promises and dealings with them. Though God was merciful to them as a nation and forgave their transgression, those who sinned and died in their iniquities did not get to the Promised Land. But those who remained alive and repented received His forgiveness. People like Achan, Ananias and Sapphira who died in their backslidden state were lost forever.

The children of Israel corrupted themselves and provoked the Lord. They "remembered not the multitude of [His] mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea... They soon forgot his works... [and] waited not for his counsel." People who corrupt their lives and provoke the Lord will be judged. Those who forget the Saviour and die in their foolishness will perish. In keeping His promise to Moses, God did not totally wipe out the children of Israel as a nation. He still brought the younger generation into the Promised Land: the older generation that provoked Him perished in the wilderness. The mercy of the Lord still avails for anyone who repents and abides in His grace. But for those who yield to corruption, "the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

The children of Israel provoked God because they "despised the pleasant land, and believed not his word." Therefore, He overthrew them in the wilderness and scattered them in the lands. So-called believers who provoke the Lord and despise heaven and His glory will be condemned. The Scripture admonishes us not to "commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer." To escape sudden destruction and eternal damnation, we must heed the warnings of the Scripture.

Believers who want their prayers to be answered by the Lord

## Springs Of Wisdom

By Pastor  
W. F. Kumuyi



## Our Gracious Benefactor (2)

must not provoke Him. Since He is the One who guides and shows us the way into the abundance of His provision and fulfilment of His promises in our lives, we should not tempt the Lord or do anything that will provoke Him. "But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries... There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfill."

God is the timeless Benefactor. "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children." The goodness of the Lord to past generations is still available today. However, you must fulfil the condition to benefit from His covenant. God's grace, mercy, love, goodness and promises are available for those who "keep his covenant, and to

those that remember his commandments to do them."

God fulfils His promises only to those who meet the condition of benefits in the Covenant, those who "keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them." To benefit from the covenant, we must also "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)."

The covenant is complete and so are the blessings we receive from it. Everything we need for our spiritual, family and professional life is contained in the covenant. Also, our safety and security is provided in the covenant. "And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee." Moreover, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law... That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

Believers are blessed as a result of the blood of the Covenant. Though we did not witness the death of Christ on the cross at Calvary through which provision for the covenant of salvation, healing and deliverance was made, He still confirms the covenant because it is "an everlasting covenant." Therefore, we should always express our gratitude to God for the provisions of Calvary. "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities... healeth all thy diseases... redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." God is able and willing to fulfil His promises in our lives if we ask in faith.

• **Further Reading (KJV):** Psalms 100:1-5; 103:1-5; 105:37; 106:7,13-16,19-21; 78:40-42; 2 Peter 2:19,20; Psalm 106:24-29; 1 Corinthians 10:5-11; Exodus 23:20-22,25,26; Psalm 103:17-19; Hebrews 10:16,19,20,23,38,39; Deuteronomy 7:12,15; Galatians 3:13-

What is the purpose of the Holy Scriptures?

Read Ps 19:7-14.

**T**HE law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; 8The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward." (Ps 19:7-11)

Ps 19:7-11 When we think of the law, we often think of something that keeps us from having fun. But here we see the opposite—law that revives us, makes us wise, gives joy to the heart, gives light to the eyes, warns us, and rewards us. That's because God's laws are guidelines and lights for our path, rather than chains on our hands and feet. They point at danger and warn us, then point at success and guide us.

19:7-11 "The law of the Lord is perfect." The revelation of God's law (19:7-11) is clearer than the revelation from God's creation (19:1-6). These verses speak of five facets of this greater reve-

## Stop Talking And Listen (8)

### Biblical Womanhood

By Emeritus  
Prof. Mercy Olumide



lation: (1) "The law"—reflects the moral character of God and is thus "perfect" in its life-giving influence on the soul (v. 7). (2) "The testimony"—represents God's wisdom and will that are "trustworthy" for making wise and prudent decisions in life (v. 7). (3) "The statutes"—comprise God's principles for "right" living that produce the "joy" of being alive and receiving his blessing (v. 8). (4) "The commandments of the Lord" radiate God's light, thereby "enlightening the eyes" (v. 8) for liv-

ing righteously in covenant relationships and in the wholesome "fear of the Lord" With enduring results (v. 9). (5) "The judgments"—laws governing social life that insure justice and righteous treatment for the whole covenant community (v. 9), being more "desired" or valuable than gold (v. 10).

Meditation on God's word is a critical aspect of listening. Meditation is a critical aspect of listening to God particularly after reading the word of God.

"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." (Jos 1:8)

"meditate in it day and night." "Meditate" (Heb hagah) means to read quietly or to talk to yourself as you think. It involves reflecting upon God's words and ways and applying them to every area of your life (Ps 1:2; 63:6; 77:12; 143:5).

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## WATS' Provost Tasks Churches, Christian Leaders On Support, As Institution Holds Convocation

By Opeyemi Babalola

**T**HE Provost, West Africa Theological Seminary (WATS), Ipaja, Lagos, Pastor Olufemi Emmanuel has tasked churches and Christian leaders to support the seminary, as it graduates 61 students at its 36th convocation ceremony scheduled to hold between November 27 and 28, 2026, at the Seminary Campus in Ipaja.

He described WATS as a non-denominational institution that had trained thousands of ministers from over 100 denominations in Nigeria and other countries.

The Provost disclosed this during a press conference held at the Seminary Discipleship Conference in Ipaja, where he reaffirmed the institution's commitment to quality theological education and ministerial training across West Africa and beyond.

He said the two-day ceremony would feature a convocation lecture, dedication of completed facilities, and the formal award of degrees and prizes to the graduands.

The graduands, according to him, include 20 undergraduates, 38 Master's degrees and three Doctor of Ministry.

Emmanuel said that Dr. John Oswalt of Asbury Theological Seminary, United States, would deliver the convocation lecture, titled, "Holiness: What Is It, and Why Does It Matter?" on November 27. He added that the guest lecturer would also speak on "Holiness and the Christian Ministry" the following day.

The Provost said the institution's curriculum had accommodated different Christian traditions, including denominational liturgies and had ensured that

graduates serve effectively within their respective churches.

While highlighting recent spiritual programmes and physical developments on campus, Emmanuel explained that WATS is currently transforming its faculty building into a multi-storey administrative complex.

The project, according to him, was prompted by government's directives that institutions housing about 150 people within the same compound must meet specific infrastructural standards.

"We realised that our institutional layout is not aligning with what is expected of us by the government. Initially, we just wanted to do a renovation, but we realised that something is beyond renovation. That place is going to accommodate a lot of offices," he said.

## Contribute To Nigeria's Development, Show Exemplary Leadership, Onwuachi Tells Widows At Summit

By Isaac Taiwo

**T**HE Founder of Blessing O. Foundation International and Lagos Nigeria Widows Pray Movement, Apostle Blessing Onwuachi, has urged over 400 widows including mothers to contribute to Nigeria's development and pray for its progress.

The widows were also charged to show exemplary leadership, personal empowerment and purposeful engagement in their respective homes and communities.

Onwuachi gave the admonition recently in Lagos during the organisation's yearly women's summit organised in collaboration with Womb of Intercession International Fellowship, themed: "Mothers and Widows: A Call to Raise Gatekeepers in Their State." The US-based Founder said her passion for supporting widows was based on her mother's experience as a widow. She said that her mother faced discrimination

and hardship when she lost her husband.

She recalled that her mother was ostracised for refusing to participate in traditional burial practices that conflicted with her Christian faith, but remained steadfast and became a source of encouragement to other women.

Onwuachi explained that her welfare assistance to widows later evolved into a divine assignment to help widows discover their purpose and contribute meaningfully to society.

"God told me that a widow has a ministry and that her ministry is intercession. He said what I was doing was good, but I should go and teach them to fulfil their purpose," she said.

Citing Exodus 22:22-24, Onwuachi said the movement sought to encourage widows to seek divine intervention against oppression and injustice.

She, however, cautioned

women against political exploitation, insisting that widowhood should not diminish their dignity, influence or voice.

She said: "Widows have a voice. They are valuable, and are powerful. They should, therefore, not subject themselves to the hands of politicians who use them."

She added that the foundation's interventions included skills acquisition, welfare assistance, food and clothing distribution, and Christmas gifts for widows and their families.

Some of the beneficiaries Mrs Ronke Ademuyiwa and Mrs Charity Ufodu, narrated how they suffered to raise their children.

Thanking the organisers for their help and support, the widows appealed to the governments at all levels to implement policies that would protect widows, mothers and children from economic hardship.

By Kehinde Olatunji

FROM ageing treatment plants and unreliable power to leaking pipelines and a widening supply gap, Lagos Water Corporation is pursuing an infrastructure overhaul. The real test, however, is whether the reforms will deliver safe, reliable and affordable water to more residents.

For millions of Lagos residents, access to clean water remains a daily challenge. Many households depend on boreholes, water vendors and private water facilities, raising concerns about groundwater contamination and the reliability of alternative sources.

Addressing the crisis requires more than increasing production. Treatment plants must function efficiently, distribution networks must be maintained, electricity must be reliable and sustained investment must support operations.

Against this backdrop, the ongoing reforms at Lagos Water Corporation (LWC), under its Managing Director, Engr. Mukhtar Tijani, have assumed significance. The Corporation recently received international recognition in Glasgow under the 2026 International Water Association (IWA) Climate Smart Utilities Recognition Programme. It became the second Nigerian utility to receive the honour after Kaduna in 2022 and the first in southern Nigeria.

The programme assesses utilities on climate adaptation, greenhouse-gas mitigation and climate-smart leadership. While the recognition highlights LWC's efforts, the more consequential question is whether the reforms can address the structural weaknesses that have constrained public water supply across Africa's largest city.

When Tijani assumed office in July 2023, alongside Helen Omolanke Taiwo as Executive Director, Operations, only two of the four major treatment plants were reportedly functional, producing a combined 15 million gallons daily. Of 48 mini and micro waterworks, only six were operating, and even those were

## From Abandoned Projects To Active Pipes: Tijani's Push To Restart Lagos Water

performing below capacity.

The management's response has involved rehabilitating existing facilities, replacing critical equipment, restoring dormant waterworks, improving pipeline mapping, exploring public-private partnerships and advancing the long-delayed Adiyen II project.

### Addressing Infrastructure Deficit

One immediate priority has been replacing critical equipment at major treatment facilities. At Iju Waterworks, the Corporation has received six clear-water pumps with motors and an additional pump head after the existing equipment had served for more than three decades. Two raw-water pumps, with motors and control systems, have also been received for the Adiyen Intake.

Installation of the new equipment at Iju is ongoing. The intervention, supported by the Lagos State Government under Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, is expected to improve production and operational reliability.

However, replacing ageing equipment must form part of a broader asset-management strategy. Regular condition assessments, preventive maintenance, adequate spare parts and transparent reporting of plant performance are essential to prevent rehabilitated facilities from returning to the cycle of breakdowns and emergency repairs.

Electricity is another major constraint. Treatment plants and pumping stations depend on reliable power, and interruptions can disrupt production while increasing operating costs.

The rebuilding of the Akute Independent

Power Plant is therefore central to the Corporation's recovery programme. On April 26, 2026, Sanwo-Olu presided over the signing of a power agreement with Fenchurch for the rebuilding of the 26-megawatt plant. Work commenced on September 26, with existing engines being removed for replacement with new gas engines.

Financed by Zenith Bank under the state's public-private partnership arrangement, the project is expected to deliver 10 megawatts within four months and the remaining 16 megawatts within 12 months. The plant is intended to supply Akute Intake, Iju and Adiyen waterworks.

If delivered as scheduled, the investment could improve production across the facilities. Its success, however, will depend on the reliability and cost of the power supplied and whether this translates into more treated water reaching consumers.

### Funding Constraints, Rehabilitation

The rehabilitation programme has also faced financial uncertainty following the withdrawal of

USAID support for the Lagos Urban Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (LUWASH) programme, originally valued at approximately \$45 million.

The withdrawal disrupted plans for a four-year rehabilitation programme, forcing the Corporation to reassess its priorities and identify projects the state government could fund.

The experience highlights the risks of relying heavily on external financing for essential infrastructure. Beyond construction and equipment, water utilities require predictable funding for electricity, treatment chemicals, laboratory testing, repairs, network maintenance and customer service.

A sustainable financing strategy must therefore provide for both rehabilitation and long-term operations, with clear priorities, realistic timelines and mechanisms for measuring value for money.

The Corporation has also pursued the revival of smaller waterworks to bring production closer to underserved communities.

Mosan Okunola Waterworks was recommissioned on December 14, 2023, with reported production restored to two million gallons daily. Supply was extended to Baruwa,

where residents had experienced prolonged water scarcity and concerns over groundwater contamination.

Similarly, Akilo Waterworks was recommissioned on December 12, 2025, following rehabilitation undertaken with WaterAid Nigeria and Armani Beauty's Aqua for Life initiative. With a stated capacity of 4,500 cubic metres daily, the facility is designed to serve approximately 100,000 residents through its distribution network and 20 water kiosks.

Read the remaining part of this story on [www.guardian.ng](http://www.guardian.ng)







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## CONGRATULATIONS TO A MAN OF EXCELLENCE

We heartily congratulate **Dr. Bashir Adewale Adeniji, MFR**, Comptroller-General, Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), on his well-deserved **Special Award of Excellence** from the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) at the 2026 Golden IPRA Awards in Athens, Greece.

This prestigious honour celebrates your exemplary leadership, professional excellence, and unwavering commitment to integrity and service delivery. It is also a source of pride to the Nigeria Customs Service, whose standards and achievements your leadership continues to advance.

Indeed, your outstanding contributions reflect the ideals of the **Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR**.

Once again, congratulations, **Sir**, on this remarkable achievement and your continued pursuit of excellence.

For and on behalf of the Officers of All Ranks,  
Nigeria Customs Service, Seme Border Area Command.

**SIGNED:**  
**Comptroller Abdullahi Kaila.**  
CAC, Seme Border Area Command. NCS.





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**T**HE Management and Staff of Fortune Heights Farms Limited warmly celebrate an outstanding patriot, an icon of industry and a father of philanthropy, Sir Kesington Adebukola Adebutu, GCON, CFR, CON, on his 91st Birthday anniversary.

Nine decades and one year of impactful living, you have remained a shining example of purposeful leadership, enduring values and selfless service to humanity. Your life continues to inspire countless lives across generations.

We pray Almighty God grants you continued good health, peace and many more fruitful years.

**Happy Birthday, Sir!**

**Sir Kesington Adebukunola Adebutu**

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# A Toast to our Iconic Chairman

As he clocks

# 91

and continues gracefully through  
the nonagenarian realm.



OUR CHAIRMAN  
**Sir Kesington Adebukunola  
Adebutu GCON**

On this remarkable milestone, we celebrate a visionary leader,  
an uncommon patriot, a distinguished businessman and  
an extraordinary philanthropist whose life continues to inspire  
generations and illuminate our path.

## Happy 91st Birthday Sir!

Endorsed by:

**Adebisi Adebutu**

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# YEYE-REWA KOFOWOROLA ADEBUTU **CELEBRATES** ODOLE-OODUA



Sir Kesington  
Adebukunola Adebutu GCON  
Odole-Oodua of The Source

Today, my heart overflows with gratitude to God as I celebrate the extraordinary gift of your life. Ninety-one years of wisdom, grace, strength, and countless blessings—a beautiful testimony of God's faithfulness!

I celebrate the remarkable man you are, the love you have given, the lives you have touched, and the legacy you continue to build.

My prayer is that Almighty God will continually renew your strength, preserve your health, grant you peace and joy, and surround you with His everlasting love.

Happy 91st birthday, my beloved husband, Daddy, and precious love! May heaven continue to smile upon you, and may the years ahead be filled with even greater blessings, in Jesus' name, Amen.



*With Esteemed Affection*

**YEYE-REWA KOFOWOROLA ADEBUTU**

# Geoffrey Chukunwiken Ohen, Jr. (1957-2026): Gone But Legacies Live

By Godwin Ofulue

THE passing of Dr. Geoffrey Chukunwiken Ohen Jr., fondly known as Dr. Geoff Ohen, on September 22, 2026, marked the end of a remarkable life distinguished by faith, intellectual excellence, professional accomplishment, generosity and selfless service to humanity.

His departure was sudden, and the grief occasioned by his passing has been profound. For his beloved wife and children, the loss is deeply personal and immeasurable. For his extended family, friends, professional associates, fellow alumni, the Church, and the many communities he served, it is the loss of an exceptional man whose influence reached far beyond his immediate circle.

The Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Asaba, Rt. Rev. Kingsley Obuh, aptly captured the essence of his life: Dr. Ohen was a man whose greatest triumph was “the quiet, consistent witness of a life fully offered to God and to the good of others.”

Born on January 20, 1957, Dr Geoffrey Chukunwiken Ohen, Jr. was a proud son of Owa community in Delta State, Nigeria.

His major educational journey began at the historic and prestigious Anglican Grammar School, Ubulu-Uku, Delta State. The institution played a formative role in shaping his character, values, and outlook on life. Here, the principles of discipline, scholarship, service, and communal responsibility took root. His lifelong attachment to Anglican

Grammar School, Ubulu-Uku, became particularly significant. Decades after leaving its classrooms, he would return, not merely as an alumnus reminiscing, but as a leader determined to improve his alma mater.

He also attended Dennis Memorial Grammar School, Onitsha, another respected institution with a proud tradition of academic excellence and character formation.

His academic journey eventually led him to the University of Benin Medical School, where he pursued his calling to medicine and earned the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) degree.

His professional life was characterised by vision, enterprise, strategic thinking, and a commitment to building institutions that could endure. Through Geoff Ohen Limited, incorporated in September 1989, he established a principal investment vehicle for strategic equity participation, corporate advisory services, and property development.

As Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Consolidated Resources Limited, he developed the company into a technical supply-chain and procurement partner serving multinational energy operators in the Niger Delta and the Gulf of Guinea.

He served as Chairman of Networth Group and held board chairmanships at Piccadilly Insurance Limited, New Patriot Building Society Limited, and Owa Oil and Gas Limited. He also



served as a director of Daily Times of Nigeria Plc.

In healthcare, his leadership at Ekocorp Plc, the parent company associated with Eko Hospital, was particularly significant. As controlling shareholder and chairman, he championed stronger clinical standards, diagnostic modernisation, and financial discipline.

In July 2026, just before his passing, he was appointed a Non-Executive Director of Royal Exchange Plc, a further recognition of his experience and standing in corporate governance.

As Board Chair and President of OSNON Academy, he contributed to strategic expansion, faculty development, and the pursuit of academic excellence.

At St. Saviour's School, Ikoyi, he served on the Board of Trustees and chaired the Education Committee, contributing to institutional gover-

nance and the maintenance of academic standards.

At the centre of Ohen's life was his Christian faith, deeply rooted in the Anglican tradition. An active worshipper at Our Saviour's Church, Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos, he maintained a life of worship and devotion while sustaining his connection with the Anglican Diocese of Ika in Delta State. Behind the distinguished professional and public figure was a man whose most intimate and cherished responsibilities were found within his family.

Ohen was a devoted husband to his beloved wife, Barr. (Mrs.) Ogugua “OG” Ohen, his lifelong companion and confidante.

“A remarkable man, dependable, loving and caring. You were the centre of my world ... a wonderful husband from beginning to the end,” she said.

He was equally devoted to his children, Geoffrey Ohen III, Carmen Ohen, and Frederick Ohen. He took pride in their development and sought to guide them through the values he held dear.

He also cherished his granddaughter, Alaia Ohen-Kazeem, whose presence represented the continuity of family, love, and hope across generations.

The Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Modern Business Machines Limited, Mr Sam Ifeozo, expressed profound pain at the loss of his amiable and successful schoolmate.

Remembering him as “Jeff,” he described him as an exceptionally

generous person who contributed and donated substantially to the development of their alma mater.

The immediate past President of the AGSUOBA Lagos Chapter, Mr. Okey Odibeli, similarly expressed shock and grief at the sudden passing. He described Ohen as a gentleman of high repute, a philanthropist, and the embodiment of the school's motto, *Non Sibi Sed Aliis*.

The current President of AGSUOBA Lagos, Ben Omife's recollection of Ohen's emergence as President General adds another dimension to these testimonies. His account shows how reputation, generosity, dignity, and an established record of service had already earned him the trust of his peers before he assumed the office.

Another alumnus, Joseph Oba, in his tribute, titled ‘And Did the Curtain Fall?’ says, “Senior Geoff Ohen remains a symbol of the AGSUOBA undying spirit and the tireless never-say-die passion of our great school.

His family will miss a beloved husband, father, and grandfather. His schoolmates will miss an exemplary leader and generous benefactor. His professional colleagues will miss a seasoned corporate mind. The Church and wider community will miss a committed servant of God and humanity.

And may his family find comfort in the assurance that a life devoted to love and service is never measured by its final day alone, but by the enduring good it leaves in the world.

## In Birthday Tribute To Her Late Husband, Irobiegbulam Unveils *Family Bond*

From Joseph Chibueze, Abuja

ON what would have been her late husband's birthday, Eugenia Onyemaechi Irobiegbulam returned to the school that helped shape his life, carrying a gift that was both deeply personal and profoundly national: a book about family, cultural identity, friendship and the enduring ties that bind people together.

It was October 7, 2026, and Methodist College, Uzuakoli, in Abia State, was more than a venue for the unveiling of her novel, *Family Bond*. It was a place where memories of a beloved husband converged with a widow's determination to preserve the values she believes are slipping away from Nigerian society.

For 29 years, Irobiegbulam had shared her life with her husband, a proud old boy of the historic institution. His education, character and friendships had helped shape the man she loved. With his birthday coinciding with the book launch, she could think of no more meaningful way to celebrate his legacy than to return to the institution that had contributed to his formative years.

Standing before the gathering of school alumni, traditional leaders, literary figures, educators and members of the community, she explained that the occasion was about much more than introducing a new book to the reading public.

“We are gathered here today for much more than the unveiling of a book. We are here to answer a quiet but urgent call,” she said.

That call, as she explained it, was to rescue a society in which indigenous languages were fading from the lips of children and the family values that once held communities together were increasingly under pressure.

For Irobiegbulam, *Family Bond* is an attempt to confront that cultural drift, using fiction to remind Nigerians of the importance of their roots, the responsibilities of parenthood and the humanity they share across ethnic boundaries.

But the occasion carried an intimate sadness that gave the book's message an added emotional weight.

Before concluding her address, she requested a minute of silence in honour of her late husband, a man whose memory she had chosen to celebrate through a work intended to influence

generations beyond his immediate family.

In that moment, the launch became a meeting point between grief and purpose: a wife honouring her husband, an author offering something to the next generation, and a family memory being transformed into a public statement about the kind of society Nigerians should aspire to build.

Irobiegbulam said *Family Bond* was written to remind young Nigerians that character matters, resilience is part of their heritage and indigenous languages and traditions must not be abandoned.

She lamented the fading of indigenous languages among younger Nigerians and the gradual erosion of family values, describing *Family Bond* as a contribution to national reorientation.

At the heart of *Family Bond* is Obinna, a civil engineer whose life illustrates how family, education and friendship shape personal values.

Obinna marries Nneamaka, a private-school principal, and they have two children, Jewel and Dike. Their experiences move between Lagos and their ancestral home in Uzuakoli, where the

children encounter their cultural heritage and discover a world beyond urban life.

But the novel reaches beyond domestic relationships through Obinna's enduring friendship with Tahirru, a schoolmate from northern Nigeria.

The two meet at Methodist College and maintain their bond beyond their school years. Their friendship eventually influences Obinna's academic journey at Ahmadu Bello University, where he studies engineering.

Through their relationship, Irobiegbulam challenges ethnic prejudice and presents a vision of Nigeria in which differences in language and background do not prevent people from building meaningful relationships.

The novel's message resonated with the principal of Methodist College, Very Rev. Mba Eke, who said the institution's history reflected the importance of education, discipline and brotherhood.

Founded in 1923 by the Methodist Church of Nigeria, the school initially aimed to educate young people who would read, write and teach the Bible before expanding into a full college.

According to Eke, it attracted students from different communities and became known for academic achievement and moral instruction.

Its notable alumni include Dr. Michael Okpara, former Premier of Eastern Nigeria, and Dr. Clement Isong, former governor of the old Cross River State.

Eke said the novel's launch was particularly appropriate because its message reflected the school's motto: “You first, and I second.”

Linked to Romans 12:10, the motto emphasises honouring others and placing mutual respect above selfish interests.

For the principal, the friendship between Obinna and Tahirru demonstrates the brotherhood the institution seeks to cultivate among students from different backgrounds.

**Rediscovering The Mother Tongue**

The novel also examines the growing disconnect between Nigerian children and their ancestral roots.

During a Christmas journey from Lagos to Uzuakoli, Obinna's children encounter village life, traditional greetings and cultural practices unfamiliar to them.



Eugenia Onyemaechi Irobiegbulam (fourth left) with guests at the event

# How ISTH Expands Access To Healthcare In Esanland Through Ewatto Facility

By **Tajudeen Kareem**

**B**UILT and donated by Chief Dr. Leemon Ikpea, the ultramodern facility at Idumu-Iyase was handed over to the Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital — and within hours it was diagnosing, dispensing and referring patients from across Esanland. The building was new enough that its corridors still smelled of fresh paint. By mid-morning on Monday, 19 October 2026, they smelled of disinfectant, pharmacy sachets and the particular patience of people who have waited a long time to see a doctor.

Hundreds of residents of Ewatto and neighbouring communities filed through the 62-bed ultramodern hospital at Idumu-Iyase, Esan South East Local Council, not as guests at a commissioning but as patients.

The Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital (ISTH), in collaboration with the University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH), had marked the formal handover of the facility with a free medical outreach — and organisers say more than 1,000 people were screened, dispensed drugs and, where necessary, referred onward.

It was, in the organisers' phrasing, a celebration of trust, quality and partnership — and a test of a model rarely executed at scale: a philanthropist builds, a proven institution runs.

The facility was built and donated by Chief Dr. Leemon Ikpea, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Agbonjagwe Leemon Ikpea Foundation (ALI). What distinguished the handover was not the concrete but the condition attached to it. Ikpea asked that ISTH take over full operations and management of the hospital, citing the institution's reputation for excellent, patient-centred and specialist care.

Stakeholders described the decision as confidence in ISTH's profile as a centre of excellence in service delivery, training and research under its Chief Medical Director, Prof. Reuben Agbons Eifediyi — and as a guarantee that the building will be run to the standards, discipline and compassion ISTH is known for.

Equipment does not treat hypertension; staffing, protocols and supervision do. By handing the keys to a teaching hospital rather than a caretaker committee, the donor attached an institution's reputation to his gift.

Outreach like a carnival

ISTH provided leadership, coordination and more than 85 per cent of the manpower, logistics, drugs and equipment that made the exercise work. Under Prof. Eifediyi, the hospital deployed consultant physicians and surgeons, resident doctors, an outreach medical team, nurses, pharmacists, laboratory scientists and public health officers. Support teams from the Works Department, ICT Unit, Publicity and

Protocol, Security Unit and the CMD's Office converted the newly commissioned building into a functioning treatment centre, with triage, consultation, pharmacy, laboratory and health education units operating in sequence.

The service menu was deliberately broad: general medical consultation, screening for hypertension and diabetes, malaria testing, eye checks, maternal and child health services and health education, alongside free dispensing of essential drugs. Patients requiring advanced care were referred to ISTH and UBTH. That mix — screening for the silent conditions, testing for the endemic one, catching maternal and child cases early — reflects the burden of a farming population for whom distance to a specialist is often the difference between management and emergency.

'We will live up to the trust'

Prof. Eifediyi used the occasion to answer the question implicit in any handover: whether ISTH can carry the weight of that confidence. He expressed profound gratitude to President Bola Tinubu, through the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, for the trust reposed in him and in ISTH to manage the new hospital's operations.

The CMD assured that ISTH "will live up to the trust" — and that the hospital would achieve the purpose for which it was created: bringing

affordable, accessible and specialist healthcare closer to the people of Esanland and beyond, in line with the Renewed Hope Agenda and the vision for Universal Health Coverage.

He also commended Chief Ikpea for what he called uncommon philanthropy and love for his people, and appreciated UBTH for its collaborative spirit.

Okpebholo: Government cannot do it alone  
Edo State Governor, Monday Okpebholo, who inaugurated the facility along with Pate, emphasised the importance of private-sector participation, adding that government alone could not meet the population's healthcare needs. "My administration has recruited over 2,000 healthcare workers to boost our workforce, and upgraded over 65 primary healthcare centres across the three senatorial districts of the state," the governor said, while acknowledging President Tinubu's support for the state's efforts.

"Government alone cannot do it. We need private-sector partners and other individuals to complement public-sector investments," he said. "Dr. Ikpea has set a good record, and I encourage other well-meaning individuals and organisations to emulate him."

Turning to the institution now holding the keys, he added: "I charge the management of Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital and the

medical professionals who will serve here to uphold the highest standards of patient care."

And to the hosts: "To the people of Ewatto, protect this facility and make good use of it. Let it become a place of hope and healing." Okpebholo also assured residents that his administration would mobilise the contractor back to site to complete the Ewatto-Udo road as the dry season approaches — a reminder that the hospital's usefulness depends as much on the road to it as on the wards inside.

Pate: A healthy population is a productive one  
Prof. Pate commended Ikpea, the ALI Foundation and his family for investing in healthcare infrastructure serving Ewatto and its neighbours, describing the project as a source of pride for the community and for Edo State.

Access to quality healthcare, the minister said, is essential to the development of any society: a healthy population is better positioned to contribute to economic growth, and farmers, teachers, children and other members of the community all benefit when services are accessible and effective.

He called on wealthy Nigerians and private-sector organisations to partner with government to expand healthcare infrastructure nationwide, saying such partnerships would complement public investment and support efforts to transform the health system.



Edo State Governor Monday Okpebholo (left); Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate and Chief Leemon Ikpea at the commissioning of 62-bed Ewatto Medical Centre on Monday

## Adekunle Gold, Pesa Commit \$20,000 To Sickle Cell Organisations

By **Oluwatobi Awodipe**

**T**HE Adekunle Gold Foundation, in partnership with financial technology company, Pesa, has launched a \$20,000 initiative to support organisations providing healthcare, education, advocacy and other services to people living with sickle cell disease.

Tagged We're Not Done: AG Foundation Sickle Cell Impact Initiative, the project is designed to strengthen existing programmes, expand access to support services and improve the lives of people affected by the disease.

Announced on October 20, 2026, the programme will support four organisations working within the sickle cell community in Nigeria, Canada, Ghana and the United Kingdom, alongside the Adekunle Gold Foundation's own activities.

The beneficiaries are Sickle Cell Advocacy Management Initiative in Nigeria, Not Just You in Canada, Sickle Life in Ghana and It Takes A Village in the United Kingdom.

According to the foundation, the funding will help the organisations expand their reach, strengthen ongoing programmes and deepen their impact through healthcare access, patient support, public education, awareness campaigns and advocacy.

Adekunle Gold, the singer and founder of the foundation, said the initiative is aimed at

translating public awareness of sickle cell disease into practical support for affected individuals and families. "We're Not Done is about turning awareness into action. There are incredible organisations working every day to improve the lives of people living with sickle cell, and together with Pesa, we want to give them more resources to do that work and

reach even more people," he said.

AG, who has publicly spoken about living with sickle cell disease, has used his platform to promote awareness and advocate for people affected by the condition.

Pesa is supporting the initiative as its programme partner, providing the \$20,000 commitment for the launch and first cycle of the

programme.

The Head of Global Growth and Marketing at Pesa, Tosin Olaniyi, said the partnership reflected the need to move beyond awareness campaigns towards tangible assistance for people living with the disease.

"Sickle cell affects many people in the Nigerian and wider Black communities we serve. These are our friends, colleagues and loved ones," Olaniyi said.

He commended the singer for using his personal experience to drive advocacy and said the company is proud to support an initiative focused on raising awareness and providing assistance to the sickle cell community.

"Through our partnership with the AG Foundation and the other participating foundations, we hope to go beyond awareness and contribute to meaningful, tangible support for individuals and families affected by sickle cell," he added.

The foundation said the initiative would combine funding, advocacy and visibility to strengthen the wider sickle cell support network and deliver measurable, long-term impact.

Founded in 2023 by Adekunle Gold, the Adekunle Gold Foundation focuses on improving the lives of people living with sickle cell disease through healthcare access, advocacy and public awareness.



# Spotlight

By **Gbenga Salau**

AIR of nostalgia filled the venue. There were smiles on familiar faces, warm embraces across generations and stories that seemed to transport guests back through the decades.

But for the celebrant, Pa Lade Bonuola, former Editor and Managing Director of *The Guardian*, the clock of life struck 80 and the milestone came alive not in the quietness of old age, but in the exuberance of music, laughter, embraces and a gathering of people drawn from different chapters of his remarkable journey.

As family, friends, associates, mentees and dignitaries converged to celebrate the octogenarian, the venue became a theatre of memories, with tributes and anecdotes bringing decades of experiences vividly to life. It was a celebration of not just a birthday, but of a life that has gathered stories, friendships and footprints along the way. And the icing for the celebrant was the unveiling of the book, 'Ladbone: A life in Print,' which is a collection of essays honouring him, published by the Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development and edited by Mr. Dapo Olorunyomi.

Bonuola, popularly called Ladbone, was overwhelmed by the honour done him on the day. In his speech, he said he got to know about the event and the book about two weeks before the day, when Olorunyomi came to personally invite him for the event. He said they had informed him about the idea of the book many months before but he had dismissed such as he was not willing to toe that line. He, however, said he would have regretted not attending the event and hearing about all the tributes and encomium poured on him later.

Bonuola recounted how Alhaji Babatunde Jose spotted him and gave him all the necessary training at home and abroad. He also talked about how Chief Olusegun Osoba had a lot of confidence in him while Kusa was unwavering in his guidance.

According to him, the late publisher of *The Guardian*, Mr. Alex Ibru, never interfered in his work for once.

"I was sending news schedule to him, but he never opened it. He would say you are the expert while he is a business man," he recalled.

Bonuola urged the attendees to thank Jose, Osoba, Michael and Alex Ibru for helping to shape his journalism destiny. He urged the participants to offer prayers for the four anytime they have the time to do so.

The Chief Organiser of the event, Mr. Dapo Olorunyomi, who is also the Publisher, *Premium Times* and CEO, CJID, in his welcome address, described the ceremony as a mini journalism festival of sorts.

"We are here to recognise, once again, the life, times and work of perhaps the most consequential editor in the late 20th century history of the Nigerian print press. It is, therefore, a moment of gratitude for the life in print of Mr. Lade Bonuola, a life that began in 1976 at the *Daily Times* and ran through *The Guardian*, *The Comet* and *Compass*.

"That half-century, 50 years of a profoundly demanding and momentous professional life, is being marked today, in part, by family, friends and mentees with a biographical anthology of essays. In about 750 pages, it explores six dimensions of Ladbone's life: his moments of excellence, his life as a legend, the architecture of his editorial genius, his extraordinary record of mentorship, the power and meaning of his courage, and the reality that behind that granite posture lies, as one contributor, Ben Tomolaju, aptly puts it, a greatness of spirit as a father, grandfather, husband, friend and neighbour. The book is titled 'LADBONE: A Life in Print.'

"We leave it to thoughtful scholars of Nigerian media history to decide whether there was a greater editor in that era. But as more than 60 contributors have asserted, Ladbone had few equals, if any. We are deeply grateful for his labour of love to the country, to the profession, and to the unfinished task of building a resilient democracy in our land."

Olorunyomi said the idea for the book grew out of the organisers' continuing effort to help remake Nigerian journalism, which has travelled in many directions since the birth of the newspaper press in this country in 1859.

"In 2011, Mr. Musikilu Mojeed, who is unavoidably absent today, and I co-founded *Premium Times* as an intervention to strengthen fact-based reporting. By 2014, it had become clear that only an ecosystem-wide intervention could deliver the ambition we had in mind: to build a spirit of innovation into the very innards of our media

# Pa Lade Bonuola: Eight Decades Of Grace, Grit And Great Memories

system, in how we cover news, how we distribute content, and how, more broadly, we finance journalism in the digital age.

"In 2020, we renamed the organisation to keep pace with the spirit of the age, recognising the centrality of technology to the future of our media. That vision has since found substance in an expansion that today places the Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID) in 15 programme offices across Africa," he stated.

Olorunyomi said that last year, the CJID launched the Living Archives Initiative. Among its broader goals, he said, include digitising and preserving the works, times and personalities that have given meaning to a part of the world, Africa.

"Fittingly, we began with our own constituency, the media, and with someone who remains a veteran on active duty. The choice was inescapable: Lade Bonuola, the great Ladbone!

"Those who know him will know he is a man of very few words, so this project was, frankly, an act of insurgency. He first heard about it from the people we had asked to write essays. He was initially shocked and probably considered shutting the whole thing down. But, wise man that he is, he quickly realised that resistance was futile. Then came the task of gathering photographs and documents, for which we relied on the kind collaboration of co-conspirators within the family. We even arranged for his wife to visit their children and grandchildren in Abuja, purely, of course, so she could help us fill a few gaps in the family history.

"Today, we thank his six daughters and eleven grandchildren for their help and support in making this book possible. We thank the contributors, some of whom helped shape the project through early interviews before writing their own essays. We thank our board members, who approved this work. And we must not forget the tireless and remarkable management and staff of CJID and *Premium Times*, the backbone of our growth and continued success," he added.

Former Ogun State Governor, Osoba, who chaired the event, recalled that Bonuola came in as a sub-editor to *Daily Times* when he was Editor of *Sunday Times*.

According to Osoba, both of them often had a tough time during production as Bonuola often wanted to ensure that all the stories were edited, painstakingly going through the copies which often slowed the pace of production.

He noted that Bonuola often paid too much attention to details while he was always conscious of meeting deadlines and getting the paper early to the news stand the next day. Osoba felt that it was one of the reasons that Bonuola started a column called, 'Caught Out,' where he spotted errors in all the newspapers.

"When *The Guardian* was established, the late publisher Alex Ibru wanted a serious minded

newspaper patterned along *London Times* and I told him that the best editor is Bonuola. He created a standard that others started following, with his good friend, Kusa," Osoba said.

Osoba also called for one minute silence to honour Prof. Idowu Sobowale and Ambassador Patrick Dele Cole.

On his part, Kusa noted that Bonuola would usually rewrite almost every sentence in a copy a reporter sent to him, aside from asking for more information to make the story more readable and better appreciated by readers.

He also recalled how both of them made it a standard that all news stories must be background, which also means they would breathe into all news copies.

"When *The Guardian* started, we maintained quality writing. Nduka Irabor joined us later. We found him a wonderful newsroom person. Mr. Emeka Izeze also helped sanitise the quality of news writing," he stated.

Just before the book was unveiled, there was a panel discussion around the future of Nigerian journalism. On the panel, moderated by Azu Ishiekwene, were Kadaria Ahmed, Ifeanyi Mbanefo and Chiamaka Ozurumba.

The discussion highlighted the changing phase of journalism and how journalism was practiced in the era of Bonuola cannot be wholly replicated though issues around integrity and ethics remain the same.

On his part, Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Lagos, Frank Keurhorst, said: "Today is not only about celebrating Bonuola but also an opportunity to reflect on the role journalism plays. Nigeria has rich media landscape and it has helped reform the country. Bonuola's contribution reminds us of his professional integrity and editorial independence. An independent press is essential to strengthening democracy and it is important we preserve the stories of those who defend it. This is why the CJID Living Archives Initiative is important by documenting experiences of journalists and helps ensure that this important history is not lost. We are proud of our long-standing relationship with CJID."

Reviewing the book, Mr. Kunle Ajibade, noted that Bonuola is a man of institutional building. He added that many of the contributors talked about their own stories while passing through Bonuola.

Ajibade described him as a journalism exemplar, statesman, the legend, the great teacher, the standard bearer, the architect of truths, the editor of editors, the bone of our bones, the engine room of *The Guardian*, a solid bridge across generations, a consummate workaholic, a media policeman, a veteran of note, an extraordinary talent supporter and a disciplinarian.

"The book is inspiring and enlightening. It is an affirmation of visionary power and a celebration of significant values."

He described the book as a master class for those who aspire to excellent public service.

"As many of the writers tell the stories of their interactions with him, they also tell plenty of stories of their own professional lives.

"The conference of these stories, the narratives within narratives, give us access to the history of Nigerian journalism itself. There are many engaging recollections here of how he was an inspiration," Ajibade said.

He noted former President Ibrahim Babangida, former Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, former governor of Osun State, Bisi Akande; Osoba and former governor of Lagos State, Babatunde Fashola, attested to Bonuola's courage and insight as a public affairs commentator.

"He was a voracious reader and a passionate lover of debate at Secondary school, where he won the John F. Kennedy zonal essay competition.

"His column in *The Guardian* is the longest running column in the history of Nigeria. He also noted that he was English and Literature-in-English teacher at Methodist High School, Arigbajo Ifo, Ogun State, including highlighting how he rose from being a sub-editor, chief sub-editor, production editor, features editor and member of the editorial board of *Daily Times* before moving to *The Guardian* where he started as Associate Editor and rose to be the Managing Director.

Chiamaka Ozurumba of CJID, stated that the organisation had worked on the book project for over a year, stating that it took a lot of pain to get some of the materials out.

Speaking on the importance of documentation, which is the major reason for the book, Ozurumba said: "Journalists have documented our political transitions, our democratic struggles, and the exercise of power and everyday experiences of our society. But journalism is not our starting point. Our wider ambition is to build a repository that eventually extends beyond journalism to other disciplines like medicine, like banking, like science, because all of this, all of the knowledge production over the years, needs to be preserved and we understand that importance."

The Secretary of CJID Board, Fred Adetiba, while delivering the vote of thanks, noted: "Today has been a celebration of a remarkable life, a distinguished career and a legacy that has contributed significantly to the development of journalism in Nigeria."

He noted that the event is not just a celebration of age but also a celebration of over five decades of professional excellence, of service to journalism, and of the values and standards that have defined Bonuola's remarkable journey.

"I would like to specially appreciate Professor Bonuola and his family for allowing CJID to be part of this important milestone and, more importantly, for partnering with us to preserve his story and legacy for generations to come."

Some of the personalities at the event include former Minister of Information, Alhaji Lai Mohamed; Lagos State Commissioner for Information, Gbenga Omotoso; former Managing Directors of *The Guardian*, Femi Kusa, Emeka Izeze and Martins Oloja; Pro-democracy activist, Ayo Obe; former Editor of *Punch*, Gbemiga Ogunleye; Sully Abu; Nigeria Guild of Editors' President, Eze Anaba; Managing Director, *ThisDay*, Eniola Bello; former Commissioner for Information, Lagos State, Steve Ayorinde; former NGE President, Funke Egbemode; Managing Director of *The Sun*, Onuoha Ukeh; Director Journalism Clinic, Taiwo Obe; former Editor, *The Guardian* on Saturday, Banji Adisa; former Editor, *The Guardian* on Sunday, Fred Ohwahwa and former Special Adviser to Governor Babatunde Fashola on Information, Hakeem Bello.

There was a huge number of former staff of *Daily Times*. There were also representatives of members of his alma mater and his community in Oyo State, Kishi.

Others are Chief Eric Teniola, Dr. Tunde Abayomi and Publisher Novation Magazine, Dele Momodu; Secretary, CDIJ, Olumide Adetiba; daughter of the celebrant, Mrs. Biodun Ozurumba; celebrant, Lade Bonuola; former Librarian of *The Guardian*, Titi Oba, former Executive Director, *The Guardian*, Oyebanji Awosanya; Managing Director of *Punch*, Adeyeye Joseph; Co-founder *Newswatch*, Ray Ekpui; Othman Dosumu-Sodipe; Augustine Isioma Iwelu; former House of Representative member, Nze Chidi Duru; Editor, *Saturday Tribune*, Lasisi Olagunju; Tribune newspaper Editorial Member, Festus Adedayo and Publisher *BusinessDay*, Frank Aigbogun.



Former Governor of Ogun State, Olusegun Osoba(right); Celebrant, Lade Bonuola and his wife Easterh, during the 80th birthday of Lade Bonuola and public presentation of his book title, Ladbone life in Print edited by Dapo Olorunyomi held in Lagos

PHOTO: AYODELE ADENIRAN

By Suliyat Tella

DUCHESS International Hospital, Ikeja, Lagos, has marked its fifth anniversary with a renewed commitment to providing specialist healthcare in Nigeria and reducing the need for patients to travel abroad for treatment.

The celebration, held on October 22, 2026, at the hospital's main hall in Ikeja GRA, brought together healthcare professionals, government representatives, business leaders and other guests to reflect on the hospital's growth since it began operations in October 2021.

The event featured speeches by government officials and the hospital's management, a lecture on cardiovascular disease, and video testimonials from patients who shared their experiences of receiving treatment at the facility.

Among those featured in the testimonials was Nollywood producer Kunle Afolayan, who spoke positively about the hospital's services. He also expressed surprise at the affordability of its care, recalling his reaction when he first visited the facility. The anniversary came at a time when the Federal Government is seeking to strengthen local healthcare delivery and reduce the number of Nigerians travelling abroad for medical treatment.

Speaking at the event, the Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr Izaq Adekunle Salako, commended the hospital for investing in specialist services and creating opportunities for Nigerian medical professionals living abroad to return home and practise. Salako cited a reported 52 per cent reduction in foreign exchange requests for medical tourism in 2025, saying hospitals such as Duchess could have contributed to the decline. He said the government was working to improve healthcare delivery, expand health insurance coverage and encourage investment in the sector. "There is no doubt that Duchess International Hospital is a high-standard healthcare facility capable of providing quality care, complex surgeries and advanced medical procedures," he said.

Five years of specialist care

IN his welcome address, the hospital's Chief Operating Officer, Dr Olajide Ojo, said Duchess was established with the ambition of demonstrating that advanced medical care could be provided locally. He said the hospital's anniversary theme, *Five Years of Delivering World-Class Healthcare: Transforming Medicine Through Innovation and Excellence*, reflected its efforts to expand specialist services and build confidence in Nigeria's healthcare system.

According to Ojo, the hospital manages an estimated 40,000 outpatient visits annually and has performed 2,053 surgical procedures since its establishment. He said 60 per cent of these were major and complex operations, including spinal, general and vascular surgeries. The hospital launched its open-heart surgery programme in 2023. Ojo said it had since performed 44 open-heart surgeries, comprising 20 procedures on children and 24 on adults. He also highlighted the hospital's collaboration with Lagos State University through the Doctors Waiting List Initiative, which he said had helped improve access to cardiothoracic surgery for patients facing long waiting periods.

The hospital's catheterisation laboratory, he added, supports interventional cardiac and radiological procedures. Ojo said these services are part of the hospital's effort to provide treatment that some patients might otherwise seek abroad. Another milestone highlighted during the celebration was the birth of the hospital's 500th baby on October 19, 2026. Ojo said the achievement reflected the trust expectant parents had placed in the hospital and the work of its maternity team. He also announced that the hospital had received the Nigerian Healthcare Excellence Award in the Private Tertiary Healthcare Facility category in 2024 and 2025.

Beyond its clinical services, Ojo said the hospital had supported community medical outreach programmes and partnerships with public tertiary hospitals. He said these initiatives had enabled it to reach thousands of people. He thanked the hospital's clinical and non-clinical staff, describing their work as central to its operations and the care provided to patients.

The hospital's founder and Chief Executive Officer, Dr Yemi Onabowale, said the institution's development had benefited from support provided through the Central Bank of Nigeria's intervention fund. Responding to a question about how the hospital balances specialist healthcare standards with affordability, Onabowale said the support had helped establish the facility and cre-

# Duchess Hospital Marks Five Years With Push To Curb Medical Tourism



ated a responsibility to make its services affordable. He said one of the hospital's achievements had been encouraging Nigerian medical professionals based abroad to return home and contribute their expertise to the healthcare sector.

Asked whether Duchess planned to expand beyond Lagos "The goal is to reach as many Nigerians as possible and ensure they can access the best healthcare available globally without having to travel abroad for treatment," he said. He also cited cardiac, reconstructive and orthopaedic surgeries among the procedures performed locally at the hospital.

The anniversary programme included a lecture titled *Hunting the Killer*, delivered by a cardiologist at Spire Hospital in Cardiff, United Kingdom, Professor Nicholas Ossei-Gerning. He discussed cardiovascular disease and the risk factors associated with heart attacks and strokes, including high blood pressure, diabetes, abnormal cholesterol levels, obesity, smoking, poor diet and physical inactivity.

Ossei-Gerning urged people to check their blood pressure, undergo appropriate diabetes screening and seek medical advice about their cardiovascular risk. He explained that plaque can accumulate in the arteries over time, narrowing them and sometimes blocking blood flow. When a coronary artery becomes blocked, the heart muscle may be deprived of oxygen, leading to a heart attack. He stressed the importance of seeking urgent treatment when a heart attack occurs, explaining that delays can increase damage to the heart muscle. "Minutes mean myocardium," he said.

The cardiologist also discussed erectile dysfunction, explaining that it can sometimes be associated with underlying vascular disease. He urged men experiencing the condition to seek medical advice rather than dismissing it as a normal part of ageing.

Government seeks local investment

SALAKO said the Federal Government was working to reduce outbound medical tourism through investment in healthcare infrastructure, expanded insurance coverage and efforts to attract skilled professionals back to Nigeria. He said the administration had established additional federal health institutions over the past three years and was strengthening primary healthcare services. The minister also referred to the government's effort to unlock the healthcare value chain by creating opportunities for investment in medical services, health-related businesses and manufacturing.

He urged Nigerian health professionals living abroad to return home and contribute to the sector. Salako acknowledged, however, that medical tourism could not be eliminated entirely, as patients would continue to have the option of seeking treatment abroad. He said the government's aim was to reduce the number of Nigerians travelling overseas for healthcare.

Representing the First Lady of Lagos State, Dr Claudiana Ibijoke Sanwo-olu was the medical director of Ebute Metta General Hospital, Dr Folakemi Irewole Ojo. She commended Duchess for its investment in medical facilities and skilled personnel.

In the remarks delivered on behalf of the First Lady, Ojo said public-private partnerships were

important to expanding healthcare capacity and improving service delivery. She encouraged the hospital to maintain high professional standards, prioritise patient safety and continue improving the quality of care. She also highlighted the importance of preventive healthcare, regular medical check-ups, maternal and child health services, and early detection of illnesses. Ojo said patients should be treated with dignity, empathy and respect, regardless of their circumstances.

Looking ahead

AS Duchess marked its fifth anniversary, its management presented the occasion as an opportunity to recognise its progress and set out its ambitions for the years ahead. Onabowale said the hospital hoped to expand its reach beyond Lagos, although no timeline or proposed locations were announced at the event.

The hospital's stated ambition is to make specialist healthcare more accessible within Nigeria. Its management said it would continue to invest in clinical services, advanced technology and partnerships with other healthcare institutions. Five years after its establishment, Duchess has highlighted its surgical procedures, cardiac services, maternity care and patient experiences as evidence of its development.

Other notable guests at the anniversary included former Minister of Information, Lai Mohammed; former Nestlé managing director, Chief Olusegun Osunkeye; Marriott's Chief Operating Officer, Chike Ogea; Leadway Holdings Chairman, Oye Odokale; Bank of Industry Managing Director, Olasupo Olusi; and Dr Sesan Onabowale, Olori Ebi of the Onabowale family. Dr Akinwande Fadepe delivered the welcome address.

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By Eno-Abasi Sunday

# Anietie Bernard Akpan: Tribute To Compassionate Mentor, Gentleman Journalist

I WAS in my sophomore year in the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Calabar (UNICAL), when the late Mr Kunle Johnson of the defunct Comet Newspaper introduced me to the late Anietie Bernard Akpan, who was then the state correspondent of *The Guardian* in Cross River State.

Fresh from a one-year internship at Sunray Newspapers, where the very good-natured Mr Emmanuel Obe held my hand around as my first boss in the journalism world, the very avuncular and affable Akpan, in the course of the interaction that evening somewhere around Target Road/Nelson Mandela Road in Calabar South Local Council of Cross River State, was swift in deciding my fate.

He said: “KJ (referring to Kunle Johnson) said you want to write” to which I answered in the affirmative. “Okay, have you written before?” Again, I answered in the affirmative, adding that I worked under Obe at *Sunray* for a year.

Obe, who was magnanimous enough to convince the management of Sunray to leave the Cross River Office of the newspaper in my care for a month as he embarked on his annual leave, later on put in a word for me, vouching that I was hardworking and of good conduct while he was away.

Akpan wasted no time in asking me over to the then Goldie Street, Calabar office of *The Guardian* in 2002, where he instantly threw me into the fray while watching me commence a journey that ultimately led me to the RUTAM House, the corporate home of *The Guardian*.

Upon the completion of my programme in UNICAL, I observed my mandatory one-year National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) at the Benin, Edo State office of *The Guardian*.

As all this went on, Akpan, who also served out his NYSC at the Lagos head office of *The Guardian* in 1991, followed my trajectory and was highly elated with every promotion that I earned until he retired on August 1, 2023.

A compassionate mentor and gentleman journalist, Akpan’s warm, approachable and down-to-earth demeanour endeared him to the legion that he encountered on and off the job. His irrepressible cheerfulness, non-temperamental nature and lively spirit saw colleagues and associates consistently describe him as an intelligent and humble leader who possessed an extraordinary capacity to listen. This aspect of him saw many young professional colleagues warm up to him.

Affectionately nicknamed “RoRo Chief” within the media community, his work life was unblemished and unquestionable, just as his go-getter work ethic was something that younger professionals would learn from. He was committed to Mother Earth

yesterday, having passed away on Sunday, August 2, 2026, following an illness.

Having been retained after his service year by *The Guardian*, the sociology graduate from the University of Jos was drafted to the Calabar office, where he, through dint of hard work, left an indelible mark on Nigerian society with his deep knowledge of complex national issues, including the Bakassi Peninsula dispute, resource control, oil pollution in the Niger Delta, maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, child and women’s rights, and social justice, among others. One of his last awards came from Safe Child Africa, a United Kingdom-based non-governmental organisation, in recognition of his work on child witchcraft issues in Akwa Ibom and Cross River states.

In his 32-year sojourn at the Flagship of Nigerian Press, Akpan grew from a reporter to become the Deputy Bureau Chief (South-South) of *The Guardian*. Upon his resignation, he co-founded *Pillar Today*, from where he furthered his journalism career.

Akpan’s indelible mark on Nigerian society as a veteran journalist was unmistakable; hence, the governor of Cross River State, Senator Bassey Edet Otu, described him as a man of stature whose contributions to journalism and public life would remain indelible.

Otu, in his condolence message conveyed through his Chief Press Secretary and Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Mr Linus Obogo, described Akpan as a respected media professional whose passing was a loss to the journalism community, noting that the deceased had made significant contributions to journalism and public discourse.

For the Managing Editor of *The Guardian*, Chinedum Uwaegbulam, Akpan was a jolly good fellow, whose cheerfulness and kindness made him a joy to be around.

Testifying to the deceased’s longstanding warm nature, he said: “We served together as youth corps members and lived in the same lodge in the Shomolu area of Lagos State. Those days were filled with laughter, friendship and unforgettable memories. With Anietie around, there was never a

dull moment. His warmth, lively spirit and friendly disposition made our time together truly memorable.

“Even when he became Deputy Bureau Chief, South-South, we remained in constant touch and continued to share memorable moments. I particularly recall my visits to Calabar, where we had opportunities to reconnect and reminisce. During one of those visits, he opened up to me about his health challenges. It was a personal moment that brought me closer to him and gave me a deeper understanding of what he was going through.

Uwaegbulam continued: “Besides his professional accomplishments, he was a friend whose warmth and good humour left a lasting impression on everyone fortunate enough to know him. Though he is no longer with us, the beautiful memories of our youth service days, our friendship and our later encounters will remain dear to me. His passing is a painful loss, but the memories we shared will continue to live on.”

In her tribute, the Chairman of the Cross River State Chapter of the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Comrade Archibong Bassey, wrote: “I am so glad I never stopped letting you know how much I deeply appreciated you for the fatherly role you played in my life.

“When I was bullied in my early years in the practice, it was you and Mr Bassey Inyang who always came to my rescue. The many times I would call you even on your sick bed to tell you my troubles, and you would calmly say “mma mma duo odudu.” I am so broken Mr Anietie Ben Akpan.”

A former Deputy Speaker of the Cross River State House of Assembly, Orok Otu Duke, recounted the sacrifices made by Akpan and his colleagues at the Correspondence Chapel to protect activists and sustain democracy during the military era. He noted that the survival of many politicians, including himself, was directly tied to the bravery of journalists at the time.

To younger reporters, lawyers, and pro-democracy advocates during critical moments in Nigeria’s history, Akpan was an accessible senior colleague who gladly opened doors and offered national platforms to emerging voices.

His

integrity, loyalty, and penchant for helping the downtrodden earned him profound respect across professional, civic, and political circles in Cross River, Akwa Ibom, and beyond.

This much was captured by legal practitioner, Okoi Obono-Obla, who wrote: “I am saddened and distraught to hear of the death of Anietie Akpan on 3rd August, 2026. He was a distinguished journalist of many years standing in Calabar, Cross River State, in those heydays when journalism was still noble and elitist... When I arrived in Calabar in 1992 to start my law practice in the law firm of Kanu Godwin Agabi, SAN, it was a period when the country was soaked in revolutionary fervour, manifesting in the agitation for a return to democratic civil rule after years of debilitating military dictatorship that had stunted the progress of the country. I decided to be part of the pro-democracy and human rights community at the forefront of the vanguard for change. It was important to forge an alliance and relationship with journalists based in Calabar in order to catch national headlines and get national media coverage for what we were doing in Cross River State. Anietie Akpan, who had already established himself as a senior journalist with *The Guardian* Newspaper, was one of the journalists I forged a relationship with. He was very willing to reciprocate and to accept a young rookie like me, and

whenever I wrote on national issues, he would always accept my press statements, releases and essays and report them in *The Guardian*. He was a gentleman to the core — cordial, amicable and accessible. He was quiet, humble and kind.”

Obono-Obla’s views resonate with a NUJ Chairman in Cross River State, Omini Oden, who said of Akpan: “Some individuals leave indelible footprints not because of the positions they occupy but due to the values they uphold, the relationships they nurture and the lives they touched in the course of their professional journey. Anietie Ben Akpan is one such individual, a professional ally, a dependable friend and a consummate journalist whose commitment to the noble ideals of journalism deserves recognition and should be celebrated.

“My association with Anietie Ben Akpan transcends the routine interactions of professional colleagues. It is a relationship enriched by shared experiences, mutual respect, and a common appreciation of the critical role journalism plays in shaping public opinion, strengthening democratic institutions and holding leadership accountable. In him, I recognise not only a colleague in the media practice but an ally whose companionship added value to my professional journey and exploits,” said the former Chief Press Secretary to then Governor Liyel Imoke.

“My tribute to Anietie Ben Akpan is, therefore, a sincere expression of appreciation for a professional ally, a cherished friend and a worthy member of journalism and media practice. May the years ahead bring greater fulfilment, renewed opportunities for service and continued accomplishments in the noble enterprise of informing, educating, and enlightening society,” Oden added.

Akpan, who died at 63, is survived by his wife, Imaobong and children.

*His integrity, loyalty, and penchant for helping the downtrodden earned him profound respect across professional, civic, and political circles in Cross River, Akwa Ibom, and beyond.*



Akpan

# Kaleidoscope

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## Kano Farmers And Blessings Of Ecological Intervention



*Better access to irrigation and roads is opening possibilities for farming communities in Kano. Turning those opportunities into dependable livelihoods will require sustained training, effective maintenance and fair access to water, GBENGA AKINFENWA writes.*

**F**ARUKU Musa Haruna and other farmers in Kumbada used to pool their money to buy plastic sheets, trapping enough water to irrigate small patches of land. They wanted to keep farming after the rains, but their ambitions depended on how much water they could save. “We always had the desire to farm, but we lacked the means,” Haruna said.

When the rainy season was poor, dry-season cultivation could become impossible. The consequences extended beyond an unplanted field: fewer opportunities to work, fewer crops to sell, and another period of uncertainty before the next rains.

Now, Haruna describes a different experience. Water reaches the farms without the need to run a generator. “You just turn the valve, and water flows right into your field.”

He grows carrots, followed by onions, tomatoes, and peppers on the same land. With a more reliable supply, he hopes to add rice and wheat—crops he previously considered beyond reach because of water shortages.

For Haruna, irrigation offers greater freedom to decide what to plant and when. For the communities around Tiga, Challawa Gorge, and the Kafin Chiri dams, the larger question is whether that freedom can become a dependable livelihood.

### More than water

The Federal Government’s intervention around the three dams combines irrigation rehabilitation and expansion with erosion control, road improvements, and agricultural support. The Ecological Project Office, under the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, under the President Bola Ahmed Tinubu’s Renewed Hope Agenda, oversees the intervention, while contractors undertake civil works, and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) provides agricultural technical support.

Its importance reaches beyond Kano. Producing beyond the rainy season could help farmers supply markets more consistently and extend rural employment. But additional harvests must cover their costs before they can improve household finances.

Haruna says the improved water supply has reduced the need to leave his community in search of work. His experience illustrates what irrigation could mean for seasonal employment, although it does not establish a wider decline in migration.

Access to water may also change production expenses. Haruna no longer needs a generator to deliver irrigation water to his field. Yet, seed, fertiliser, labour and transport remain part of the calculation, as does the price a buyer eventually offers.

The distinction is essential: growing more food and earning more money are connected, but one does not automatically guarantee the other.

A plant breeding and genetics specialist at IITA’s Kano station, Professor Lucky Osabuo-hien Omoigui, argues that farmers need support to make productive use of the infrastructure. “But you need to train them on how to use the water effectively, productively,” he said.

IITA’s intervention covers water management, crop management, soil fertility and improved farming practices across 16 local council areas. The institute reports 1,890 beneficiaries overall, including 501 smallholder farmers who received training. Eight farmer field schools and 86 demonstration plots provide opportunities for practical learning.

These activities establish that agricultural support is taking place. Whether the lessons are adopted widely—and remain useful after the initial intervention—will determine their lasting value.

### Making another season count

**O**MOIGUI describes initial reluctance among some farmers to make land available for demonstrations. That hesitation is understandable: a household relying on its harvest must weigh the risks of committing land and labour to an unfamiliar practice.

To him, demonstration plots can help farmers assess those risks. They allow techniques and varieties to be tested under local conditions, giving participants something more concrete than a promise of higher yields.

Omoigui also stresses the importance of farmers’ preferences. He said improved varieties must suit the environment and the people expected to grow them. Technical performance alone cannot settle whether a farmer will adopt a new crop or change an established practice.

Even then, the assessment takes time. “So, you will see the effect maybe in two or three years,” he said.

His caution puts the early enthusiasm in perspective. Some participants report benefits already, but dependable conclusions about adoption, productivity, and income require evidence across successive seasons.

That includes understanding what happens to the soil when cultivation becomes more frequent.

Omoigui warns that repeatedly growing cereals on the same field can deplete soil fertility. He advocates cereal-legume rotations and appropriate fertiliser management to help sustain production.

For farmers, this is a practical concern. The opportunity to plant again after harvesting has limited value if declining soil fertility makes each subsequent crop pricier or less productive.

Training therefore needs to extend beyond the arrival of water. Farmers require advice on planting decisions, suitable varieties, fertiliser use, and land management over time. They also need access to the inputs required to apply that advice.

He noted that the measure of success will be what farmers can continue doing when organised demonstrations and initial support have ended.

### Harvest still needs road

**W**ATER is only one part of the journey from planting to payment. A farmer in Gana, Abdullahi Hamza, recalls how poor road conditions complicated trips to Bakin-Fa, particularly during rain. Onions could fall, become damaged, or spoil on the way to market.

“By the time we reached the market, they would be crushed and spoiled,” he said. He revealed that repairs have made it easier to transport produce by motorcycle or car. His account shows how transport difficulties can undermine a successful harvest before a farmer reaches a buyer. For rural businesses, access works can matter just as much.

Hafsat Yakubu, a businesswoman in Kwanar-Dangora, says flooding previously prevented customers from reaching her street. Drainage improvements, she states, have made access easier and helped her business.

Neither account provides a measured change in sales or losses. Both, however,

identify a clear connection between infrastructure and everyday commerce: farmers need to move produce, and businesses need customers to reach them.

At Darki, Adamu Salisu of Firm and Resolute Engineering describes a 1.5-kilometre market bypass intended to ease Thursday congestion. Road markings remained outstanding when he spoke.

The bypass illustrates why transport belongs in the irrigation discussion. More production creates additional demand for movement, storage, and buyers. A canal can help grow a crop; but cannot ensure that the crop arrives at market in excellent condition or commands a worthwhile price.

Roads and drainage also affect journeys beyond trading. Their condition shapes how easily residents can reach farms, services, and neighbouring communities. Those benefits deserve attention alongside construction milestones.

In Sumaila town, residents describe how gully erosion threatened homes while inaccessible roads forced car owners to park outside their neighborhood. Ado Ibrahim, a resident, remembers carrying household goods by hand because vehicles could not enter.

However, through President Tinubu’s Renewed Hope Agenda, implemented by the Ecological Project Office under the leadership of Permanent Secretary Dr. Aishetu Gogo Ndayako, the construction of roads and erosion-control infrastructure has improved accessibility, allowing residents to move more freely.

### Who keeps the water flowing?

**A**T Kafin Chiri, the lead site engineer for ECL Construction Limited, Jibril Muhammad Ibrahim, describes a completed main canal alongside an ongoing work on distribution and field channels.

His assessment that rehabilitation was 80 per cent complete applied to the embankment section. This figure does not represent the total completion status for the entire intervention.

For farmers, the difference matters. A completed main canal does not establish that every intended plot receives enough water when it is needed. The smaller channels carrying water onward and the arrangements governing its distribution are equally important.

Maintenance will become a recurring obligation. Channels need clearing, damaged structures need repair, and faults need a timely response. Responsibility for that work—and how it will be financed—must be understood before deterioration interrupts supply.

The Hadejia Jama’are River Basin Development Authority has supported engagement with water user associations and dam managers on operations and maintenance. The practical test will be whether these arrangements continue to function over successive seasons.

According to plans, fair access is another condition for lasting gains. Farmers need workable rules for sharing water and resolving disputes, including arrangements that protect those cultivating plots farther along a canal.

Women’s participation also warrants closer attention. IITA reports that women comprise 20 per cent of its overall beneficiaries and 97 of the 501 trained farmers. Those numbers show participation but do not explain who controls irrigated land, receives reliable water, and makes decisions about crop income.

A durable intervention must be judged by those experiences, as well as its physical reach. Back in Kumbada, Haruna’s immediate concern is simpler: the water that once constrained his farming is now more accessible. He can consider another crop and envision more work within his community.

Haruna has described what it means to turn a valve and see water enter his field. The more demanding test will come after repeated harvests, when farming families can judge whether another planting season has brought dependable earnings.



Tinubu



# Ogun 2027: Yayi And The Concept Of *Ató bá télé*

By Mikail Mumuni

IN the politics of leadership, one of the most important questions voters must ask is whether a candidate has acquired the experience, developed the capacity and demonstrated the commitment required to shoulder the responsibilities of the office being sought.

For Ogun State, as preparations gradually gather momentum towards the 2027 governorship election, this question brings Senator Solomon Olamilekan Adeola, popularly known as Yayi, into focus.

Adeola's supporters point to his legislative experience, constituency interventions and projects across Ogun State as evidence of his preparation for the governorship. For them, his political journey represents a gradual accumulation of experience that would prove valuable in the administration of a state with diverse economic interests, development needs and social expectations.

Indeed, there is a Yoruba saying that aptly captures the philosophy of preparation before assuming a position of responsibility: "Ató bá t l kó tó j ba." In essence, the saying conveys the idea that preparation and experience should precede the assumption of a position of authority. It is a principle that resonates with the argument being made by those who believe Adeola's years in public service have helped prepare him for the demanding task of governing Ogun State.

One of the most striking aspects of the case being made for Adeola is the claim that his development interventions extend beyond the boundaries of Ogun West Senatorial District, which he currently represents in the Senate, to other parts of the state.

In Nigeria's political system, senators are elected to represent their respective senatorial districts in the National Assembly. Their primary responsibility is to make laws, provide oversight and represent the interests of their constituents at the federal level. However, many senators also facilitate development projects and interventions through federal institutions, constituency initiatives and engagements with relevant government agencies.

Adeola's approach to constituency development reflects a broader understanding of the relationship between representation and development. Rather than restricting his interventions to the geographical area he represents, his projects and engagements demonstrate an interest in addressing needs across Ogun State, both rural and urban.

This countless verifiable evidence of Adeola's projects and

their distribution offers an important dimension to the conversation about his governorship ambition. For a state such as Ogun, which comprises Ogun Central, Ogun East and Ogun West Senatorial Districts, the ability to appreciate the different development priorities of its constituent communities is an important consideration in the selection of a governor. The challenges confronting communities in the state's industrial and commercial centres may differ from those facing rural settlements, agricultural communities and emerging urban areas. A governor must therefore understand these differences and develop policies that accommodate them without creating a sense of exclusion. A statewide development outlook is consequently an important quality to examine in any candidate aspiring to lead the state.

What sets Adeola's record apart is the scale and deliberate geographic spread of these interventions. As senator for Ogun West, he has facilitated the delivery of tens of thousands of solar street-light poles under the "Light Up Ogun" initiative. One recent batch alone involved 5,360 poles distributed as follows: 1,900 for Ogun West, 1,400 for Ogun East, and 2,060 for Ogun Central (including Abeokuta Township). Cumulative figures cited by the senator and independent reports place the total well above 50,000-80,000 poles across the three districts. These lights improve security, extend commercial hours and visibly signal presence in communities far beyond his formal constituency.

Road projects form another major pillar. In Ogun West, about 100-140 roads have been constructed or rehabilitated, the most prominent being the roughly 103-kilometre Ilara-Ilashe corridor that links dozens of communities and extends influence into adjoining areas. Recent completions also include the Joga-Ibora Road in Yewa North and numerous township and access roads in Imeko-Afon, Ipokia, Yewa South, Yewa North and Ado-Odo/Ota. Critically, similar interventions have reached Ogun Central: the Magbon-INEC Road in Abeokuta South, the Olomu-Ososun Road in Ifo Local Government Area, and support for facilities and roads in Obafemi-Owode (including donations towards community development infrastructure and pledges on the Mowe-

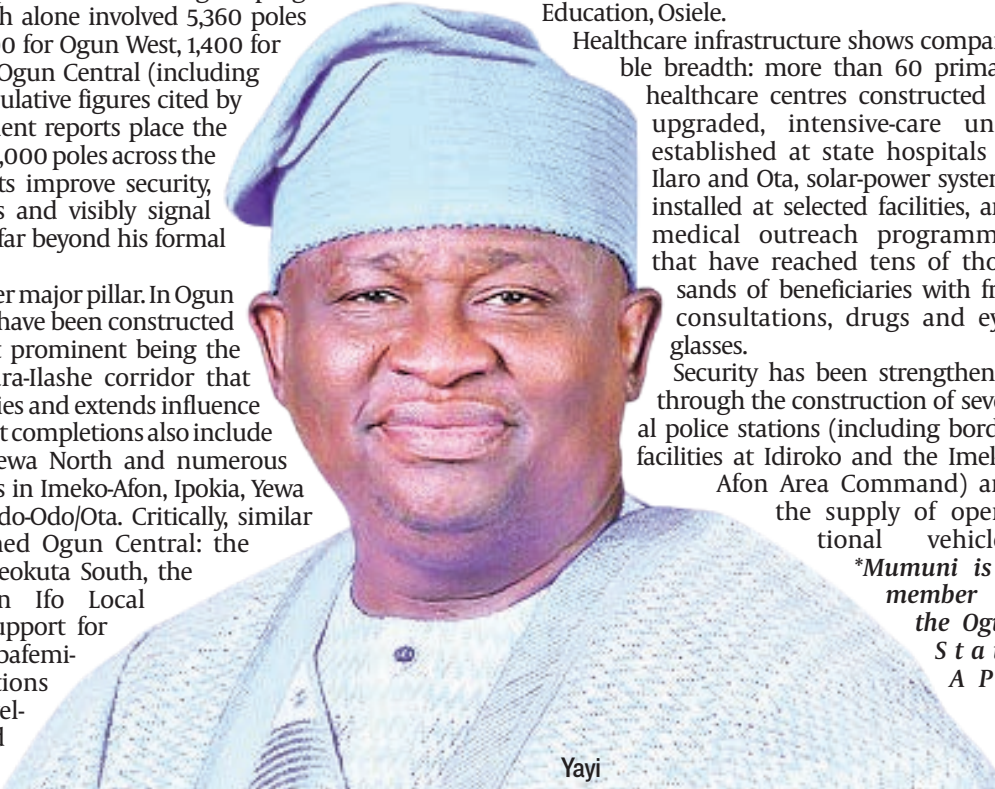
Ofada corridor). Transformers and power-line rehabilitations have also been extended into Ogun East communities such as Ijebu-Imushin, Ishagunse and Itele.

Education and human capital investments follow the same pattern. Hundreds of classroom blocks (including multiple 12-classroom structures complete with offices, libraries and furniture) have been delivered in schools across the five local government areas of Ogun West and beyond. A recent example is the 12-classroom block at Ibafo Grammar School. Thousands of tertiary students—figures exceeding 5,500—have received scholarships and bursaries ranging from N100,000 to N200,000. Textbooks, school bags, ICT centres and libraries have reached scores of schools. His legislative facilitation helped convert the Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, into a Federal University of Technology, while support has also flowed to institutions such as the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED) and the Federal College of Education, Osiele.

Healthcare infrastructure shows comparable breadth: more than 60 primary healthcare centres constructed or upgraded, intensive-care units established at state hospitals in Ilaro and Ota, solar-power systems installed at selected facilities, and medical outreach programmes that have reached tens of thousands of beneficiaries with free consultations, drugs and eye-glasses.

Security has been strengthened through the construction of several police stations (including border facilities at Idiroko and the Imeko-Afon Area Command) and the supply of operational vehicles.

*\*Mumuni is a member of the Ogun State APC*



Yayi

## Mustapha Aliyu And What He Is Bringing To INEC

By Emmanuel Ado

EVERY institution derives its strength and credibility not just from the Act establishing it, but from the quality and commitment of the people entrusted with ensuring that it delivers on its mandate. While a clear mandate and sound institutional structures are essential, it is the experience, integrity, good sense of judgment and competence of those responsible for translating that mandate into results that ultimately determine its capacity to effectively deliver. An institution with the best crafted laws can fall short of its purpose when those at the helm lack the capacity or the character to lead it.

For the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the stakes are definitely higher. True, the commission's credibility depends significantly on the competence and integrity of its officers entrusted with conducting the elections. However, the responsibility for credible elections does not rest solely with INEC alone. Politicians must respect the electoral process and voters must exercise their civic responsibilities responsibly. Indeed, the conduct of political actors and the choices that Nigerians make are just as consequential to electoral credibility as the performance of the electoral body itself. It is within this context that the experience, character and the competence of those appointed to lead the commission becomes especially important as Nigeria prepares for another general election cycle.

Mike Igini, a former Resident Electoral Commissioner of INEC, recently disclosed how politicians determined to win elections at all costs manipulate the recruitment of election officials. Speaking on ARISE News' Morning Show on October 20, 2026, Igini revealed that politicians infiltrate the lists of

the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members and replace them with their supporters to enable them to serve as election officials at polling units. His disclosure confirms that the politicians are those compromising the integrity of the elections at the polling units, where votes are cast and recorded. So the damage is not really done by the commissioners.

President Bola Tinubu in exercising his constitutional powers has rightly discharged that solemn responsibility by appointing Prof. Mustapha Aliyu as a National Electoral Commissioner representing the North-West Zone. The appointment has been well received given his experience, integrity and professional competence, qualities that are essential in strengthening INEC's capacity to deliver on its constitutional mandate. A quintessential public servant, Aliyu brings to the office an understanding of the demands of public service and the enormous responsibility that comes with overseeing a process fundamental to the survival of democracy.

In appointing Aliyu as a National Electoral Commissioner, President Tinubu has greatly enriched the commission with an academic and a tested financial professional whose career spans accounting, finance, taxation, university administration and the public service. This breadth of experience is a valuable combination of professional discipline and an analytical mind that will definitely contribute meaningfully to advancing INEC's responsibilities.

Beyond his academic and professional accomplishments, Aliyu, a keen sportsman is also a team player, a quality that his passion for volleyball has deepened. Volleyball demands more than individual talent; it requires coordination, discipline, effective communication and a clear understanding that success

depends on the collective effort of every member of the team. Players must anticipate each other's moves, respond quickly to changing situations and remain committed to the common objective, even under pressure. These are the additional qualities that Aliyu is bringing to INEC, where effective collaboration, good judgment and the ability to work with colleagues from diverse backgrounds are essential. His experience as a national volleyball player reinforces the value of teamwork, adaptability and collective responsibility in the discharge of the commission's mandate.

Aliyu's strongest credential is the breadth of his experience—education and public service experience. His education reflects a steady commitment to professional development. He obtained a National Diploma in

Accounting in 1993 and a Higher National Diploma in the same discipline in 1996 from the Polytechnic, Birnin Kebbi. He subsequently earned a Master of Business Administration from Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, in 2001, followed by a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting in 2004. In 2005, he obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting from the College of Accountancy, Jos. He later returned to Usmanu Danfodiyo University, where he obtained an M.Sc in Accounting and Finance in 2010 and a PhD in the same field in 2017. He also obtained a Diploma in Computer Studies in 2015. He is a fellow of the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria and the Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria.

These qualifications reflect sustained engagement with disciplines that place emphasis on analytical reasoning, evidence, accuracy, professional ethics and adherence to standards. In an institution responsible for managing a nationwide electoral process, these qualities are certainly useful in reaching decisions and in evaluating reports.

His professional career began outside the university environment. After completing his National Youth Service Corps programme in Kwara State between 1996 and 1997, he worked as an internal auditor before joining the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation. He subsequently became Chief Accountant in the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing.

Aliyu's early trajectory exposed him to the workings of government and the responsibilities associated with managing public resources. Internal auditing, for instance, requires attention to records, scrutiny of transactions and the controls designed to ensure compliance. His experience with the federal public service means he is familiar with administrative procedures and accountability.



Mustapha Aliyu

### The Industry Newspaper Unveils Panelists For Top 50 Men Of Impact 2026

•Onaivi, Ojeikhoa, Ozekhome, Others To Speak At Summit

By Gbenga Salau

THE Industry Newspaper Limited has unveiled the lineup of panelists and the moderator for the second edition of its flagship leadership event, The Industry Top 50 Men of Impact 2026.

The event, themed ‘Responsibility and Impact: The Role of Men as Builders of Brands, Businesses and Society,’ is scheduled for November 5, 2026, at Lagos Oriental Hotel, Lagos.

Now in its second edition, The Industry Top 50 Men of Impact is an annual roll of honour celebrating 50 distinguished Nigerian men who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in building enduring brands, thriving businesses and a better society.

This year’s edition will feature two sessions: a one-hour high-level panel discussion and the official presentation of certificates to the 50 honourees. According to the organisers, this year’s panel was carefully curated to deliver practical insights on responsible leadership, brand building and sustainable business growth in a challenging economy.

### Access Bank Partners PMI To Empower Nigerian Women With Global Certifications

By Sulaimon Salau

ACCESS Bank Plc, through Aits W Initiative, has partnered with the Project Management Institute (PMI) to expand Nigerian women’s access to globally recognised project management certifications.

The initiative comes against the backdrop of persistent gender disparities in Nigeria’s formal private sector.

McKinsey’s Women in the Workplace 2025: India, Nigeria and Kenya report found that although women account for around half of Nigeria’s workforce, they occupy only one in three entry-level positions in the formal private sector. The disparity is also evident in project management, where men globally outnumber women by three to one, according to PMI’s The State of Women in Project Management (2023) report.

At the same time, demand for skilled project professionals continues to rise. According to PMI’s Global Talent Gap report, Nigeria could require up to 211,000 additional project professionals by 2035 to meet growing demand and replace those leaving the workforce.

## NIMASA Detains Vessels Over Cabotage Violation

By Sulaimon Salau

THE Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) has confirmed that only MT Holmes and MT Sabeak were detained during a targeted enforcement operation code named Operation Sea Guardian to enforce compliance with maritime regulations in Nigeria waters.

Deputy Director/Head, Public Relations, NIMASA,

Osagie Edward, said contrary to the earlier statement, MT Fujairah Energy, JS Gratitude and MT Bora were not detained as they were in full compliance with the Cabotage Act and other extant regulations.

“However, MT Holmes and MT Sabeak were the vessels detained for non-compliance,” he emphasised.

Edward said the statement has been released for trans-

parency purposes while the inconvenience caused to the affected vessels and their owners by the mix up is regretted.

“Operation Sea Guardian was conducted as a follow-up enforcement initiative aimed at strengthening regulatory compliance, verifying cabotage obligations, assessing surcharge and levy compliance, and ensuring adherence to applicable

maritime regulations.

“It deployed Deep Blue assets to help track, board, inspect and verify the operational status of vessels identified through intelligence reports and compliance indicators through effective inter-agency cooperation among NIMASA enforcement personnel, the Nigerian Navy, the Maritime Guard Command and C4i intelligence personnel,” he stated.



Samson Oluranti Alonge, Principal, Omole Junior Grammar School (left); Stella Nwosisi, General Manager, Regional Operations, Lagos, MTN Nigeria Plc; Aolat Alade, Director, Procurement, Deputy Governor’s Office, Lagos State; and Joyce Omolere Audu, Principal, Omole Senior Grammar School, at the handover of learning support materials by MTN Nigeria at Omole Junior Grammar School, Lagos,

### Nestlé Boosts Water Access Through New Regeneration Facilities In Agbara

By Sulaimon Salau

NESTLÉ Nigeria Plc has advanced in its Water Regeneration Project with the commissioning of eight climate-smart boreholes and water treatment plants in communities within the Agbara catchment in Ogun State.

The facilities form part of a wider programme spanning the Agbara catchment in Ogun State and the Abaji catchment in the Federal Capital Territory.

Speaking at the commissioning, Business Executive Officer, Nestlé Waters and Premium Beverages, Nestlé Nigeria Plc, Olutayo Olatunji, said: “The Agbara commis-

sioning is an important milestone within our wider Water Regeneration Project and reflects Nestlé’s commitment to helping regenerate local water cycles.

“By combining treated water infrastructure with local governance and performance monitoring, we are creating a model that improves access, strengthens watershed resilience and delivers enduring value. As we finalise the remaining scope, our focus remains on rigorous delivery and measurable outcomes that benefit communities and support business continuity.”

Also speaking on the project, the Minister of Water

Resources and Sanitation, Prof. Joseph Terlumun Utsev, said: “Commissioning a facility is only the beginning; ensuring that it continues to provide safe, reliable and sustainable service is the true measure of success. It is encouraging that this initiative places strong emphasis on governance and water stewardship through the development of a governance training manual for water regeneration and stewardship.”

In his address, the Minister of Environment, Balarabe Abbas Lawal, added: “This project demonstrates what strategic public-private collaboration can achieve. By

working with regulators, local authorities and host communities, Nestlé has supported an ecosystem for sustainable and equitable access to safe drinking water. The initiative advances Sustainable Development Goal 6 and aligns with Nigeria’s environmental priorities.”

Corporate Communications, Public Affairs and Sustainability Lead, Nestlé Nigeria Plc, Victoria Uwadoka, said: “Through the National Water Quality Advocacy Campaign and the National Water Quality Handbook developed with the Federal Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation.

### Islamic Finance Industry Assets To Reach \$10.5tr By 2030

By Sulaimon Salau

THE global Islamic finance industry is on a steady trajectory towards significant expansion, with total assets projected to surpass the \$10.5 trillion threshold by the year 2030.

This strategic projection was unveiled on Thursday at the Kuala Lumpur Islamic Finance Forum (KLIFF) in Malaysia, following the official announcement of the 2026 edition of the Islamic Finance Development Report.

The comprehensive report was jointly published by LSEG in collaboration with the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD) – the private sector arm of the Islamic

Development Bank (IsDB) Group.

The detailed findings highlight that the global Islamic finance ecosystem maintained a remarkably strong growth momentum throughout 2025, recording a nine per cent year-on-year increase as total assets hit \$6.5 trillion.

“The global Islamic finance industry maintained a strong growth trajectory in 2025, with total assets reaching \$5.5 trillion, up nine per cent year-on-year. Growth was supported by the continued expansion in Islamic banking, record sukuk issuance, strong Islamic fund performance and new regulatory frameworks.”

According to the report,

Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and Pakistan retained their positions as the world’s most developed Islamic finance markets.

“These countries continued to benefit from comprehensive regulation, strong institutional development, active financial markets and well-established knowledge ecosystems,” it stated.

Beyond the core hubs, notable growth gains were recorded across several emerging jurisdictions, including Türkiye, Tanzania, Kenya, Benin, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, signalling broadening geographical traction.

The report outlines critical structural shifts driving sec-

tor progression worldwide, particularly across Africa and Central Asia:

“Regulatory reforms and stronger market infrastructure are supporting growth beyond core markets, particularly across Africa and Central Asia. Sustainability guidelines are increasingly prioritised, although activity remains concentrated in developed markets. Digitalisation is also advancing, with FinTech, open banking and tokenised sukuk influencing financing, issuance and settlement while widening access to financial products. However, talent development is lagging industry expansion, emphasising the need for stronger specialist education.”

### Dufil Deepens Social Investment With Teachers’ Devt Programme

By Sulaimon Salau

IN a sustained investment in the people shaping Nigeria’s next generation, Dufil Prima Foods Ltd, makers of Indomie Instant Noodles, has convened its 17th Annual Indomie Teachers Seminar, bringing together educators from more than 350 schools across Lagos and Ogun states to explore how teaching can evolve to meet the demands of 21st century learning.

The seminar focused on practical approaches to classroom engagement, technology adoption and inclusive education. It also highlighted how engagement with school communities extends beyond pupils to include the educators who shape their everyday learning experiences.

Themed ‘21st Century Teaching Essentials: Engagement, Technology and Inclusion for Nigerian Educators,’ the seminar explored ways to make lessons more interactive, encourage pupil participation and respond to different learning needs.

Facilitating the seminar, Prof. Mojisola Manuel, an early childhood education specialist at the University of Lagos and acting Director of its Career Development Centre.

### Unemployment: Coca-Cola Creates Over 160,000 Jobs

By Sunday Aikulola

AS part of efforts aimed at reducing unemployment in the country, the Coca-Cola system across its value chain have supported over 160,000 jobs, including nearly 3,000 direct jobs and an additional 157,200 jobs through suppliers, partners and customers.

This was recently announced during the result of a comprehensive socio-economic impact study, conducted by global consulting firm, Steward Redqueen, following its recent Coca-Cola’s 75th Anniversary Gala celebrated in Abuja.

This new independent study highlights the scale of the Coca-Cola system’s contribution to the nation’s economy, employment and communities.

The study reveals that the Coca-Cola system in Nigeria comprising The Coca-Cola Company and its authorised bottler – Nigerian Bottling Company – alongside a broad network of local suppliers, distributors and retailers, contributed \$1 billion in value-added economic activity in 2024.

The study also highlights the Coca-Cola system’s strong local integration, with \$601 million worth of goods and services sourced from suppliers in Nigeria in 2024.

## Ubani Urges INEC To Allow Stakeholders To Count, Collate, Publish Election Votes

By Benjamin Alade

**T**HE Executive Director, #FixPolitics Africa, Anthony Ubani, has urged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to allow political parties to independently collate and publish results from the 2027 elections.

Ubani, in a statement, stressed that independent vote counting would not deprive INEC of its sole authority to declare the winner of the elections.

He was reacting to a recent comment by Segun Showunmi, as reported by The Guardian, that the release of results and declaration of winners by anyone other than INEC would be regarded as treason.

According to him, treason is not a word that should be used loosely in a democracy.

“In Nigeria, it carries too much history and too much pain. We have lived through periods when criticism was treated as disloyalty, opposition as subversion, and disagreement as a threat to the state.

## Fasoranti: Family Announces December 17 For Funeral, Interment

From Adewale Momoh, Akure

**T**HE family of the late Afenifere leader and elder statesman, Pa Reuben Famuyide Fasoranti, has announced December 17, 2026, for his funeral service and interment.

Fasoranti, a foremost nationalist and respected Yoruba leader, died at his residence in Akure, the Ondo State capital, on Tuesday at the age of 100. In a burial announcement, the Christian wake-keeping service will be held on Wednesday, December 16, by 4 pm at his residence within the Omolere Nursery and Primary School Compound.

The funeral service is scheduled for Thursday, December 17, at St David's Cathedral, Ijomu, Akure, Ondo State, by 10 am, with interment following immediately at the church cemetery.

The family said a reception for guests would take place at the deceased's residence immediately after the interment.

An outing and thanksgiving service will subsequently hold on Sunday, December 20, at St David's Cathedral, Ijomu, Akure, by 10 am.

The statement, signed by Dr. Taiwo Fasoranti on behalf of the family, read: “The family of late Pa Reuben Famuyide Fasoranti is pleased to announce the burial arrangements of our beloved patriarch, leader of Afenifere and foremost nationalist, who passed away at the age of 100 years.

## SON, Regulators Target End To LPG Persistent Challenges, Nationwide Recertification

By Gbenga Akinfenwa and Divine Yusuf

**W**ORRIED by the persistent circulation of expired, damaged and uncertified liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders and other problems in its supply chain, the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) has reiterated its commitment to addressing the menace through a structured recirculation system.

Disclosing this at a press conference in Lagos on Friday to announce the launch of the National Cylinder Recirculation Programme (NCRP), a national initiative designed to strengthen the safety, identification, traceability and lifecycle management of LPG, the Director-General and Chief Executive Officer of SON, Dr. Ifeanyi Chukwunonso Okeke,

said through the NCRP, stakeholders are unifying statutory quality control with digital traceability to protect Nigerian lives and property while building consumer trust in clean energy.

The programme, initiated by SON, in partnership with the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA), the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC) and other government agencies and industry partners, is targeted at addressing persistent problems in the LPG supply chain, including limited access to cylinder histories, and gaps in inspection and requalification records.

It was gathered that the implementation will begin with stakeholder onboarding, integration with the digital registry and rollout activities across

Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. The national unveiling is scheduled for October 28 and 29, 2026 in Abuja, alongside the Nigeria Clean Cooking Forum 2026. An international unveiling is also planned for COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, scheduled for November 9-20, 2026.

“Safe and reliable LPG use depends on more than access to gas. It requires strict adherence to cylinder quality standards, responsible handling, and effective lifecycle tracking across the supply chain. Through the NCRP, we are unifying statutory quality control with digital traceability to protect Nigerian lives and property while building consumer trust in clean energy,” Okeke said.

A central component of the programme is the National Cylinder Registry (NCR) powered by FuelTree's virtual

Cylinder Recirculation Management System (vCRM). Using unique cylinder identities and smart QR tags, the system records cylinder movements and key lifecycle events, including distribution, refills, exchanges, inspections and requalification. These records will help participating stakeholders check cylinder status and monitor compliance requirements across the supply chain.

The Director and Chief Technology Officer at FuelTree, Femi Oye, said: “The National Cylinder Registry (NCR) connects unique cylinder identity tags with real-time lifecycle tracking. This digital infrastructure enables seamless monitoring of requalification cycles, inspection records, and carbon credit metrics as cylinders move through the supply chain.”



Engr Dapo Akinsanya (left); Co-Founder, GTBank, Fola Adeola; Managing Partner, Oyagbola Chambers & Poet, Bayo Oyagbola and Founder, WISCAR, Amina Oyagbola at the launch of the book, “The Sky's Forgotten Prayers - Echoes of River, Drum and Heaven” in Lagos

## World Polio Day: No Child Should Get Paralysed By Preventable Diseases - Rotary Governor

By Florence Utor

**A**S Nigeria joins the rest of the world to mark World Polio Day, the District Governor of Rotary International District 9111, covering Lagos and Ogun states, Rotarian Bukola Olabisi Bakare, has appealed to parents, government authorities, community leaders and Nigerians generally to take the fight against polio seriously and ensure that every child is protected

through vaccination.

Bakare expressed concern that children are still at risk of contracting polio despite the availability of vaccines to prevent the disease.

“It is heartbreaking that in this day and age, a child can still become paralysed because of polio. We have vaccines that can prevent this suffering, so why should any child have to go through it? As a mother and grandmother, I cannot imagine the pain of watching a child suf-

fer from something that could have been prevented. This is why I am appealing to every parent to ensure that their children are vaccinated. We must protect our children,” Bakare said.

She recalled that Nigeria was certified free of wild poliovirus in 2020, describing the achievement as one that every Nigerian should be proud of. However, she warned that the country must not allow the success to create a false sense of security, particularly as outbreaks of

variant poliovirus continue to pose a threat.

“We celebrated when Nigeria was declared free of wild poliovirus, and rightly so. It was the result of years of hard work by health workers, volunteers, government agencies, Rotary members and many other organisations. But we must understand that being certified free of wild poliovirus does not mean we should stop vaccinating our children.

## MMA2: Babalakin Applauds Tinubu For Resolving 18-year Impasse, Pledges Quality Jobs For Nigerians

By Olusegun Koiki

**P**RESIDENT Bola Tinubu has received commendation from the Chairman of Bi-Courtney Aviation Services Limited (BASL), Dr. Wale Babalakin, following the recent signing of the settlement agreement resolving the more than 18-year impasse surrounding Murtala Muhammed Airport Terminal Two (MMA2), which he described as a victory for Nigeria.

Speaking at the signing cere-

mony involving the Federal Government, the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Bi-Courtney Limited and Stabilini Visioni Limited, Babalakin commended the President for his intervention through the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, SAN.

“This is not a win for us alone; it is a win for Nigerians,” he said.

He expressed appreciation to the President, the Minister and

Nigerians who have followed the dispute over the years.

He noted that the resolution sends a positive signal to investors that long standing disputes between government and private enterprises could be resolved through dialogue and constructive engagement.

Prolonged uncertainty, he observed, could discourage long-term investment, making the settlement an important step towards strengthening confidence in Nigeria's

investment environment.

The agreement also creates an opportunity to advance key development projects at MMA2, particularly the hotel and conference centre, and the commencement of regional flight operations. Completing the hotel and conference centre would enhance the airport environment and provide accommodation and conference facilities for business travelers, corporate organisations and other airport users.

## \$242m Petroleum Products Diversion Claim: UBA Secures Court Order Against Vitol, Four Others

• Commences Contempt Proceedings Against WEMPCO Directors

By Opeyemi Babalola

**A**LAGOS State High Court, last Thursday, granted interim preservative orders of Mareva Injunction against Vitol SA – a Switzerland based Energy Trading company, and four other shipping companies in favour of United Bank for Africa (UBA) Plc.

The bank accused Vitol of wrongful release of cargoes of petroleum products which were consigned to the order of UBA in the Bills of Lading.

Addressing the court, Bode Olanipekun (SAN), lead counsel for UBA, urged the court to grant the interim preservative orders against Vitol and the other shippers.

In a ruling on the application, the presiding judge, Justice K. A. Jose granted three prayers in UBA's application, including requests to restrain the dissipation of assets and dealings with funds up to the disputed amount by Vitol SA.

“Prayers one to three are granted as prayed against the second Respondent only,” the judge ruled.

The application was brought pursuant to Order 43 Rule 1 of the High Court of Lagos State (Civil Procedure) Rules 2019 and the Lagos State High Court Practice Direction No. 2 of 2019.

UBA is seeking to contend in the substantive proceedings that Vitol SA and the owners of the vessels are liable for alleged conversion, misrepresentation and negligence arising from the non-delivery of the petroleum products.

UBA also cited 34 financial institutions and public agencies, including commercial banks, merchant banks, microfinance banks, the Nigerian Ports Authority and the Nigeria Customs Service, in connection with the application.

In an affidavit supporting the application, UBA's Group Head of Recoveries and Remedial Management, Anthony Chilaka, stated that the bank issued a letter of credit for the benefit of Vitol SA to facilitate a petroleum products transaction.

UBA alleged that the cargo was transported to Nigeria and that the vessels' masters issued several bills of lading.

The bank further alleged that Vitol subsequently endorsed the bills of lading “to the order of” UBA and handed over the original copies to it.

UBA maintained that the endorsement entitled it to take possession of the cargo upon completion of the voyage.

However, Chilaka stated that the bank had not received the gasoil despite the completion of the voyage.



## CHANGE OF NAME

www.guardian.ng Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria Guardiannigeria Guardian Nigeria - C00264288

**ABILOYE** : I, formerly known as Abiloye Samuel Dayo now wish to be addressed as Abiloye Samuel Olaboda. My DOB is 18-01-1999 not 18-01-1998. Former documents remain valid public note.

**ADDITION OF NAME** : I, formerly known as Arinze John now wish to be addressed as Arinze John Jeremiah. All former documents remain valid. General public take

**ADDITION OF NAME** : I, formerly known as Duru Maxwell now wish to be addressed as Duru Maxwell Ndubuisi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**ADDITION OF NAME** : I, formerly known as Okechukwu Success now wish to be addressed as Okechukwu Success Ebele. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**ADEJO** : I formerly known as Christopher Bako Adejo now wish to be addressed as Christopher Bako Adem. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**ADEJOKE** : I, formerly known as Adejoke Chukwumah now wish to be addressed as Adejoke Adebayo-Chukwumah. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**ADELOYE** : I, formerly known as Adeloye Stella Enogie now wish to be addressed as Williams Stella Enogie. All former documents remain valid general public take note

**ADEROJU** : I, formerly known as Miss Aderoju Christianah Adebisi now known as Mrs. Aderoju Christianah Adebisi. All former documents remain valid g. General public take note

**AGAGA** : I, formerly known as Mary Oluwatosin Agaga now wish to be addressed as Mary Oluwatosin Darlington. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**AKHIMIEN** : I formerly known as Akhimien Winfred now wish to be addressed as, Unuigbe Winifred. My DOB is 29-10-1987, not, 16-06-1986. Aormer documents remains valid. Public note.

**AKIBU** : I, former Miss Akibu Ganiyat Iyanuoluwa now wish to be known as Mrs Iyanuoluwa Ganiyat Akinade. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**ALUKA** : I, formerly known as Aluka Uzoamaka Christiana now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Umeadi Uzoamaka Christiana. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**AMEDU** : I formerly known as, Amedu Francis Michael now wish to be addressed as, Francis Michael Prophet. My DOB is, 21-12-2004 not 21-12-2000. Former documents remains valid public note.

**ANIFOWOSE** : I, formerly known as Anifowose Mariam Temitope now wish to be addressed as Anifowose-Abidoye Mariam Temitope. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**ANTHONY** : I, formerly known as Anthony Davis Uchendu now wish to be addressed as Ahaneku Anthony Uchendu. All former documents remain valid. Public take note.

**AREMU** : I. formerly known as Miss Aremu Hassanat Ojuolape, now wish to be known and addressed as Mrs. Adepoju Hassanat Ojuolape. Former documents remain valid Public take note.

**ARRANGEMENT OF NAME** : My name was wrongly arranged as Aderonke Omolara Latona instead of Omolara Aderonke Latona. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**CHIBUKE** : I, formerly known as Chibuke Hygenius Nnodebe, now wish to be addressed as Chibuke Hyginus Nnodebe. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**CHUKWUZARAM** : I, formerly known as Nnodebe Deborah Chukwuzaramkepe, now wish to be addressed as Chukwuzaram Deborah Nnodebe. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**CONFIRMATION OF NAME** : I, formerly known as Ibrahim Jumoke Rasheedat Now wish to be addressed as Azeez Rasheedat Omolara. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**CONFIRMATION OF NAME** : That, Egbon Uyi Excellent and Uyi Egbon Excellent, is same person, now wish to be addressed as Uyi Egbon Excellent Esewi. Former documents remain valid. Public note

**CONFIRMATION OF NAME** : That Adebisi John Olumuyiwa and Adebisi John Olalekan and Adebisi J. O. Olalekan is same person, now addressed as Adebisi John Olumuyiwa Olalekan. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

**CONFIRMATION OF NAME** : This is to confirm that I, Eke Chioma is the same person as Eke Chioma Uchechi. All former documents remain valid. Banks, public take note

**CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH** : I, Ogundele, Babawale Adeyeye, hereby state that My DOB was wrongly written as 07/03/1990 instead of 07/03/1976. All former documents remain valid. WAEC, Unimaid. Public take note.

**CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH** : I, Opawole Oladimeji, On my Passport records and other documents, my date of birth was wrongly stated as 13th March, 1965 instead of 13th March, 1961. General public note.

**CORRECTION OF NAME** : I, formerly known as Olorunfunmi Oyinkansola Ajose now wish to be addressed as Olorunfunmi Princess Oyinkansola Mautin Ajose. All former documents remain valid. General public take

**CORRECTION OF NAME** : I, formerly known as Stephen Thomas, now wish to be known as Stephen Thomas. Both names refer to one and the same person. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**CORRECTION OF NAME** : I, Orizu Josiah Chukwuma, hereby give notice that my name was erroneously stated on my NECO result, National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) certificates as Orizu Josiah C/Orizu Chukwuma Joshua, instead of my correct name, Orizu Josiah Chukwuma. All concerned authorities, general public are hereby requested to take note. All other particulars remain unchanged.

**EBERE** : I, formerly known as Ebere Esther, now wish to be addressed as Samuel Nwaji Esther. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**EBUBE** : I, formerly known as Ebubechukwu Augustine Nnodebe, now wish to be addressed as Ebube Augustine Nnodebe. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**EKE** : I, formerly known as Kalu Miriam Eke, now wish to be addressed as Miriam David. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**ELISHA** : I, formerly known as Chukwudalu Elisha Nnodebe, now wish to be addressed as Elisha Chukwudalu Nnodebe. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**ENWEREAMA** : I formerly known as Enwereama Uchenna Donatus now wish to be known as Amaefula Uchenna Donatus. All former documents remain valid. General public note.

**ESKHAILU** : I, Formerly known as Angela Eskhailu now wish to be addressed as Angela Emmanuel all former documents remain valid general public take note

**EZE** : I, formerly known as Eze Judith now wish to be known and addressed as Mrs. Osayende Judith. All former documents remains valid. General public take note.

**IBOGEMA** : I, formerly known as Elijah Gideon Ibogema now wish to be addressed as Kashater Elijah Ibogema. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**IGWE** : I, formerly known as Miss. Igwe Ijeoma Matilda now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Ugochukwu Ijeoma Matilda. All former documents remain valid. General Public take note.

**IKHINE** : I, formerly known as Ikhine Blessing now wish to be addressed as Owobu Blessing. My DOB is 12-11-1975 not 18-11-1975. All former documents remains valid. Public note.

**LASODA** : I, formerly known as Abimbola Victoria Lasode now wish to be addressed as Abimbola Victoria Omotosho. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**MERAYEBU** : I, formerly Miss Merayebu Bosede Olajumoke now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Olufokunbi Bosede Olajumoke. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**MICHEA** : I, formerly known as Martins-Yedenu Micheal now wish to be addressed as Martins-Yedenu Oluwasegun Michael. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**MURTALA** : I formerly known as, Murtala Idris now wish to be addressed as Yahaya Idris. My DOB is 01-01-2001 not 01-01-2004. All former documents remains valid. Public note.

**NDIUKWU** : Formerly Ndiukwu David Ebubechukwu now wish to be addressed as Chimeka, Ebubechukwu David. My DOB 21/05/2007 not 1/05/2007. All former documents remain valid. Public take note.

**NJOKU** : I, formerly known as Chidinma Esther Njoku now wish to be addressed as Chidinma Esther Ihejirika. All former documents remain valid g. General public take note

**NKWACHUKWU** : I formerly known as Nkwachukwu Gift, now wish to be addressed as Ayemere Gift Augustina, my DOB is, 01-07-1995 not 25-12-2001. former documents remains valid public note

**OFORMA** : I formerly known as Miss Nneka Felicia Oforma now wish to be addressed as Mrs Nneka Felicia Okechukwu. All documents remain valid. Public note.

**OGUNOJO** : I, formerly known as Miss Ogunojo Bose Helen now wish to be addressed as Mrs Fagbemi Bose Helen. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**OHA** : I, formerly known as Oha Maryjane Chinenye now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Ifeanyichukwunnanna-Oha Maryjane Chinenye. All former documents remain valid. Public note.

**OHIA** : I, formerly known as Ohia Perpetual Ijeoma now wish to be addressed as Asomba Mirabel Ijeoma. All former documents remain valid. Public take note.

**OKPIORORO** : I, formerly known as Okpiororo Onome now wish to be known as Esi Onome Christian. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**OLAGUNJU** : I, formerly known as Olagunju Sunday Oladipo Now wish to be addressed as Olagunju Sunday Gabriel All former documents remain valid g. General public take note

**OLASUSI** : Formerly Olasusi Adayo Oluwatoyin now wish to be addressed as Olasusi Oluwatoyin Adedayo. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

**OLOKUNDE** : I, formerly known as Nwankwo Vivian, Nwankwo Vivian Onyemuche, Nwankwo Vivian Onyemuchechukwu and Olokunde Vivian Onyemuchechukwu Now wish to be addressed as Olokunde Vivian Onyemuche all former documents remain valid general public take note

**OMORODION** : I, formerly known as Miss Omorodion, Osatohanmwun Marie now wish to be addressed as Mrs, Osa, Osatohanmwun Marie. All former documents remain valid. General public note.

**ORJI** : I, formerly known as Orji Chinecherem Alice now wishes to be called Ugwa Chinecherem Alice. All former documents remain valid. General public note.

**OSAYEMI** : I, formerly known as Afejuku Lucky Godwin now wish to be addressed as Efejuku Oluwaseun-funmi Osayemi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**OSOBA** : I, formerly known as Ogun-sanya Erianu Opeyemi now wish to be addressed as Osoba Erianu Opeyemi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**PRECIOUS** : I, formerly known as Chinedu Precious now wish to be addressed as Chinedu Nkechi. All former documents remain valid. General public note.

**SHERIFF** : I, formerly known as Sheriff Alao Tanimoomo now wishes to be addressed as Samuel Alao Tanimo - omo. All former documents remain valid. Public note

**TOBIN** : I, formerly known as Benny Emmanuel now wish to be addressed as Tobin Benjamin Jedidiah. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

**UDEOKA** : I, formerly Uchechi Perpetua Nwanejuafor, Uchechi Perpetua Udeoka and Perpetua Uchechi Udeoka, now addressed as Uchechi Nwanejuafor. All former documents remain valid. Public note.

**YEMISI** : I, formerly known as Miss Adejimi, Yemisi Deborah now wish to be known as Mrs. Tankubo, Yemisi Deborah. All former documents remain valid. Public notice.

**YUSUF** : I, formerly known as Miss Yusuf, Bukola Abibat, now wish to be known as Mrs. Odumboni Olubukola Abibat. All former documents remain valid. General Public, take note.

## News Extra

### LASUSTECH, Ghanaian University Set 12-Month Target For Partnership

By Suliyat Tella

**L**AGOS State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH) and Kumasi Technical University (KsTU), Ghana, have agreed to assess the impact of their partnership within 12 months, with plans for faculty exchanges, joint research and greater industry involvement in technical education.

The agreement was reached during a five-day visit by the KsTU leadership to LASUSTECH from September 18 to 22, 2026, to strengthen the partnership established in 2023.

The partners said engineering will be the initial focus, with both institutions planning faculty exchange programmes

supported by a logistics-swap arrangement. They also intend to appoint experienced industry professionals as professors of practice to strengthen practical training and improve the relevance of academic programmes.

The Vice-Chancellor of LASUSTECH, Professor Olumuyiwa Odusanya, said the partnership must deliver measurable outcomes beyond academic qualifications.

He identified curriculum development, postgraduate programmes and research addressing practical challenges as key priorities. He also stressed the need to build the capacity of non-teaching staff alongside academic collabora-

tion.

Odusanya said progress would be assessed within 12 months, with joint research publications and the involvement of KsTU academics as external examiners for master's programmes at LASUSTECH among the proposed indicators.

He also proposed developing new curricula from postgraduate to doctoral levels, alongside staff exchanges, joint supervision and research collaborations.

Other areas of cooperation include joint international conferences, student innovation challenges, technology and innovation fairs, and collaborative research.

### At Plugged In 2026, Stakeholders Unite To Turn Nigeria's Creators Into Million-Dollar Businesses

By Daniel Anazia

**T**HE creative economy is no longer a side hustle; it is the frontline. This was the powerful message that echoed at the second edition of Plugged IN, Nigeria's most decisive creator-to-brand marketplace.

Organised by Insight Redefini, an integrated marketing communications network operating across Nigeria and West Africa and a member of Publicis Groupe in partnership with Woof Studios Africa, an African creative agency and Creator Service Provider (CSP) dedicated to supporting and amplifying the continent's digital talent, the event brought brands and creators together, to

explore opportunities for more meaningful collaboration through brand-funded content on YouTube.

Theme: "Beyond the Placement: Rethinking How Brands Work with Creators," this year's Plugged IN brought together Nigeria's biggest YouTube creators, brand decision-makers and media agencies under one roof to examine how brands, agencies and creators can move beyond conventional advertising placements to develop content that combines business objectives with authentic audience engagement.

Building on a 2025 pilot, this year's event raised the bar, expanded the conversation

to more brands, with a focus on small-group discussions and one-to-one engagements designed to connect brands with creators and move promising ideas towards campaign briefs, partnerships and funded content.

Hosted by actress and media personality Bisola Aiyeola, the event comes amid growing interest in digital video and creator-led content as platforms for brands to connect with audiences. YouTube previously reported that watch time in Nigeria grew by more than 50 per cent year on year in 2025, with the platform reaching more than 30 million adults in the country each month.

## A Ballon d'Or Campaign As Fierce Off The Pitch As On It

AN emotional Ousmane Dembele had barely settled back into his chair at Paris' historic Theatre du Chatelet last September, gold-dipped orb in hand, when campaigns for this year's men's Ballon d'Or prize began to whirr into action.

Entourages roused their candidates, media revelled in the hype. Who deserved the award in 2026? A World Cup year, no less, in which the narrative occasionally became not just which players could lead their country to glory, but how doing so would help them secure football's biggest individual accolade.

"The Ballon d'Or has been discussed every single day," said European football expert Guillem Balague on BBC Sport's Euro Leagues podcast.

"Quite clearly it follows the pattern of socie-

ty, where it puts a lot of emphasis on the individual - it's harder to understand why a collective works, it becomes very easy to understand why one dribbles or doesn't dribble."

Clamour for the spotlight only increased as the red-carpet ceremony neared.

"You can't underestimate the PR machine that some clubs and some players are going to use," added French football journalist Julien Laurens.

Managers and sporting directors talked up their charges, and questioned why others on their squad did not make the 30-man shortlist.

Deco branded it a "huge scandal" that Barcelona pair Raphinha and Pedri missed out, but backed Lamine Yamal as over-

whelming favourite to win it. Not, he says, because he is also a Barca player, but "because I like football".

Star names have appeared frequently in the media. Lamine Yamal himself insisted he will not "beg for anything" - after last year saying he dreamed of "winning many" - but suggested the prize should not merely go to the top goalscorer.

Paris St-Germain manager Luis Enrique confessed he is "bored of the Ballon d'Or" - although with a record 10 PSG players on the shortlist, perhaps he wishes to keep out of the debate. Dembele and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia talked each other up to BBC Sport.

"We can cut it in two," joked Dembele. "Honestly, he deserves it, the season he had



was exceptional." Kvaratskhelia responded: "Of course it's him!"

A 'Kvara d'Or' campaign in Georgia celebrated the country's favourite fleet-footed son.

"I think for the big nations it's really difficult to understand what [winning] would mean for the small country," the winger explained.

Kylian Mbappe, who Real Madrid boss Jose Mourinho compared to the original Ronaldo, was less subtle than most in his pitch to win the award for the first time.

"I always think I'm the best but everyone has their own opinion," professed the Frenchman, now the all-time World Cup top goal scorer. "Of course, this year could be good for me to win the Ballon d'Or - but journalists vote."

Indeed - since a short spell of national team captains and managers also voting ended in 2015 - the 30-player shortlist drawn up by the publications France Football and L'Equipe has been voted on by one journalist from each of the top 100 Fifa-ranked nations.

The deadline has passed. The winner has already been chosen.

Read the remaining story online [www.guardian.ng](http://www.guardian.ng)

## Dakar 2026 Youth Olympics: Team Nigeria To Depart For Senegal Oct. 29

By **Gowon Akpodonor**

THE Nigerian contingent to the 2026 Youth Olympics billed to hold in Dakar, Senegal, will depart from Abuja on October 29 for the Games, the National Sports Commission (NSC) has said.

The team began a 21-day local camping programme on October 9, and it will end on their departure date on October 29.

In its operational timeline for Team Nigeria's participation in the Youth Olympic Games unveiled yesterday, the NSC said that it is fully prepared for the Games scheduled to run from October 31 to November 13, 2026.

It disclosed that the camping programme featured medical screen-

ing, anti-doping education, technical and tactical preparations, kit fitting, travel documentation and final confirmation of the team's participation requirements.

According to the timeline, Team Nigeria is expected to arrive in Dakar on October 30 for accreditation, accommodation and equipment checks, technical meetings and familiarisation with competition venues across the three host zones of Dakar, Diamniadio and Saly.

The opening ceremony will take place on October 31 at the Diamniadio Olympic Stadium, the same day competitions begin in table tennis and beach volleyball.

The competition schedule will

see beach volleyball and table tennis lead Nigeria's campaign from October 31, with swimming beginning on November 1. Boxing is scheduled for November 7 to 12, while athletics and road cycling will take place on selected dates between November 8 and 10.

Beach volleyball will be staged at Saly Beach West, table tennis and boxing at Dakar Expo Centre, swimming at the Tour de l'Euf Complex, road cycling along Corniche Ouest and athletics at the Iba Mar Diop Complex.

The Games will conclude with the closing ceremony on November 13 at the Diamniadio Olympic Stadium, after which the Nigerian contingent is expected to return to

Abuja following the completion of departure formalities and equipment reconciliation.

The NSC said that the operational timeline is designed to coordinate Team Nigeria's preparations, travel, accreditation and competition schedules, while ensuring that athletes and officials are adequately prepared for the demands of the international sporting event.

Nigeria's participation in Dakar 2026 forms part of the country's broader efforts to strengthen grassroots sports development, nurture emerging talents and establish a pathway for young athletes to progress to elite international competition.

## Business

## Nigeria's Next Major Export Will Be Intellectual Assets, Not Oil – Echono

FOR decades, Nigeria's economic identity has been inextricably tied to crude oil. Millions of barrels shipped abroad, revenues dictated by volatile foreign markets, and an economy exposed to every international price shock. Yet, beneath the surface of this commodity-dependent nation lies an untapped reservoir far more valuable and endless: the intellectual energy of its youth.

That narration is beginning to change. Through strategic interventions by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), driven by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope agenda, Nigeria is quietly building a new economic engine.

The nation's tertiary education system is undergoing its most far-reaching transformation in decades. TETFund is moving decisively beyond brick-and-mortar infrastructure into digital education, innovation hubs, research commercialisation, entrepreneurship, staff welfare and advanced medical training.

The goal, according to TETFund's Executive Secretary, Arc. Sonny S.T. Echono, is to reposition universities, polytechnics and colleges of education from knowledge-consuming institutions into engines of job creation, wealth generation and national development.

Speaking at an interactive session with Eniola Olakunri, public sector analyst and CEO of Write Affairs, in Abuja recently, Echono was emphatic about where this leads: "With President Tinubu's unprecedented investment in education, our major export going forward will no longer be oil, but intellectual assets," he declared.

This shift is not merely rhetoric; it represents a fundamental overhaul of how Nigeria approaches tertiary education.

Historically, Nigerian universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education were structured as consumer-oriented ivory towers. Students entered to memorise lectures, passed examinations, and stepped into a market that lacked jobs to absorb them.

Today, TETFund is rewriting that script. The goal is to convert these institutions into active engines

### How TETFund Is Shifting Tertiary Education From Classrooms To Innovation Hubs

of wealth generation, job creation and global competitiveness. The transformation is visible across several key fronts:

#### Opening The Door To The Global Knowledge Economy

One of the most visible signs of this shift is the Renewed Hope - TETFund ICT Experience Centre. Four centres in Lagos, Calabar, Anambra and Kwara were recently commissioned by First Lady Oluremi Tinubu to expand digital access for students who lack devices or whose institutions lack adequate facilities.

Echono described it as a convergence of two visions: TETFund's drive for digital technology and hybrid learning, and the First Lady's focus on vulnerable groups.

Through the centres, TETFund provides computers, broadband, data and digitisation tools free of charge, linked to its TERAS platform for learning resources, assignments and research.

But the ambition goes beyond learning.

"The jobs of the

future are not necessarily going to be in traditional fields," Echono said. Students can use the centres for outsourcing jobs and direct participation in the global knowledge economy.

Six centres - one per geopolitical zone - have been completed. Four have been commissioned, with Kaduna and Jalingo due before month-end. Another 15 are at advanced stages.

The centres are also gateways to employment through the 'Learn to Earn' initiative, where students acquire specialised skills alongside their studies to service global clients while still in school. With alternative power and 24-hour broadband, a student can work at 2.00 a.m. and synchronise with clients in Thailand, the U.S., Brazil or Japan.

#### From Job Seekers To Job Creators

The same philosophy drives the plan to establish 68 innovation hubs across tertiary institutions in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme.

The objective is to shift from

memorisation to practical, problem-solving, analytical and critical-thinking skills; the premium skills of the modern economy.

TETFund is adopting a mixed partnership model involving UNDP, Innov8 Hub; an Israeli-Nigerian partnership leveraging Israel's start-up ecosystem; and a group working with the European Union, particularly Sweden.

"We do not want graduates looking for jobs; we want graduates creating jobs and wealth," Echono said.

Examples are already emerging. One polytechnic innovator developed specialised packaging for Nigerian export produce - addressing an estimated 35 per cent value loss due to poor packaging. Others are working on post-harvest losses, quelea birds, veterinary challenges, chemical preservation linked to cancer and organic foods

Every invention, he noted, creates a value chain - storage, distribution, maintenance - and each link creates jobs. Citing India and China, Echono said TETFund is cascading the model into its Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programme so technicians, machinists and fabricators can support industrial growth.

#### Closing The 'Valley of Death'

For innovation to drive the economy, ideas must move from lab to market. That is the purpose of the National Research Fair.

The maiden edition brought together tertiary institutions, research institutes, manufacturers and fabricators and produced a robust, categorised national database of innovators.

It also exposed what Echono called the "valley of death" - where promising inventions die for lack of investment - and the troubling trend of Nigerian products being taken abroad, patented and manufactured there, then sold back at higher prices.

At the maiden fair, over 100 trademarks and patents were facilitated, with a dedicated fund for patent support. One individual alone secured six patents.

Read the remaining story online [www.guardian.ng](http://www.guardian.ng)



FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup

## Flamingos Shock Champions, North Korea, 3-1, Qualify For Second Round

By Christian Okpara

NIGERIA'S national U-17 women's football team, the Flamingos, yesterday con-



Nigeria's Flamingos celebrating their 3-1 defeat of North Korea at the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Morocco yesterday.

founded pundits at the ongoing FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, by beating defending champions and Group B leaders, North Korea, 3-1. The shock victory at the championship holding in Morocco propelled the Nigerian girls to the second round of the competition.

They finished second in Group B with six points from three matches with Korea overall winners, while Poland, who dumped Puerto Rico 6-2, finished third and also qualified for the knockout rounds of the competition.

After losing their opening game 2-1 to Portugal and beating whipping girls, Puerto Rico, Nigeria needed at least a draw against the free-scoring Koreans to advance to the second round. But they gave their fans more than they expected. Nigeria opened the scoring through Oluwakemi Adegbuyi, who collected a ball down the left, muscled off a defender and finished with her right foot.

After the goal, the Flamingos wanted more and struck for a second shortly before intermission when Oluebube

Umejiaku surged through the DPR Korea half and finished past goalkeeper Kim Son-gyong.

DPR Korea came out with a sense of urgency to start the second half, but Nigeria did well to withstand the pressure and then found a crippling third via Kanyinsola Yusuf's exquisitely-taken free-kick. The reigning champions pulled a goal back through a late Yu Jong-hyang penalty conversion, but the day belonged to Nigeria. Nigeria will now meet the runners-up in Group F in the second round on Thursday.

### Danjuma: 'The Storm Is Over, Enyimba Will Win, At Least, A Continental Ticket'

By Christian Okpara

FOLLOWERS of Enyimba Football Club were worried at the beginning of the current EuroMatch Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL) when the Peoples Elephant could not win a single game after four matches.

There were fears then that the two-time African champions, who escaped relegation on the last day of the 2025/26 season, would go down to the lower division if things did not turn around immediately. Racked by a fractious leadership tussle, which pitted the club's Chairman, Kanu Nwankwo, against the Sporting Director, Daniel Eke, said to be backed by bigwigs from the Abia State Ministry of Sports, the team was in a freefall. But in the last few games, Enyimba have shown a remarkable recovery that has seen them winning three games and getting away draws when pundits predicted that they would lose. SO, what has changed.

Enyimba Head Coach, Lawrence Ukaegbu, also known as Danjuma, said it is because "the storm is over."



Ukaegbu

## Ikoyi Ladies Open Targets 200 Golfers, Expands Push For Women's Participation

By Divine Yusuf

THE Ikoyi Ladies Open Golf Tournament is targeting 200 participants in future editions, up from an average of about 100, as the organisers seek to attract younger players and create more opportunities for women to compete internationally.

The target comes ahead of the 51st edition of the tournament, scheduled for November 11 to 13 at Ikoyi Club 1938, Lagos, with about 130 female golfers expected to participate in the opening day's competition.

While unveiling the programme for the tournament, themed "Enjoy Golf, Go Global," the organisers said that the competition will feature players from Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana, Zambia, Benin Republic, Italy and France.

The Lady Vice Captain of Ikoyi Club 1938 Golf Section, Annie Eimiakhena, said the tournament was designed to encourage more women to take up golf, improve their skills and build professional and social connections through the sport.

She said that the organisers were working to increase participation and expand the tournament's international reach, while acknowledging the need for a more structured approach to introducing disadvantaged young people to golf.

"We do want to impact lives," Eimiakhena said, adding that the club was working with caddy communities and encouraging women within those communities to participate in the sport.

## El Clasico: Real Madrid Bank On Mbappe's Stunning Record Against Barcelona

KYLIAN Mbappe will be one of the biggest threats when Real Madrid visit Barcelona in Sunday's El Clasico, with the French forward arriving in formidable form after scoring in consecutive 4-1 victories over Sevilla and RB Leipzig, writes [madriduniversal.com](#).

The October 25 showdown at Spotify Camp Nou presents another opportunity for the Real Madrid star to make his mark against one of his favourite opponents.

Barcelona remain unbeaten in La Liga after winning all nine of their opening matches, but their 2-4 Champions League defeat to Paris Saint-Germain highlighted that they are not invulnerable.

The Catalans have conceded nine league goals, giving Real Madrid reason to believe their attacking quality can make the difference.

Mbappe's numbers heading into El Clasico underline why he will be Real Madrid's biggest goal threat.

He has scored 12 goals in 12 appearances across all competitions this season, including nine in nine La Liga matches and three in three Champions League outings.

The Frenchman has become a central figure in Real Madrid's attacking plans, and his ability to punish defensive mistakes could prove decisive against Barcelona's high defensive line.

## Elizabeth Wuraola Ojo Toyota Golf Tourney Hits Smokin Hills Nov. 13

By Eniola Daniel

IT'S that time of the year, once again, when golf enthusiasts and corporate heavyweights across Nigeria gear up for a thrilling display of skill, legacy, and sportsmanship. The event is the Elizabeth Wuraola Ojo Toyota Golf Tournament (EWOTGT), which, according to Toyota (Nigeria) Limited (TNL), will hold on November 13 and 14, 2026.

The prestigious yearly competition will once again return to the world-class greens of the Smokin Hills Golf Resort in Ilara-Mokin, Ondo State, promising an el-

evated experience for both players and spectators.

The tournament honours the memory and enduring legacy of the late Chief (Mrs.) Elizabeth Wuraola Ojo, a matriarch celebrated for her remarkable virtues, integrity, and dedication to inspiring excellence—particularly among women in sports.

Speaking ahead of the event, the Managing Director of Toyota (Nigeria) Limited, Mr. Kunle Ade-Ojo, emphasised that the event goes far beyond the boundaries of sport.

## Arsenal Fear Saka Could Be Out For Two Months

ARSENAL fear Bukayo Saka could miss a minimum of six weeks with the quadriceps injury he sustained in their Champions League tie against Bayern Munich, *BBC* reports.

The 25-year-old was scheduled to undergo an MRI scan on Friday afternoon to better assess the problem, which forced him off in Wednesday's 2-2 draw at the Allianz Arena.

Fluid around the affected muscle has made diagnosing the injury difficult, but club medics are estimating, after early examinations, Saka will miss a minimum of six weeks and it could be even longer.

If those early concerns are realised, he will miss a clutch of key games for the Gunners, as well as England's forthcoming Uefa Nations League matches against Croatia and Spain.

"We need a few more scans and opinions from the specialists," said Arsenal head coach Mikel Arteta.

## Organisers Confirm 14 Schools For NNPC-Snepco Inter-School Swimming Championship

By Daniel Akinola

THE Ikoyi Club 1938 has confirmed that 14 schools will feature in the forthcoming NNPC-SNEPCo Inter-School Swimming Championship billed to hold at the club's swimming pool today.

The organisers, apart from promising to make the third edition of the championship better than previous ones, disclosed that Temple Schools registered 32 swimmers with 86 entries, Team Grange School has 31 swimmers with 94 entries, Corona Schools will come with 31 swimmers with 64 entries, while Riverbank School registered 23 swimmers with 50 entries.

Also featuring in the competition are St. Saviours School Ikoyi, which will be at the event with 22 swimmers, LFLP Swim (17 swimmers), Meadow Hall School (17 swimmers), AVI-CENNA International School (16 swimmers), and ESL, which will present 16 swimmers.



The best of Nigeria's student-swimmers are expected at the NNPC-SNEPCo Inter-School Swimming Championship in Lagos tomorrow.

Other registered schools are Lagoon and Whitesands Schools with 11 swimmers, The Learning Place with nine swimmers, TFS CHAMPS with seven swimmers, Downen College Lagos with three swimmers and Attwool Sunflower School with just two swimmers.



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## Adieu Dele Cole! Happy Birthday Lade Bonuola

**W**HEN an old man dies, the saying goes, a library burns. When Patrick Dele Cole died, a national archive burnt. Dr. Patrick Dele Cole passed on in London on October 17, 2026, at 86. PANDEF has declared seven days of mourning. President Bola Tinubu, former President Olusegun Obasanjo, PANDEF leader Ambassador Godknows Igali, and a legion of journalists, diplomats and politicians have paid tribute. But no tribute can capture the library that has burnt. For many young Nigerians, Dele Cole was just "Tonye Cole's father" or "that old ambassador on TV." For those who know, he was the man who professionalised Nigerian journalism, deepened Nigerian diplomacy before and after Abacha. He taught us that intellect can serve power without being enslaved by it.

**'The Cambridge scholar who returned home'**  
Born August 4, 1940, in Abonnema, Kalabari Kingdom, Rivers State, Patrick Dele Cole's path could have ended in Cambridge quadrangles. First Class Honours, University of Otago, New Zealand. PhD, Cambridge University. Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. Visiting Professor, University of Pennsylvania (1969-1973), teaching history and political science to American students at the height of civil rights. He was an avid reader to make himself abreast of contemporary global systems - colleagues recall him reading three newspapers before 7am, journals on international relations, economics, history, and literature into midnight. You could not discuss world affairs with Dele Cole without him quoting latest Foreign Affairs, latest African Affairs, latest development in China, latest debate at the UN. He read to lead.

Yet this man who could have stayed in Ivy League returned to Lagos in 1973 to serve as Administrative Officer, Political Department, Cabinet Office, under General Yakubu Gowon. Reason: he believed Nigeria was worth serving.

**'The "Daily Times" Years: He restored a newspaper's soul'**

In 1976, Murtala Muhammed/Obasanjo military government took over "Daily Times" and needed a man who could manage it without turning it into government megaphone. They chose Dele Cole, 36. What he did in three years (1976-1979) became textbook: **He restored independence.** At a time when government owned "Daily Times", he insisted on independent editorial board system modelled on American system - where editorial opinion is separate from news, and editorial board can criticise government that owns the newspaper. He protected editors from soldiers. Former President Olusegun Obasanjo recalled this week: "He introduced an independent editorial board system to protect the newspaper's editorial policies from political interference." That system was later copied by every serious newspaper in Nigeria. **He was a talent scout.** He was in New York, and persuaded Dele Giwa, who was a copy boy for "The New York Times", to return home. He navigated the US academia to bring back Stanley Macebuh, a brilliant literary stylist and world-class orator. Giwa and Macebuh came, joined "Daily Times", and changed Nigerian journalism. Without Dele Cole, there would have been no "Newswatch" and the 1980s golden era. He introduced intellectual depth. Under him, "Daily Times" circulation rose to over 600,000 - making it Africa's largest at that time.

**'The Guardian' Years: He was with Alex Ibru to build a dream**

When Dr. Alex Ibru, businessman and industrialist, wanted to establish "The Guardian" in 1983 - as independent, intellectual, uncompromising newspaper - who did he call after Aremo Olusegun Osoba? Patrick Dele Cole who gave him Dr. Macebuh, first as



Cole



Bonuola

Executive Editor and then as first Managing Director. The quiet architect behind "The Guardian"'s birth was Aremo Osoba facilitated the headhunt of Mr. Lade Bonuola.

So if you read "The Guardian" today and admire its independence, its editorial board system, its intellectual seriousness - you are reading Dele Cole's architecture. He rebuilt the "Daily Times" where the bulk of the pioneer editors, Macebuh, Bonuola and Femi Kusa who set off the foundation of "The Guardian". "Daily Times" attracted intellectuals into journalism and he helped birth "The Guardian". For "Daily Times"/"The Guardian" old associates, therefore, his death is not just news - it is loss of a founding father.

**PDC As Diplomat: After management in journalism, diplomacy called**  
Nigerian Ambassador to Brazil (1987-1990) and Argentina, member, Presidential Panel on History of Nigeria Since Independence (1977); Nigeria-China Forum (1979); Represented Nigeria at UN and OAU (1976, 1989, 1990).

But his finest diplomatic hour came from 1999-2007 as Special Adviser to President Olusegun Obasanjo on International Relations. Nigeria in 1999 was still a pariah state after Abacha. Sanctioned. Isolated. Obasanjo needed men who understood global systems. He chose Dele Cole because, as Obasanjo wrote in his tribute this week: "Dele brought exceptional tact, outstanding economic knowledge and unwavering patriotism... Nigeria needed experienced diplomatic hands to help restore its international standing after years of isolation." Dele Cole travelled with Obasanjo to every capital - Washington, London,

Paris, Berlin, Beijing - rebuilding relationships. He was behind the scenes of Paris Club debt relief - the \$18 billion write-off that remains Nigeria's biggest diplomatic victory since independence. Obasanjo credited him for contributing to the strategies that culminated in that relief. He did it all without noise, without seeking credit.

**The PANDEF Leader: Niger Delta Conscience**

Even while serving in Obasanjo government, he never abandoned Niger Delta. He was a firm advocate for true federalism and resource control. PANDEF National Chairman, Ambassador Godknows Igali, said his commitment to aspirations of Niger Delta people remained firm. As leader of PANDEF in later years, he brought intellectual depth to Niger Delta struggle - arguing not just with emotion but with history, economics, and law.

**A Library on Fire**

Why does his death smack of a burnt-down library? Because Dele Cole was a mobile library. He was author of "Modern Traditional Elites in the Politics of Lagos" - a classic still taught in universities. He wrote speeches that were essays. He wrote memoirs that were history. He remembered dates, names, events from 1960s to 2020s. He was that rare Nigerian who could discuss Kalabari history, Lagos politics, Cambridge economics, American foreign policy, and Brazilian culture in one sitting - because he read. He was avid reader to remain abreast of contemporary global systems.

He was bridge: Between town and gown, between "Daily Times" and "The Guardian", between military and civilian, between Kalabari and Nigeria, between old journalism and new. Nigeria today has many journalists but few journalism builders. Many diplomats but few diplomatic architects. Many politicians but few intellectual politicians. Dele Cole was all three. He belonged to generation that put country above self - scholars who left Pennsylvania and Cambridge to serve in Cabinet Office for peanuts.

His death in London, after ICU, also reminds us of the question we keep asking: Why do our statesmen die abroad? Why can't we build hospitals that can keep an 86-year-old alive at home? That is a story for another day. Today, we mourn. We mourn a teacher. A historian. A journalist. A diplomat. A father to Tonye Cole and many adopted children in journalism. Adieu, Chief PDC. Abonnema's pride. Nigeria's library.

**LADBONE @ 80: The Bonuola Day that Cole should have lit...**

**A**ND then this week, history delivered a cruel coincidence - a day of joy and a day of mourning intertwined. The same man whom Dele Cole endorsed from "Daily Times" in 1983 to be first editor of "The Guardian" - Mr. Lade Bonuola - clocked 80 on Thursday, October 22, 2026. The very week Cole died. On Thursday, at Civic Centre, Victoria Island, Lagos, the aristocracy of Nigerian journalism gathered not to mourn, but to celebrate. To celebrate LADBONE at 80. A book titled "LADBONE: A LIFE IN PRINT" published by Premium Times Books Ltd was presented to mark the glorious day. The hall was full - journalists who represented various spectrums from "Daily Times" to "The Guardian". From old "Daily Times" men in agbada who worked in

Kakawa in 1970s, to "The Guardian"'s Rutam House generation, to "Premium Times" digital generation. It was a reunion of the tribe Dele Cole helped in building. Every one who recalled early days of "The Guardian" remembered and paid tribute to the role of Dr. Cole in rebuilding "Daily Times" and setting up the niche newspaper by late Alex Ibru.

Lade Bonuola - Ladbone - is himself a legend. For those who don't know: Fearless editor, master of prose, the man who gave "The Guardian" its voice and brand reputation. That famous Guardian editorial style - measured, erudite, uncompromising, literary - that was Ladbone. He was editor when "The Guardian" took on Buhari military government, when it was proscribed, when Alex Ibru was shot. He held the line. That he is 80 and still sharp, still writing, still intellectual, is testament to the school Dele Cole created. The book presentation was glorious. Dapo Olorunyomi, Publisher of "Premium Times", spoke about why they published Ladbone. Femi Kusa, Martins Oloja, Reuben Abati, Debo Adesina, all paid tribute, in the book. Former editors, current editors, line editors - all came. But there was a vacuum. A seat that should have been occupied. Cole should have been there. He should have left the morgue and come to Civic Centre, VI, on Thursday to speak. His speech at the ceremony would have illuminated the occasion and moment he began in 1983. Imagine what he would have said: He would have told us how in 1983, Alex Ibru called him to his office in Apapa and said, "I want to build a newspaper that will be like Guardian in UK - independent, intellectual." He would have told us how he said, "You need Lade Bonuola from Daily Times - Osoba recommended: has discipline." That speech is now lost. Because library burnt on October 17, five days before Ladbone's 80th.

The irony was painful and beautiful: On the day we celebrated 80 years of Ladbone's life in print, we also mourned 86 years of Cole's life that made Ladbone's life in print possible. So Ladbone's 80th is also Cole's tribute. "Premium Times" Books did well to publish "LADBONE: A LIFE IN PRINT" - because it preserves history that Cole would have wanted preserved. It documents how "Daily Times" school became "The Guardian" school, how Kakawa birthed Rutam House. The photo sessions showed the striking relationship on Thursday.

At 80, Ladbone represents the last of the titans of that golden era - after Dele Giwa (killed 1986), after Stanley Macebuh (died), after Alex Ibru (died 2011), now after Dele Cole (died 2026). He is the last library standing from that generation. We must protect Ladbone. We must interview him more. We must archive his memories before another library burns.

At Civic Centre, as journalists laughed, hugged, and bought the book, the spirit of Dele Cole was there. He was there in every mention of 1983. He was there in every mention of "Daily Times" to "The Guardian" transition. He was there in Lade's smile. He should have departed thereafter - after Ladbone's 80th - not before. God knows best. But we can still honour him by ensuring Ladbone's book is read, by ensuring that "The Guardian" remains what Alex Ibru with him, Osoba and Bonuola envisioned: Conscience, Nurtured by Truth.

Happy 80th, Ladbone. Thank you for life in print. Rest in peace, Dele Cole. Thank you for making life in print possible. One library burnt. One library at 80 still stands. Let us cherish the one that stands while mourning the one that burnt. May their legacies - "The Guardian", "Daily Times", intellectual journalism - never die! Adieu PDC. Happy Birthday Ladbone.

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