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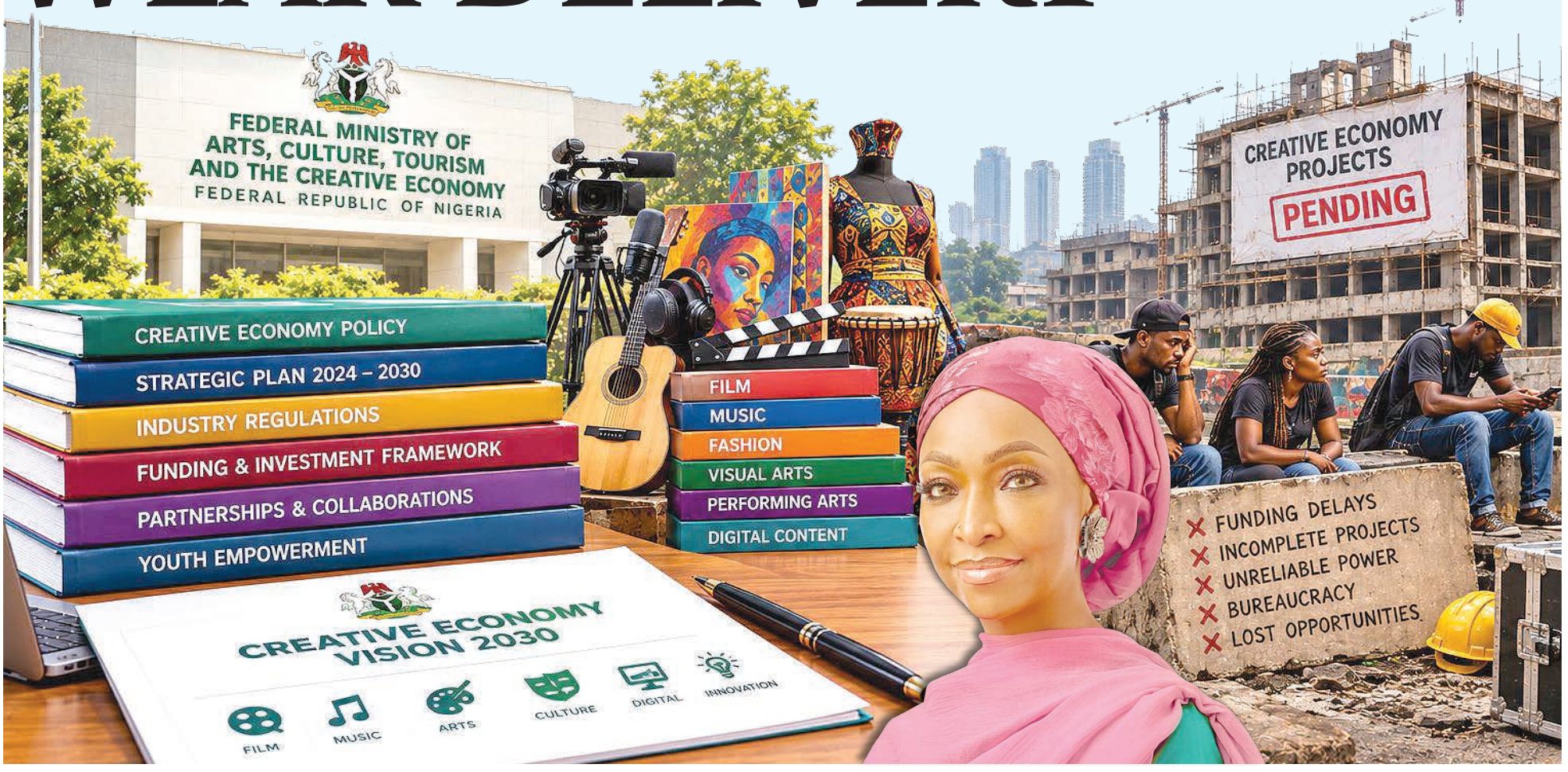
Conscience, Nurtured by Truth

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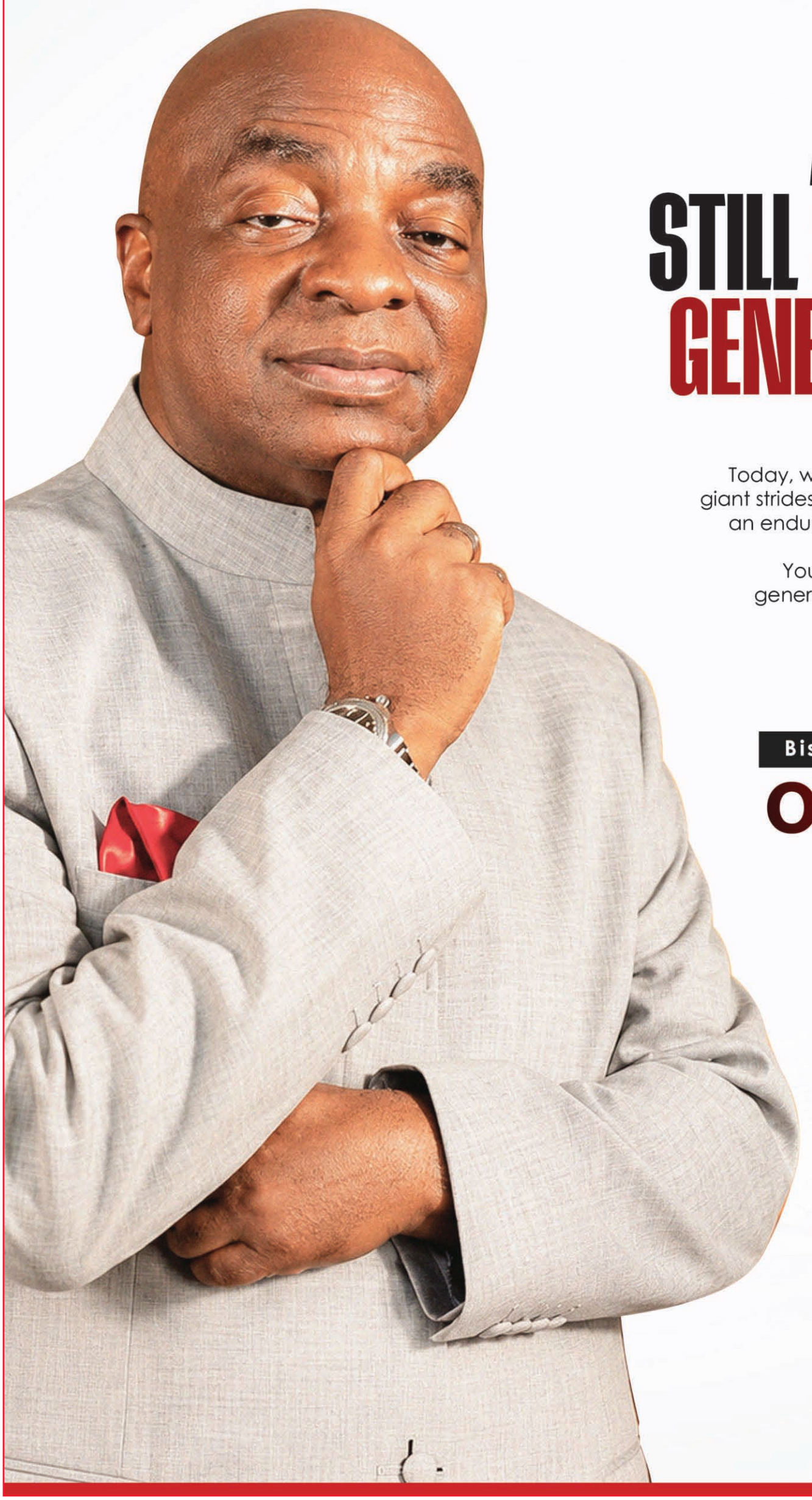
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184.5kg Cocaine: NDLEA Arraigns KC Luxury, Accomplices

As Agency Files 22-Count Charge Over UK-Bound Drug Haul

By **Yetunde Ayobami-Ojo** and **Suliyat Tella**

THE National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), on Friday, arraigned Afolabi Kazeem Michael, popularly known as KC Luxury, and two other accomplices, Boniface Freeman Ochoche Sule and Ikechukwu Ekugo Patriarch, before Justice Ayokunle Olayinka Faji of the Federal High Court, Lagos, on a 22-count charge bordering on cocaine trafficking, illegal export of narcotics and money laundering.

The defendants, who were accused of conspiring between July 28 and August 1, 2026 to export 184.5 kilogrammes of cocaine concealed in five consignments through a Lagos-based logistics firm to London, United Kingdom, pleaded not guilty to all counts when the charges were read to them.

Count one of the charge sheet, marked FHC/LAG/CR/755/2026, accused Afolabi, alongside Boniface and Ikechukwu, of conspiring with Atandare Oladipupo Oluwarotimi and Latifat Yusuf, already arrested in London in connection with the same case, to export the narcotic drug using consignments bearing Airway Bill Numbers 2079998314, 8224082370, 2079973571, 7181131742 and 2211893902, under the shipper's name Yemi Ejide.

Other counts detailed how Boniface procured Ikechukwu to facilitate the export while Afolabi is accused of procuring a staff member of BOT Express Logistics on Lagos Island to process the illicit consignment and of unlawfully possessing the cocaine ahead of export.

The charge sheet further linked Afolabi to the payment of 13.2 million from a Mallamawa Ventures Zenith Bank account to BOT Express Logistics as consideration for the shipment.

On the financial trail, no fewer than 16 counts bordering on money laundering, contrary to the Money Laundering (Prevention & Prohibition) Act, 2022, accuse Afolabi of funnelling several billions of naira through a web of companies and personal accounts, including Mallamawa Ventures, Fateey Man Multi-Purpose Nig. Ltd, Patonifa Ltd, Ade-Lak Resources, Holmestas Global Services Limited, La Capital Enterprises and others, with the funds used, among other things, to acquire motor vehicles and various landed properties, in a bid to conceal the true origin of the proceeds of the illicit trade. He is also alleged to have failed to declare his assets to the agency as required by law.

After the not-guilty plea was entered and their bail application argued, the NDLEA prosecutor, Abu Ibrahim, who opposed the bail application prayed the court to remand the defendants in a correctional facility pending trial, citing the gravity of the offences.

Justice Faji, thereafter, ordered that the defendants be remanded in the agency's facility, and adjourned the matter till October 4, 2026 for ruling on the application.

Afolabi, also known as KayCee Luxury, KayCee Lux, KC, Mr. Luxury, Yemi Ejide, who paraded himself online as a luxury goods dealer and lifestyle influencer, was arrested by NDLEA operatives on the night of August 13, 2026 as he attempted to flee Nigeria on a business-class flight to Paris from the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos, following the interception of the 184.5kg cocaine consignment estimated to be worth about N39 billion.

A subsequent search on him and his Banana Island apartment led to the recovery of exotic vehicles, foreign currency and jewellery believed to be proceeds of the illicit trade.



Vice President Kashim Shettima (3rd right); River State Governor, Siminalayi Fubara (4th left); Zamfara State Governor, Dauda Lawal (2nd right); Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), Abike Dabiri-Erewa (3rd left) and others, at the Debate of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Thursday. PHOTO: NAN

We'll Remain Tough On Bandits Until IDPs Return Home, Says Sokoto Gov

From **Tunde Omolehin**, Sokoto

SOKOTO State Governor, Ahmed Aliyu, has assured residents that his administration will sustain its fight against banditry until Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) return to their ancestral homes.

Aliyu gave the assurance on Thursday while declaring open the eighth regular meeting of the State Executive Council.

He said the state government, in collaboration with conventional security agencies, had intensified the fight against banditry through a more robust strategy that was yielding positive results.

"We are recording tremendous improvement in our fight against banditry in the state, and we will not relent until we make the state safer," he said.

"Our collaboration with security agencies is indeed yielding tangible results, as bandits are now being engaged more than ever before, while livestock are being recovered in some local government areas."

The governor cited recent operations in Rabah, Tureta and Kebbe Local Councils, where he said security agencies engaged bandits, rescued people from captivity and recovered thousands of rustled livestock.

He assured residents, particularly those in areas worst affected by banditry that security personnel would continue to pursue the bandits with the support of newly provided armoured vehicles and other equipment.

Aliyu also restated his administration's commitment to providing the necessary support to security agencies to protect lives and property across the state.

He appealed to residents to continue supporting the government's efforts to restore lasting peace and security in the state.

The governor said his administration would also continue to execute projects with direct impact on residents in line with its nine-point agenda.

According to him, the administration has, over the past three and a half years, implemented projects and programmes in healthcare, education, road infrastructure, water supply, religious affairs and empowerment across the state.

"We are committed to achieving our dream of a New Sokoto that generations yet unborn will be proud of," he said.

He urged residents to continue to support and pray for the administration as it works towards achieving its objectives.

Police Foil Abduction Attempt, Rescue 7 Victims In Katsina

From **Danjuma Michael**, Katsina

THE Katsina State Police Command has said it foiled a kidnapping attempt and successfully rescued seven victims in Kankara Council of the state.

A statement by spokesperson for the command, DSP Abubakar Aliyu, said the incident occured on September 21, at about 9:45pm.

Aliyu said a distress call was received that suspected armed bandits had blocked a point from Kankara to Dutsin-Ma Road, including intercepting a vehicle conveying six passengers.

He said the Police upon receipt of the report, moved to the scene, intercepted the bandits and engaged them in a gun duel, which forced the bandits to flee the area.

He said the six passengers as well as the driver of the vehicle were rescued during the operation and have been reunited with their family members.

According to Aliyu, On September 21, 2026, at about 9:45 pm, a distress call was received at Kankara Division reporting that a syndicate of suspected armed bandits had blocked a point from the Kankara to Dutsin-Ma road by Unguwar Kanawa-Dantudu village and intercepted a Volkswagen Golf 3 motor vehicle with Registration No. BCH 58 SB, driven by one Sani Umar, age 35, conveying six passengers to Dutsin-Ma LGA from Kaduna State.

Upon receipt of the report, the DPO Kankara Division swiftly led operatives of the Violent Crime Response Unit (VCRU) to the scene. The team tactically traced and intercepted the bandits and engaged them in a fierce gun duel, compelling the bandits to flee the scene.

During the operation, all seven occupants of the motor vehicle, comprising the driver and six passengers, were successfully rescued unhurt.

The victims are Sani Umar, aged 35 years (Driver); Emmanuela Anyaba, aged 20 years; Regina Felix, aged 19 years; Peace Joseph, aged 23 years; Mercy Michael, aged 19 years; Maryam Salisu, aged 21 years; and Nafisa Yakubu, aged 18 years.

The victims were immediately taken to the nearest hospital for medical evaluation and were subsequently certified stable and discharged.

The Commissioner of Police, Katsina State Command, CP Ali Fage, commended the gallantry especially the prompt response of the operatives. He assured members of the public of the Command's commitment to ensuring the safety and security of all residents.

He urged the public to continue to support the command with timely and credible information for prompt and decisive action against all forms of crime and criminality.

He said rare earth elements were not necessarily rare in the ground but were rare in the market because bringing them to market required significant capital and technology.

He, therefore, urged Nigeria to present commercially viable transactions to investors rather than rely on policy documents and promotional presentations.

Wunti said private capital would be needed to finance most critical mineral projects, while the government should focus on reducing investment risks associated with geological uncertainty, unpredictable regulation, inadequate infrastructure and inefficient permitting.

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

Nigeria's 44 Minerals Must Create Jobs, Not Export Poverty, Says Wunti

THE Chief Executive Officer of the World Energy Council Nigeria, Bala Wunti, has urged the Federal Government to turn Nigeria's 44 critical minerals into factories, jobs and sustainable economic opportunities, rather than repeat the country's crude oil experience of exporting raw materials and importing finished products.

Wunti, a former Chief Upstream Investment Officer of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), said Nigeria must develop domestic processing and manufacturing capacity if it is to derive greater value from its mineral resources.

He spoke at the 2026 Concordia Annual Summit, held at the Sheraton New York Times Square alongside the United Nations General Assembly, where he participated in a panel titled, "Rare Currency: Critical Minerals in a Shifting Global Economy."

The panel examined the United States' growing dependence on imported minerals and China's dominance of global mineral processing.

Wunti warned that Nigeria must not repeat the crude oil model, saying the country had exported crude oil for decades while importing refined petroleum products at significantly higher prices.

He said the same mistake must not be repeated with lithium and rare earth elements, noting that the country's inability to fully develop its mineral resources was partly linked to the absence of reliable geological data and commercially structured projects.

According to him, the difference between mineral potential and an investable project remains a major challenge, as Nigeria has geological indications but lacks proven reserves supported by JORC-compliant data and clearly defined projects.

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

75% Of Govt Pilgrimage Funds Allegedly Stolen, Olukoyede Alleges

From **John Akubo**, Abuja

THE Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Ola Olukoyede, has alleged that nearly 75 per cent of funds released by the Federal Government for Christian and Muslim pilgrimages were stolen by leaders of the agencies responsible for the programmes.

Olukoyede made the disclosure in Abuja while addressing the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council meeting and the public presentation of the EFCC's Anti-Corruption Interfaith Manual for religious bodies.

The EFCC chairman said the alleged diversion was uncovered during investigations conducted by the commission into the activities of the Christian and Muslim pilgrimage bodies.

He described some of the discoveries as "mind-boggling", alleging that officials entrusted with managing public funds for pilgrimage programmes diverted a substantial portion of the money.

According to him, some officials allegedly went as far as registering private companies in countries where Nigerian pilgrims travelled, creating what he described as serious conflicts of interest.

Olukoyede said the issue underscored the need for religious leaders and institutions to demonstrate integrity before demanding the same from their followers.

He warned religious leaders against mixing funds belonging to churches, mosques and other faith-based organisations with their personal resources or businesses.

"Whatever they give you, offerings, zakat and all of that, you keep it in that religious organisation. You are not supposed to mingle it," he said.

The EFCC boss said religious leaders were free to engage in legitimate businesses but must keep such businesses separate from funds entrusted to them by their religious organisations.

He warned that diverting money belonging to a religious organisation into a personal business amounted to a criminal act.

Olukoyede also challenged pastors and imams to question the sources of unusually large donations, particularly when such money comes from public officials whose legitimate earnings could not reasonably explain their wealth.

He gave an example of a public servant receiving a huge donation at a place of worship and urged religious leaders not to simply accept such funds without asking questions about their source.

He said accepting unexplained wealth and publicly blessing its donor could amount to giving moral cover to proceeds of crime.

The EFCC chairman urged religious leaders to develop internal compliance mechanisms that would clearly define the boundaries between institutional and personal finances.

He said money held by religious leaders on behalf of their organisations was held in trust for members and for the propagation of the faith.

The meeting was attended by the Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar; President of the Christian Association of Nigeria, Rev. Daniel Okoh; Secretary to the Government of the Federation, George Akume; and other religious and traditional leaders.



Ekiti State Governor, Mr Biodun Oyebanji with traditional rulers from the Central Senatorial District during the Town Hall Meeting on 2027 Budget held at Aladeloye Event Centre, Aramoko-Ekiti...on Thursday.

We've Been Honest With Budget Implementation For Four Years – Oyebanji

EKITI State Governor, Mr. Biodun Oyebanji, has declared that the excellent budget performances under his administration in the last four years remain a huge testimony to the fact he had kept faith with the people in the fulfillment of promises made to them during budget preparations.

Oyebanji stated that he had neither betrayed the people, nor took their needs for granted, considering the strategic ways he captured their requests during town hall meetings preceding annual budget preparations.

He spoke on Thursday evening, during a town hall meeting with stakeholders from Ekiti Central Senatorial District, as part of preparations for the 2027 Budget, held in Aramoko Ekiti, Ekiti West Local Council.

Going down memory lane, Oyebanji said besides budgetary provisions, he made some promises in 2022 during electioneering campaigns, adding he didn't renege on this social contract taking cognisance of the quantum of projects he had executed across the council areas.

The governor also assured the people that his administration will use its collaboration with the World Bank through the Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project (RAAMP) to deliver 1,500 kilometers of roads across the state to ease transportation challenges being faced by residents.

I Have No Quarrels With Soludo, Says Peter Obi

From **Lawrence Njoku**, Enugu

• As Oloja Implores Media Houses To Strengthen Social Media Desks At NGE Forum

PRESIDENTIAL Candidate of the Nigeria Democratic Party (NDC), Peter Obi, on Friday, said there was no quarrel between him and Anambra State Governor, Charles Soludo, insisting however that the rift over finances of the state during his administration would be settled with available records.

Obi who spoke at the 22nd All Nigeria Editors Conference in Enugu, also called for issue-based campaigns, free and credible elections and greater respect for democratic principles ahead of the 2027 general elections.

He also charged the media practitioners to continue to interrogate the country's leadership at the federal and state levels in order to get the best for the country.

Addressing the gathering, Obi stated that his relationship with Soludo was cordial, stressing there was no personal disagreement between them.

"There is no issue between me and Soludo. Soludo and I are close. He is the governor, he is my governor. If you watch the same interview, they say, 'Oh, what is the issue between you and Soludo? Whether you're owing or not owing.' I said, Soludo is my respected elder brother. Any day, anytime! People might not know, I and my wife are godparents to Soludo's children. Yes, we are that close! So we are not quarrelling! And we will never quarrel! If I see him any day, me and him will hug and everything," he said.

He stressed that political differences should not be allowed to degenerate into personal hostility, adding that public officials should respect the offices occupied by their political opponents.

Obi also revisited the controversy over the finances he left behind when he was governor of Anambra State, maintaining that his administration left substantial savings and that the state's financial position should be assessed through verifiable records.

He urged Nigerians to examine the records of political candidates and demand explanations on their past actions, qualifications and policy proposals rather than allowing political contests to be reduced to personal attacks.

According to him, politicians seeking public office should be prepared to account for their records and address allegations against them where evidence exists.

Rivers Assembly Issues Arrest Warrant For PAMO Varsity VC, Seeks Recovery Of Unaccounted Funds

From **Obinna Nwaoku**, Port Harcourt

RIVERS State House of Assembly has issued a warrant of arrest for the Vice Chancellor of PAMO University of Medical Sciences, following his repeated failure to appear before the House Adhoc Committee investigating the disbursement of scholarship funds to the institution.

The resolution was reached on Friday, during the 53rd Legislative Sitting, as the lawmakers considered the report of the Adhoc Committee set up to investigate the scholarship scheme involving the Rivers State Government and PAMO University.

The resolutions were contained in a statement by Martins Wachukwu, Special Assistant on Media to the Speaker of the Rivers State House of Assembly.

The committee, chaired by the Deputy Leader of the House, Dumle Maol, had invited the vice chancellor on several occasions to explain how funds released to the university under the scholarship arrangement were utilised.

According to the report presented to the House, the university received more than 29 billion from the Rivers State Government under the scholarship scheme.

The report, however, stated that the funds received were not matched by corresponding student enrolment figures, raising questions over the utilisation and accountability of the money released by the state government.

The Assembly subsequently resolved to issue a warrant of arrest for the Vice Chancellor, in line with the recommendation contained in the committee's report.

The House also urged the Rivers State Government to establish a funds recovery committee to identify and recover all unaccounted funds allegedly in the possession of PAMO University and return the recovered money to the state's Consolidated Revenue Account.

Presenting the committee's findings, Maol detailed the financial transactions between the state government and the university and raised concerns over discrepancies in the records presented by government agencies.

The Speaker of the House, Martin Chike Amaewhule, said the scholarship agreement was entered into with a good intention by the government, but expressed concern over what he described as problems with its implementation.

Amaewhule particularly questioned discrepancies among documents submitted by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education and the Office of the Accountant-General of the State.

According to the Speaker, the documents were not consistent in their accounting of the funds released to the university.

He further stated that, based on the Assembly's assessment of the records before it, only about 5 billion of the more than 29 billion released to PAMO University appeared to have been utilised.

The speaker said the figures and discrepancies contained in the committee's report required the Assembly to take steps to establish accountability for the funds.

Lawyers Seek IGP's Intervention Over Alleged Detention Despite Release Order

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

THE legal team representing one Mr. Godwin Francis Akpan has appealed to the Inspector-General of Police, Olatunji Disu, over what it described as the continued detention of their client despite an order of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory directing his release.

The FCT High Court, Maitama, had on September 17 ordered Akpan's immediate release after considering his application for bail or release from detention.

Justice C.N. Nwabulu-Ndukwe, in Motion No. M/13570/26, held that the reliefs sought had merit and ordered that Akpan be released "forthwith".

The order followed an application filed on September 2 by Akpan, who had alternatively sought an order for his production before the court.

ECOFEPA Urges Women To Explore Regional, Global Markets

From **Bridget Chiedu Onochie**, Abuja

THE Female Parliamentarians' Association of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOFEPA) has urged women across the region to explore regional and global markets by acquiring the necessary skills and leveraging technology.

The call was made, on Friday, at an executive masterclass titled, 'Advancing Women's Participation in Global Trade for Political Readiness and Export Opportunities in ECOWAS Region', which brought together women parliamentarians, entrepreneurs, exporters and other stakeholders to examine ways of increasing women's participation in trade and strengthening their readiness for leadership and decision-making.

Delivering the welcome address on behalf of the ECOFEPA President, the First Vice-President, Zainab Gimba, said women must move beyond being participants in economic activities to becoming major drivers of trade, investment and innovation.

Ardova-Led Consortium To Acquire 100% Of Africa's Largest CNG Producer, Powergas

By **Temitope Templer Olaiya**

AN Ardova Plc-led consortium, including Diadem Energy, has agreed to acquire 100 per cent of Powergas Global Investments Nigeria Limited and Powergas Ebedei Limited (PEL), in a deal that will expand Ardova's operations into Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) production and distribution.

A.P. Moller Capital announced the agreement, on Friday, through its Africa Infrastructure Fund I (AIF I) and Impala Energy Holdings (Impala), saying the transaction would combine Powergas' gas sourcing relationships, compression infrastructure and industrial customer base with Ardova's nationwide retail, logistics and distribution network.

Diary



Delta State Governor, Sheriff Oborevwori (right) and his Deputy, Sir Monday Onyeme, during the swearing-in of the new Auditor-General (State) and inauguration of Pro-Chancellors/Chairmen and members of the Governing Councils of University of Delta, Agbor; Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba; and Southern Delta University, Ozoro, at Government House, Asaba...on Tuesday.



Her Majesty, Olori Atuwatse iii, Queen Consort of Warri kingdom (left); His Majesty, Ogiame Atuwatse iii, the Olu of Warri kingdom and Founder, Chairwoman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Noor Royal Holdings, Sheikha Somayeh Noor, during the presentation of the book "*Ogiame Atuwatse Five Years in Photographs*" at Noor Royal Museum in Dubai ...recently.



Akwa Ibom State Governor, Umo Bassey Eno (left) presenting the Governor's Leadership Excellence Award for 2026 to the Vice Chancellor of Akwa Ibom State University, Professor Otoabasi Etim Akpan, at the state's 39th anniversary dinner in Uyo.



Divisional Executive, Business Support, Wema Bank, Tajudeen Bakare (left); Representative of Trade & Exchange Department, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Anne Ezekannagha; Acting Customs Area Controller Lilypond Export Command, Nigerian Customs Service, Deputy Comptroller Olushola Salako; Deputy Managing Director, Wema Bank, Oluwole Ajimisinmi; Group Head, Banking Services and International Business Wema Bank, Mercy F-Olagundoye, and South West Regional Coordinator, Nigerian Export Promotion Council, Arc Benedict N. Itegbe, during the 2nd Edition of the Wema Export Trade Academy in Lagos

Metronotes

MUSWEN Congratulates Muibi Opeloye On Appointment As NIREC Executive Secretary



Opeloye

THE Muslim Ummah of South West Nigeria (MUSWEN) has congratulated Prof. Muibi Omolayo Opeloye, Chairman of its Mediation and Reconciliation Committee, on his appointment as the new Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC).

MUSWEN described the appointment as a recognition of Prof. Opeloye's outstanding contributions to interfaith dialogue, peacebuilding, mediation and the promotion of harmonious relations among Nigeria's diverse religious communities.

In a congratulatory message signed by its President, Alhaji Rasaki Oladejo and Executive Secretary, Prof. Wole Abbas, both said Opeloye's appointment was particularly significant given his long-standing commitment to fostering mutual understanding, peaceful coexistence and reconciliation across religious and communal divides.

Stakeholders Seek End To Exploitative Child Domestic Work

By **Sunday Aikulola**

MAEJT Nigeria and other stakeholders have restated need to strengthen partnerships, and renew collective commitment to ensuring that every child deserve to enjoy dignity, safety, education, hope and not exploitative domestic work.

They stated this at the recent Nigeria Convening conference 2.0 held recently in Ikeja, Lagos. With the theme 'Childhood Not Servitude,' it brought together government institutions, security agencies, non governmental organisation (NGOs) and other stakeholders to discuss measures for protecting children from exploitative domestic work and other forms of abuse.

National Coordinator, MAEJT Nigeria, Halilu S. Awesu, assured the organisation would continue to document our voices, strengthen survivor and youth leadership, support community-driven protection efforts, facilitate referral pathways, and advocate for stronger systems that protect children.

Rehoboth Olakunle Wins GOFAMINT Ogba District 2026 Bible Recitation Challenge, Takes Home Laptop

By **Suliyat Tella**

ELEVEN -year-old Rehoboth Olakunle has emerged champion of the 2026 Bible Recitation Challenge organised by the Youth Fellowship of The Gospel Faith Mission International (GOFAMINT), Ogba District, Region 12, following an impressive display of Scripture mastery and biblical knowledge.Olakunle finished first among 21 contestants at the grand finale held at the Pacesetters Assembly, Lagos, winning the star prize of a Dell Latitude 5410 laptop. Aduragbemi Olaniran emerged first runner-up and received a mobile phone, while Jesumihefue Marcus finished third and received a cash reward.

Bakare Lauds Rotary Club Of Agege For Executing Outstanding Projects

By **Isaac Taiwo**

ROTARY Club of Agege under the leadership of its President, Abiola Ogundeji, has been commended by the District Governor, Rotary International, District 9111, Lagos and Ogun States, Bukola Olabisi Bakare for its laudable projects and also for its plans ahead for the Rotary year 2026-2027.

Bakare, who was on her routine visit to the club, was visibly impressed by the humanitarian activities of the club, which include adopting a baby, who lost the mother for which the district governor also announced the gift of N1m to the caregivers of the baby by the district. She sai The club would charter two new clubs and grow the membership by 30 per cent."

MMC Reaffirms Commitment To Charity, Family Empowerment

By **Opeyemi Babalola**

MATURED Minds With Class (MMC), a private organisation founded on friendship, mutual support and positive values, has reaffirmed its commitment to charity, family support and economic empowerment as it marks its seventh anniversary.

The organisation said the anniversary, scheduled to take place on Saturday, November 14 2026, in Lagos Mainland, would be marked with a series of initiatives focused on supporting members and their families, while creating opportunities for economic advancement.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Organisation, Mrs Temidayo Ogunsuyi, stressed that organisation will use the anniversary to give back to the community, strengthen families and empower members and beneficiaries.

Ikoyi Lions Club Calls For Improved Maintenance Of Public Schools

By **Kehinde Olatunji**

• Renovates II Toilets At Tinubu Methodist Primary School

THE Lions Club of Lagos Ikoyi, District 404-A3, has renovated and commissioned 11 toilet facilities at Tinubu Methodist Primary School on Lagos Island, with a call on the Lagos State Government to improve the maintenance of public school facilities.

The project, spearheaded by the Immediate Past President of the Lagos Ikoyi Lions Club, Lion Pat Jinadu, was undertaken as part of her commitment to community service and creating a lasting impact.

Jinadu said the renovation involved extensive work, noting that most of the toilets were non-functional before the intervention.

Micmar Communications Is Official Media Partner For *UBOMI 2026*

PSTIS Foundation has partnered with Micmar Communications as the Official Media Partner for UBOMI 2026, its flagship free medical and surgical outreach programme.

Micmar Communications will support the communications and media strategy for *UBOMI 2026*, to connect the programme with wider audiences across Nigeria and beyond. The collaboration will spotlight the people, partners, volunteers and communities at the heart of UBOMI while creating greater awareness of the programme and its impact.

The Chairperson of Communications sub-Committee, *UBOMI 2026*, Sowari Akosionu, said: "We are delighted to partner with Micmar Communications as the official media partner for UBOMI 2026. Their experience and understanding of strategic communications will be invaluable as we take the story of UBOMI to a wider audience. We look forward to a partnership that not only amplifies the impact of UBOMI but also creates meaningful value for both organisations."

Olalekan Okusan of Micmar Communications said: "At Micmar Communications, we believe in the power of purposeful storytelling to create awareness, inspire conversations and drive meaningful engagement..."

Contractors Abandon Reconstruction Of Two Roads In Lagos Council

By **Gbenga Salau**

MANY residents of Olojede and Saibu streets in Oriade Local Council Development Area (LCDA) were excited when they had that there roads would be reconstructed. That excitement tempo increased when the contractors moved to site, though at different times. It was gathered that the contractor, Masod Construction Limited, for the reconstruction of Olojede Street moved to site first. It was learnt that the contractor reconstructed the road drainage, re-graded the road that resulted in taking off spots on the road that still has tarred sections. After doing that, it was also said that the contractor poured powdered granite stones across the road in preparation for inter-locking of the road.

Some of the residents said after the contractor poured the powered granite stones on the road, they were expecting that the contractor will begin to put interlock on the road and the road will be completed. But that has not been for over two months now.

However, it was gathered that while the residents of Olojede were still expecting the contractor handling their road to return to site to complete the project, the contractor for the construction of Saibu Street moved to site.

The contractor, Metricsilo Contractors Company Limited, also cleared the road in preparation for its reconstruction. The contractor with support from LCDA marked all the kiosk and shades built on the drainages across the road. It was learn that two days after a caterpillar moved into the street, re-grading the road, and moving away debris. Thereafter, the contractor it was said brought in sand and granite in preparing for inter-locking the road and it started on a Saturday, continued work on Monday and Tuesday and after then disappeared. Residents for over two weeks now, the contractor has not been seen,

They also stated that the section of the road that had been inter-locked was barricaded from vehicular movement inflicting pains on residents with vehicles who were made to park their vehicles away from their residential buildings and constantly under the fear of the vehicles being burgled at late-night and midnight where they are parked.

A message was sent to the Chairman of Oriade LCDA, Mr. Rasaq Akoreder Olojede, on if he was aware that the contractors have left sites and why. He was yet to respond the questions as at press time.



The reconstructed section of Saibu Street


The graded Olojede Street instead of reconstruction



Lagos Seeks Monarchs, Others' Support To Mobilise For LASRRA Registration

By **Balikisu Ademuyiwa**

THE Lagos State Residents Registration Agency (LASRRA) has implored traditional institutions and other stakeholders to help mobilise their subjects and members to participate in the LASRRA registration to help government plan and take development to them.

The General Manager of LASRRA, Mrs Bilkis Adebiyi-Abiola, disclosed this at a sensitisation campaign and town hall meeting on the roles and responsibilities of the agency at the palace of the Obateru of Egbin Kingdom, Ijede LCDA, Ikorodu, Lagos.

She stated that because the agency understands the importance of the registration to attracting government projects, programmes and development to different communities is why it is expanding its registration drive to communities, schools and healthcare facilities across the state to make registration more accessible to residents.

Adebiyi-Abiola said the agency was working with traditional rulers across the five divisions of Lagos State to take registration closer to residents and enlighten them on the importance of being captured in the state's residents' database.

She said the recent directive by the Ministry of Education requiring students in private schools to have LASRRA registration had increased the agency's registration numbers.

"Currently, before the announcement, LASRRA was only required for public schools. But now, private schools are part of it," she said.

Ikeja Schools' Pupils Get Over 1000 Free Back-to-school Materials

By **Gbenga Salau**

OVER 1000 pupils from eight public schools in Ikeja federal constituency, Lagos, have benefited from free distribution of educational materials to support them as the 2026/2027 academic session begins.

The educational materials which include school uniforms, bags, notebooks, stationeries and scandals were courtesy of an NGO Olalekan Ayinla Foundation.

The beneficiary schools are Oke Ira primary school Ogba, Onigbongbo Primary School, Maryland, Opebi primary school, Ikeja, Saint Peters primary School Adeniyi Jones primary school, Tokunbo Alli Primary School and Shogunle Primary school.

At the presentation of school bags, scandals, notebooks to pupils, the Donor, Mr Olalekan Ayinla, said the initiative was to give back to the society and put smiles on the faces of the less privileged as well as ease the burden on their parents due to economic realities in the country.

He urged beneficiaries to face their studies squarely, be good ambassadors of their schools and be morally upright to be future leaders of the country.

While noting that despite the challenge encountered during the APC primary election, Ayinla reiterated his support for the re-election of President Bola Tinubu and the Lagos Governorship candidate, Dr Obafemi Hamzat, saying the Party remains supreme.

He called on all residents on Ikeja federal constituency to support all APC party candidates to ensure victory.

"Whatever comes from my party, the APC, I am in support. My priority is to support the party and ensure that candidates nominated for various positions are successful.

"I will also encourage members to go into the communities and mobilise support for the party and its candidates," he said.

He, however, stressed that the back-to-school initiative was primarily focused on supporting pupils and encouraging education.

Lagos International Theatre Festival Returns To MUSON Centre

By **Gbenga Salau**

THE Lagos International Theatre Festival (LITF) returns for its 2026 edition on November 14 and 15 at the MUSON Centre, Lagos, bringing together an exciting programme of theatre from Nigeria and around the world. The festival, which attracts more than 25,000 attendees across its programme days, has become one of the most anticipated events on Lagos's cultural calendar.

This year's festival is themed "The Masks We Wear", anchored by the statement "The Stage Is Everywhere." The theme explores the different roles and identities people assume in everyday life, while inviting audiences to consider how theatre extends beyond the traditional stage.

LITF 2026 brings an international dimension to Lagos, featuring artists and productions from Kenya, Canada and Brazil alongside a diverse Nigerian programme. An international highlight is Grand Theatre's Under The Mango Tree from Canada, directed by Lynette Randall, with productions from Kenya and Brazil adding further cultural and theatrical perspectives.

The Nigerian programme features productions from Lagos, Abuja, Enugu and Abeokuta, including Monkey Laundry, directed by Olarotimi Fakunle; tHERapy, directed by Tosin Adeyemi; Men-Oh-Pause, directed by Elvina Ibru; and Behind Closed Doors, directed by Bolanle Austen-Peters. The festival will also spotlight emerging theatre makers through productions from Atlantic Hall, Evergreen College and Children International School, alongside professional and independent productions.

The festival experience begins ahead of the main weekend with a series of events across Lagos. On November 9, Theatre Meets Food, hosted by Hilda Baci, will bring together artists, partners, cultural leaders and members of Lagos's creative community for an evening of food, theatre and conversation.

This will be followed by Embassy Nights on November 10 and 11, celebrating international cultural exchange among diplomatic representatives, artists and creative industry leaders.

Politics

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Twenty-three years after five governors of the defunct Alliance for Democracy (AD) lost their states despite the party's decision to support former President Olusegun Obasanjo's re-election bid on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), a related question is confronting the All Progressives Congress (APC) with Nyesom Wike's Rainbow Coalition ahead of the 2027 general election. ***SEYE OLUMIDE*** *examines the implications of the development.*



APC Governors, Wike's Rainbow Coalition: Lessons From 2003 AD – Obasanjo Union

THE fate of five Alliance for Democracy (AD) governors who lost their South-West states to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in 2003 after backing former President Olusegun Obasanjo's re-election is looming over the political calculations surrounding FCT Minister Nyesom Wike's Rainbow Coalition ahead of the 2027 elections.

The argument is whether politicians can support President Bola Tinubu's re-election while backing candidates outside the APC for governorship and legislative positions.

The question has gained prominence following the disagreement between APC governors under the Progressive Governors Forum (PGF) and Wike's coalition, which has continued to attract politicians dissatisfied with the ruling party's internal arrangements.

The circumstances are different from those of 2003, but the political tension over presidential support and control of state and legislative structures has created a parallel that is now central to the 2027 calculations.

In 2003, the AD, then the dominant political party in the South-West, did not field a presidential candidate and supported Obasanjo, the PDP candidate, for the presidency.

However, the party's governors contested the governorship elections on the AD platform.

Of the six governors elected on the AD platform in 1999, only Bola Tinubu of Lagos retained his position in 2003. The PDP won Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti, effectively ending the AD's dominance of the region.

The party also suffered substantial losses in the National Assembly.

The current APC situation is different because the party controls the Federal Government and has an incumbent president seeking re-election on its platform. Unlike the AD in 2003, the APC has a presidential candidate whose campaign is expected to operate alongside those of its governors and legislative candidates.

The new fault line

THE disagreement between the APC governors and Wike became more pronounced on September 14, when the PGF declared that APC governors would not participate in or support any political arrangement capable of undermining Tinubu's re-election, weakening the APC or adversely affecting its candidates.

PGF Chairman and Imo State Governor, Hope Uzodimma, said the governors' campaign structures would be devoted to APC candidates at all levels.

The position placed the governors against any arrangement in which Tinubu receives presidential support from politicians campaigning against APC candidates in governorship or legislative elections.

Wike's position is different.

The FCT minister has maintained that his Rainbow Coalition is intended to mobilise support for Tinubu's re-election without becoming an APC structure.

He has also argued that support for the president does not require politicians to support APC candidates at other levels.

The position creates a political arrangement in which a politician could support Tinubu for president while contesting against an APC candidate for governor, senator, member of the House of Representatives or state Assembly.

For the APC governors, such an arrangement raises concerns about the unity of the party's campaign structures. For Wike, it reflects the possibility of voters and politicians making different choices on different ballots.

The 2003 election remains relevant because it demonstrated the difficulty of separating presidential alliances from the struggle for control of states and legislatures.

The AD's decision to support Obasanjo did not prevent the party from contesting governorship elections in the South-West. The arrangement therefore placed the party in a position where it supported a presidential candidate from another party while seeking to retain control of the states.

The dispute between the APC governors and Wike's coalition is not limited to presidential support. It extends to control of party tickets, governorship contests, National Assembly seats and grassroots structures. For the APC governors, maintaining control of these structures is central to the party's ability to campaign as a united organisation. For Wike and politicians aligned with his coalition, the objective is to create a political network capable of supporting Tinubu while allowing members to pursue interests outside the APC structure at other levels

The outcome was significant. The PDP defeated the AD in five of the six South-West states controlled by the party after the 1999 elections. Lagos remained under Tinubu and the AD. The AD also lost substantial representation in the National Assembly.

However, the outcome was influenced by several factors beyond the party's presidential arrangement, including the strength of the PDP, incumbency, internal divisions and the broader political environment surrounding the 2003 elections.

The experience therefore does not establish that supporting another party's presidential candidate automatically leads to the loss of state governments.

What it demonstrated was that presidential alliances and state-level political contests can produce different electoral consequences.

A different 2027 equation

THE APC's position in 2027 differs substantially from that of the AD in 2003.

The APC controls the presidency, has governors across several states and maintains a national political structure. Tinubu is seeking re-election on the APC platform.

The issue facing the party is therefore not the absence of a presidential candidate, but the possibility that support for the president could become separated from support for APC candidates at other levels.

Wike's position is based on the proposition that such separation is possible.

He has pointed to voting patterns in previous elections, including the 2023 elections, in which voters in some states supported candidates from different parties for presidential, National Assembly and governorship positions.

The governors, however, are insisting on a unified campaign structure in which support for Tinubu is accompanied by support for APC candidates.

The difference has turned the question of ticket splitting into an organisational issue for the ruling party.

The disagreement has also extended to the control of legislative structures.

On September 22, Wike named Uzodimma, Kwara State Governor AbdulRahman Abdul-Razaq and Ogun State Governor Dapo Abiodun among governors he said were opposed to his coalition.

Wike also linked the disagreement to the interests of some governors in the composition and leadership of the National Assembly after the 2027 elections.

He alleged that some governors had influenced APC primaries to secure tickets for candidates they could rely on after the election. Those allegations have not been independently established.

The issue, however, illustrates the wider importance of the National Assembly contests to the political calculations surrounding 2027.

Control of the Senate and House of Representatives seats will affect the balance of power within the ruling party and the composition of the next National Assembly. This is perhaps the main reason APC governors are kicking against Wike's Rainbow Coalition.

A source within the party expressed concern that Tinubu may be re-elected but lose influence over the next National Assembly if Wike's arrangement eventually works out.

Consequently, disagreements over candidates at the legislative level are closely connected to the broader contest for political influence after the election.

Aggrieved politicians

ANOTHER factor is the movement of politicians who have become dissatisfied with the APC's internal processes, especially in the last primaries.

Primary elections inevitably produce both successful and unsuccessful aspirants. Where defeated aspirants have established political structures and local followership, their movement to other platforms can affect the distribution of political support.

Wike's coalition provides an avenue through which some politicians who lost in the APC primaries are now contesting against APC candidates at state and legislative levels while maintaining support for Tinubu at the presidential level.

That possibility is at the heart of the disagreement between the coalition and the APC governors.

For the governors, allowing competing political structures to emerge within the same presidential campaign could weaken the party's candidates.

For politicians dissatisfied with the APC, however, the arrangement creates an opportunity to remain politically active without necessarily opposing the president.

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

Amidst opposition to his second term i n office in 2027, Governor Peter Mbah has presented his scorecard for the people to be the judge between promises and realities, reinforcing his claim that he rightly deserves to be re-elected. LAWRENCE NJOKU reports.



MBAH: Can This Scorecard Guarantee A Second Term?

ON September 9, this year, the main bowl of the remodeled International Conference Centre, Enugu was filled to its brim, as residents struggled to be part of historic scorecard. The occasion was the launch and public presentation of the compendium titled, "A Thousand and One Reasons Why Governor Peter Mbah Should Continue as Governor of Enugu State" beyond 2027.

Compiled by the Governor's media team, it chronicled over 10,000 measurable milestones across infrastructure, human capital development, revenue, industry and governance among others achieved by Mbah in the last three years of his administration. It is on the basis of these achievements that Mbah is asking for re-election in Enugu State.

Sector by sector, the compendium highlighted verifiable impacts the administration had made in order to reposition the state as preferred destination for investment, business, tourism and living, and as part of efforts to achieve its $30 billion economy.

Mbah, who took oath of office in May 2023, had while presenting his manifesto, titled, "Building a Peaceful and Secure, Highly Developed and Prosperous State for All" to the people of the state, stated that it was not written as a "campaign document designed to excite voters", but one deliberately designed to reposition the state for greatness.

He had told those that cared to listen that, "We could not continue to nomalise underdevelopment while other subnational governments across the world were reinventing themselves through innovation, infrastructure, productivity and human capital expansion".

He had spoken about his desire to grow the economy of Enugu State from approximately $4.4 billion to $30 billion within eight years, through infrastructure development, attraction of investments, jobs creation, and restoring certain moribund assets as well as human capital development that would see the people contribute positively to the growth trajectory of the state.

Taking a bold review of how far he had gone to achieve the campaign manifesto in the first four years, the compendium highlighted that the Mbah administration had not relented in building the infrastructure and institutional machinery required to actualise the target.

One of such moves, the compendium pointed out was the improvement in the internally generated revenue (IGR) of the state. It noted that as at 2025, the state's IGR has moved from N26.8 billion in 2022 to N406.77billion in 2025; a development that represents a fundamental shift in the state's fiscal capacity.

Governor Mba's Senior Special Assistant on Strategic Communications, Dr Collins Ogbu, had said of the rise in the revenue: "The argument is not that Enugu has suddenly become rich because more taxes were imposed on its citizens. In fact, the 2025 revenue figures show that only N51.5 billion, or 12.6 per cent, came from tax revenue, while N355.2 billion came from non-tax sources".

Ogbu insisted that the development was a deliberate attempt to move the state beyond the model of waiting for federal allocations and squeezing tax payers, toward an economy in which public assets, investment, technology and economic activity contribute more meaningfully to government revenue." He had noted that leveraging the improvement in revenue, federal allocation and other sources, the administration decided to recreate Enugu State, by making imprints in every facet of the state, including building new health centres, new class room blocks fitted with modern learning facilities, rehabilitation of roads and building new ones, boosting security, improving transport sector, improving water supply, tourism, agriculture, among others.

Taking the government's developmental strides, sector by sector, the compendium stated that the administration in two years constructed over 800 kilometers of roads.

"By 2025, the road programme had expanded to urban roads, inter-city roads, ruralroads and strategic gayeway corridos. The administration moved beyonf the initial programmes of 90 days to additional projects including the dualisation of the Abakap –Nike-Ugwuogo –Nike-Ekwegbe –Opi –Nsukka corridor, the Enugu airport –Ebonyi boarder corridor and the Owo –Ubahu –Umuabor –Amankanu –Ikem road

"In May, Mbah inspected the 40 kilometer Owo–Ubahu –Amankanu –umualo –Ikem dual carriage way and other major projects including the 14.5 kilometer Amechi–Idodo-Oruku-Amagunze road, the New Enugu Smart City and the Enugu International Hospital", it stated.

It went further to state that the Mbah administration has turned human capital development into an ambitious education infrastructure programme in the state's history by building the Smart Green Schools, stressing that it is being established in each of the state's 260 electoral wards.

"The schools are designed around digital learning, science, laboratories, modern classrooms, solar power, technology and experiential learning rather than the old model of memorisation and inadequate infrastructure", it explained.

It added that the state had been deliberate about allocation to the education sector with 33 per cent in both 2024 and 2025 fiscal years and 32.27 percent allocation in the 2026 fiscal year as part of efforts to rebuild a functional education.

Justifying the huge investments in education further, the compendium stated that it was essential that "if Enugu wants to become a $30 billion economy, it cannot educate its children for an economy that no longer exists. It must prepare them for technology, science, entrepreneurship, manufacturing, agriculture, creative industries and a globally competitive labour market".

It explained that when Mbah took over in 2023, the primary health system was in distress, explaining that of the 566 primary healthcare centres assessed, 47 per cent were in disrepair, while the state faced major shortage of primary healthcare workers. The Compendium, noted that in response to the development, the administration launched the construction and upgrading of 260 Type -2 primary healthcare centre for each electoral ward, adding that the government approved recruitment of thousands of health workers as well as renovation and upgrading of secondary health facilities.

"By June 2026, the state reported that visits to its primary health centre has risen from about 800,000 to 1.4 million, an 80 percent increase, while Penta -3 immunisation coverage rose from 78.5 per cent to 88.9 per cent, exceeding the national target of 85 per cent", it claimed.

On security, it insisted that the administration had invested heavily in security infrastructure. The first major approach was to confront and dismantle the illegal Monday sit at home, which was crippling businesses, restricted movements with schools and ordinary people suffering and living in fear.

The document named the establishment of a Command and Control Centre, deployed AI –enabled surveillance patrol vehicles, expanded fiber-enabled cameras, drones and a mobile distress –response system, and established the 112 emergency lines as part of the efforts.

It added that these measures had led to the reduction of crimes in the state, stressing that the state "reported more than 80 per cent decline in violent crime in 2025 with the state security architecture attracting several commendation in 2026", even as it argued that security remains an economic infrastructure.

The compendium further highlighted that the administration has expanded transport infrastructure towards achieving a transport hub, adding that to make transport infrastructure align with the desire of a regional economic hub, it developed five modern transport terminals at the Holy Ghost Terminals 1 and 2; Gariki, Abakpa and Nsukka. There was also the acquisition of 100 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)-powered buses that have sustained, improved and reduced transport costs in the state.

It added that on July last year, the state owned airline "Enugu Air" was inaugurated with three Embraer aircraft, now connecting Abuja, Lagos and other parts of the country, stressing that the Airline has received Air Operator Certificate in March this year and the subsequent admission into the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) in August this year. The compendium added that strong efforts have been made to expand it's flight operations beyond Nigeria to parts of Africa and other areas of the world leveraging the concession of the Akanu Ibiam Airport in Enugu.

"The point is not that an airline by itself makes a statement prosperous. The point is that Mbah is trying to build an integrated transport ecosystem in which roads, terminals, aviation and commerce reinforce one another", the Compendium noted.

It further stressed that for years, Enugu had carried the burden of institutional decay for it's valuable public assets. It particularly referred to the Hotel Presidential, Enugu International Conference Centre, United Palm Produce as well as the Nigergas Company among others.

"Under Mbah, the International Conference Centre was completed and commissioned; Hotel Presidential was revived; and Nigergas, which had remained moribund for decades, was brought back into productive use... the philosophy is straightforward: government should not merely own assets; government should make assets productive", it emphasised.

On water supply, the Compendium said the administration has improved potable water supply from a sporadic 2 million liters per day to 120 million liters, through rehabilitation of the Oji and Ajali water schemes, replacement of old asbestos pipes with durable ductile iron pipes and restoration of the reservoirs at Milliken hill, Emene and high pressure tanks.

Adding that it fulfilled the promise of restoring pipe borne water to Enugu metropolis in 180 days through commissioning of the 9th Mile water scheme in November 2023, it disclosed that the Ministry of Water Resources had been building Modular and sustainable water supply systems that do not impose a heavy financial burden on local communities.

But are these efforts and many others enough for the Governor Mbah administration to continue in office in 2027? Has the governor lives his manifesto to the people of the state, even in the midst of other competing needs?

The scale of opposition at the moment, especially from those who want to take over from him might lend credence to certain narratives that the administration has not lived to expectations. Those who go by this school of thought believe that the state should have fared better with the quantum of resources and opportunities available to it, hence growing desire to have the governor replaced.

But the Chairman of Oji River Local Government Area, Greg Anyaegbudike insists that Mbah has surpassed his campaign promises, stressing that the state had been rejuvenated by the scale of activities in every facet of governance. Anyaegbudike noted that Mbah has achieved in three years what no past administration had been able to do in eight years.

He stated that the Compendium succeeded in scratching the surface of the many achievements that Mbah has made to reposition Enugu State among leading states in Nigeria.

"But what you must take home with you is that our intentions are noble. What we try to do is to put Enugu on a reversible path of greatness. What we try to do is to ensure that Enugu will not compete with Nigeria or within Nigeria"

2027 Presidential Campaigns: Ballads Of

The preponderance of spokespersons, commentators and political party hype men and women make Presidential elections in Nigeria look more of an entertaining sport rather than a serious business of leadership recruitment. However, the tradition has changed slightly in the lead-up to the 2027 poll, because some ambitious commentators have risen as non-participatory gladiators to preserve obvious sibling rivalry and project their political ambition, LEO SOBECHI reports.

MOST often, electoral competitions and contests are framed as in horse-racing. That explains why you get to hear of three-horse race, dark horse and backing the wrong horse. Political scientists propose that victory in democratic elections could either be through First-Past-the-Post or Two-Round system, that is where a runoff is organized to produce a clear choice after the candidates fail to reach a determined threshold or required majority.

However, whether by plurality or simple majority, how winners emerge during elections underscore the fact of the democratic ideal of popular participation. Perhaps, due to Nigeria's recourse to the parliamentary system of government during the immediate post-independence era, despite the changeover to the presidential system in 1979, periodic elections continue to expose some of elements of the parliamentary system.

One stark example is the idea of giving political parties prime positions in the reckoning of candidates during an election. So, unlike in the United States, from where Nigeria borrowed the presidential system, the 1999 constitution posits that votes are cast for political parties that produce the candidates.

So, instead of the candidate being at the forefront for voter evaluation, the party remains the focus. That is why the refrain of 'structure' has gained currency in various electoral cycles. This method broaches the alternative vote or ranked choice voting and proportional representation that obtain in parliamentary jurisdictions.

It is against that intricate background that spokespersons feature prominently and strongly during campaigns for presidential elections in Nigeria. That trait came up strongly during the lead up to the 2015 presidential election, when a lot of surrogate voices emerged to outline the various positive things that Nigeria should experience in a Muhammadu Buhari presidency.

These promotional voices created a lot of lurid pictures of how life under Buhari would banish the perceived failings of the incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan's administration. It was as a result of that chorus of benefits of 'Change' that, for the best time, an incumbent president was defeated by the opposition.

However, the irony of the effusive promotion of a candidate was that at the point of his election, President Buhari began to disassociate himself from the many heaven-on-earth promises that were churned out by the college of spokespersons. For instance, about the promise of making one Nigeria's naira to equate in value to one United States dollar or providing massive jobs for Nigerian youths, the then President usual refrain was, "I am not aware."

Many watchers of the polity argued that the evident gap between the campaign promises and mandate delivery by the Buhari administration was blamed on the then President's decision to isolate the leaders of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) tendency in the merger that produced the All Progressives Congress (APC).

Whatever be the case, the 2019 election cycle threw up a plethora of presidential spokespersons including, Femi Fani Kayode, Senator Dino Melaye, Reno Omokri, Segun Sowunmi among others.

In the succeeding electoral season of 2023, the field of presidential marketers widened to include the likes of Bayo Onanuga, Daniel Bwala, Kenneth 'Andy' Okonwko, Aisha Yesufu, Dele Farotimi. Nearly four years later, the culture is yet to fade, rather there have been some added innovations, including the inclusion of online representatives.

Some of these new marketers include Precious Oruche (Mama Pee), Zekeri Idris Junior and Peter Akah. The migration to online presence seems to accommodate the clamour for youth involvement in the political cum electoral process.

But, the central feature of offside marketers is the involvement of some partisan apologists that have either held or holding public office or those who were on the presidential ballot at one point. Of this pack are Governor Chukwuma Soludo, Minister Nyesom Ezenwo Wike and Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed. As they demarket their targets, these non-participant supporters cleverly mask their ambition for the high office.

The influence and impact of the voices of those personalities have helped to keep the buildup to the 2027 common election intense and explosive. What they say, how they say them as well as their latent and obvious motivations belie the need for clarity on the promises of the main contenders.

Governor Soludo: Carryover Bitterness

On May 29, 2009, when Professor Charles Chukwuma Soludo left the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) as its governor, he disclosed that both Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and late Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, talked him into exploring an excursion into partisan politics.

In the year 2010, in spite of the electoral abracadabra that gifted him with the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governorship ticket for Anambra State, Soludo contested unsuccessfully against Peter Obi and Dr Chris Ngige.

It was not only that Soludo was beaten by the duo of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) and Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the former CBN governor felt so embittered that the very mini bus that he donated to the church in his community was used to ferry parishioners to where Obi was endorsed for his second term in office.

Then, at the tail end of Obi's tenure as governor, Soludo's attempt to join APGA and re-contest for the 2013 governorship poll, he was disqualified after some political jobbers in the party fleeced him of humongous sum of money. The pain from those twin losses humbled the garrulous and proud former CBN governor.

The influence and impact of the voices of those personalities have helped to keep the buildup to the 2027 common election intense and explosive. What they say, how they say them as well as their latent and obvious motivations belie the need for clarity on the promises of the main contenders.

It was after those experiences that Soludo went down on bended knees to become a hype man for Governor Willie Obiano, culminating in his legendary endorsement of Obiano's second term ambition with the words: if it is not broken, why mend it? Having learnt the power of sycophancy, including serving guests at Obiano's residence, the former CBN was supported to become governor in 2021.

As governor, Soludo in 2022, launched himself on the scene as one of the presidential marketers by writing a long essay in which he traduced Mr Peter Obi and dismissed his chances at winning the 2023 presidential contest.

Titled, "History beckons: I shall not keep silent," the essay started as a defensive account of his postulation that Obi's investments in Anambra State while he held sway, amounted to less in relative value.

Part of the vitriolic essay read: "In a democracy, it is a game of numbers. So far, I don't see any of these–and 2023 might again be a wasted opportunity for Ndigbo! What is our Plan B when Peter Obi loses in February 2023?

"After the elections, we will see how many votes any of the leaders of the socio-cultural groups will get for Peter Obi from their wards. Sometimes I even sense a conspiracy to nudge us on a path to nowhere thereby further pushing us into irrelevance, and I pray that I am wrong. Just my two cents!"

Only those who are aware of the silent rivalry between Obi and Soludo know that the Anambra State governor had, since 2010 when he lost his first bid to be governor, dreamed of flying the flag of a national party in a presidential election. And, having graduated with first class in the Department of Economics in the same University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN) as Obi, the former CBN governor panders to the grand illusion that he is the best brain from South East to seek the mandate of Nigerians for the Presidency.

Soludo knows that a win for Obi would bury his presidential ambition, especially given the power rotation principle between North and South of Nigeria. As such, his effusive attempts to curry President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's favour after tipping former Vice President Atiku Abubakar to win the 2023 poll come as part of his erudition in sycophancy.

To that extent, the claim that Progressives are working together comes as a handy selling proposal to ensure that a possible Peter Obi presidency remains a chimera so that he could breathe easily the air of continued relevance in Nigeria's politics.

Nyesom Wike: Master-Servant Antagonism

AT a point in his political career, Ezenwo Nyesom Wike looked up to the immediate past Minister for Transportation, Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi. Those who know the relationship between the current FCT Minister and the African Democratic Congress (ADC) Vice-presidential candidate, say that Wike served as the go-to enforcer within their political circles in Rivers State.

For his roles in midwifing the Amaechi governorship, Wike was rewarded with the position of Chief of Staff in the BrickHouse, the seat of government in the oil-rich Niger Delta state. But, matters took a different turn in Governor Amaechi's second term, when the former Chief of Staff was recommended for ministerial appointment in the President Goodluck Jonathan administration.

As Minister of State, Education, Wike started dreaming big and eyeing the office of his former master. Siding with the Jonathans in the political


Soludo
Datti
Wike

Non-participant Gladiators

hostilities that ensued, Wike founded the Grassroots Development Initiative (GDI), which he cleverly transformed into a political structure to amplify his governorship aspiration.

As luck will have it, Jonathan lost his re-election bid to the inchoate APC, which had Amaechi as the Director General of the Muhammadu Buhari Presidential Campaign. But, winning the Rivers State governorship in that selfsame election cycle, Wike secured the ground to sustain the supremacy battle with his former boss.

And so, with Amaechi going ahead to net the Grade A ministerial appointment, while Wike takes over from him at the BrickHouse, their political competition and rivalry were to take another dimension in 2023, when both former allies aspired the nation's presidency. Both crashed. But, as Wike proceeded to net a Grade A ministerial appointment in Bola Ahmed Tinubu Presidency, Amaechi went to retool himself, garnering a Bachelor of law degree and being called to the Nigeria Bar.

However, in the lead up to the 2027 general election, Amaechi became what Wike failed to become in 2022: Vice Presidential candidate of a major political party. Piqued that his rival has attained that lofty political height before him as in the governorship, Wike dismissed Amaechi's vice-presidential candidacy, stressing that anybody who had shut-down the courts in the past does not deserve to be Vice President of a democratic country.

While fielding questions from journalists during his monthly media interactive programme in Port Harcourt, the FCT Minister declared: "Rotimi Amaechi who wants to be Vice President, once shutdown the courts in Rivers State, which caused a pregnant woman to give birth in prison."

Datti Baba-Ahmed: Painful Abandonment

As Senator representing Kaduna North Senatorial District, Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed had his mandate truncated by the Court of Appeal. After contesting the 2011 general election as the candidate of now defunct Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) for the Senate seat, the PDP candidate in the election, who is a former governor of the state, Ahmed Makarfi, rejected INEC's declaration of Baba-Ahmed as winner.

The former governor successfully proved widespread irregularities through a recount as ordered by the Election Petition Tribunal. After the Tribunal nullified the election, Datti took the matter to the Court of Appeal, but the Makarfi's return as the validly elected candidate for the Kaduna North Senatorial District was upheld.

In 2022, shortly after he defected from the PDP and joined the Labour Party (LP), where he clinched the party's presidential ticket, Peter Obi, chose Datti as his running mate. Believing that his party won the election, Datti claimed that none of the three front runners in the election was qualified to be sworn in as President on May 29, 2023.

He warned the then President Muhammadu Buhari not to swear-in President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, claiming that the president did not satisfy the necessary constitutional provisions to be inaugurated as President.

Stakeholders in Kaduna North said that Datti has for long dreamed of becoming president, stressing that even his senatorial gamble was to serve as a stepping stone to the presidential contest. Like Soludo in Anambra State, Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed believes that he is about the best candidate to be President of Nigeria in a democratic dispensation.

After failing to be on the ballot for the 2027 presidential contest, as well as his very brief stint as Senator, Datti has been shooting from both sides of his lip. When he is not attacking Vice President Kashim Shettima, he propounds the dubious argument that nobody can fix Nigeria or its economy.

With eyes set on 2031, Datti kicks against Vice President Shettima and the Vice-Presidential candidate, Senator Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, believing that in the event of any of the two being in the presidency in 2027, his chances of fulfilling his presidential ambition would have been extinguished permanently.

Datti's pain of abandonment seems to have been accentuated by the failure of former governor Donald Duke to consider him as Vice-Presidential candidate on the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP), to which he had hurriedly defected in anticipation of possible consideration for retention as presidential running mate.

Oborevwori's Bumper Investment In Delta's Tertiary Education

By **Festus Ahon**



FOR decades, the story of public universities in Nigeria has been one of competing demands: inadequate infrastructure, unstable academic calendars, industrial disputes, funding constraints and an ever-growing population of students seeking access to higher education.

In Delta State, however, the administration of Governor Sheriff Oborevwori is seeking to write a different chapter. The administration's latest interventions in the state-owned tertiary institutions point to a strategy that goes beyond the conventional building of lecture theatres and payment of salaries. It combines infrastructure, staff welfare, academic stability, institutional governance, expansion of professional programmes and, increasingly, a search for alternative and sustainable sources of funding.

The scale of the challenge is underscored by the remarkable growth in student enrolment. When Oborevwori assumed office in 2023, the population of students in the state-owned universities was about 50,000.

By 2026, the figure had risen to slightly above 100,000. That doubling, according to the governor, reflects growing demand for tertiary education in the state, but also places enormous pressure on infrastructure, manpower, accommodation and funding. Rather than regard the expansion as a burden, the administration appears to be treating it as an opportunity to reposition Delta as a major education hub.

At the swearing-in of the State Auditor-General and inauguration of the governing councils of University of Delta, Agbor; Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba; and Southern Delta University, Ozoro, in Asaba on Tuesday, September 22, 2026, Oborevwori laid bare the breadth of his administration's intervention. One of the most striking measures is the approval for the construction of two hostels for each of the nine state-owned tertiary institutions. Each hostel, the governor disclosed, will accommodate 480 students.

The intervention is expected to expand accommodation capacity at a time when inadequate student housing remains a major challenge in many public tertiary institutions. But infrastructure is only one side of the equation. The governor also announced a new salary structure for academic staff of the four state-owned universities, effective from August 2026, while the new structure for non-academic staff and other tertiary institutions will take effect from September.

For a university system, staff welfare is closely tied to academic stability. And here lies one of the administration's most significant strides: the academic calendars of Delta's state-owned universities, according to Governor Oborevwori, have not been disrupted by staff strikes or student unrest for 17 years. In a country where prolonged industrial actions have repeatedly interrupted university education, the governor said the stability demonstrated the efficient running of the institutions and the administration's commitment to maintaining centres of excellence. Delta's four state-owned universities now offer medicine, law, nursing, accountancy and several other professional programmes, with nearly all courses reportedly oversubscribed.

But growth creates its own challenges. More students require more lecturers, laboratories, libraries, hostels, classrooms and other facilities. More programmes require stronger accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms. And expanding institutions require stronger governance. This explains the importance attached by the governor to the newly inaugurated governing councils. The councils, he said, were selected on the basis of discipline, competence, resourcefulness, integrity and proven ability to work as teams. As the highest policy-making and governing bodies of the universities, they are expected to strengthen corporate governance, improve planning and ensure accountability in the management of the institutions.

Governor Oborevwori charged them to meet regularly, operate within the laws establishing the universities and embrace collective responsibility. He also tasked them with confronting sexual harassment, examination malpractice, cultism, favouritism, corruption and other practices capable of undermining the integrity of the university system. His message was equally pointed on nepotism and parochial interests, urging the councils to uphold equity, fairness and justice in their decisions. Yet, perhaps the most consequential aspect of the governor's charge is his insistence that the universities must begin moving towards financial independence. Government funding, he argued, cannot sustainably carry the entire burden of university education.

The institutions must develop the capacity to attract private-sector investment, partnerships and other legitimate revenue streams. Speaking on behalf of the three newly inaugurated councils, Chairman of the Governing Council of Dennis Osadebay University, Professor Patrick Muoboghare, expanded the conversation from government funding to a broader ecosystem of education financing. He proposed a collaborative funding model involving the state government, universities, communities, local governments and the State Legislature.

The proposal goes beyond simply asking stakeholders to contribute money. Muoboghare suggested that such contributions should be strategically invested to generate sustainable returns, with proceeds shared among participating universities according to their levels of contribution. He proposed that the initiative could operate under a Governor Sheriff Education Trust Fund, as a structured mechanism for mobilising and investing resources towards the sustainable development of education in Delta. The proceeds, he envisaged, could strengthen funding for tertiary institutions while also supporting free primary and secondary education across the state. The proposal introduces another dimension to Delta's education conversation: moving from expenditure to investment. Muoboghare also stressed the importance of experience in university governance, advocating a balance between youthful innovation and the knowledge and institutional memory of seasoned administrators. For Delta, the stakes are high. The state is witnessing rapid expansion in its university population at a time when the global economy increasingly rewards knowledge, technical competence and professional skills. The quality of its tertiary institutions will therefore have implications beyond the campuses. It will influence the employability of young Deltans, the ability of businesses to access skilled manpower and the state's capacity to attract investment.

Oborevwori's interventions from hostels and improved staff remuneration to professional programmes, uninterrupted academic calendars and stronger university governance represent one side of that equation. The emerging conversation around financial autonomy and the proposed education trust fund represents another. Together, they point to an attempt to build a university system that is not only bigger, but more stable, better governed and increasingly capable of sustaining itself. For an administration that has made education a central component of its development agenda, the direction is clear: Delta's universities are being positioned not merely as consumers of public resources, but as strategic institutions in the state's human-capital and economic development architecture. If the infrastructure investments, improved staff welfare and proposed funding innovations are translated into sustainable structures, the state's bumper investment in tertiary education could evolve from a programme of government into a more enduring institutional legacy.

Meanwhile, the decision has been welcomed by stakeholders in the university system. Omordi George Ugbomah, PhD, former Chairman of the Governing Council of Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku, and a Political Science lecturer at Dennis Osadebay University, described the new salary structure as a significant demonstration of the governor's commitment to staff welfare, quality education and human capital development. According to Ugbomah, improved remuneration is not merely a welfare measure but an investment in the stability, productivity and overall quality of the state's tertiary education system. He also commended the governor's other interventions in the tertiary education sector, stressing that infrastructure development and staff welfare must go hand in hand if Delta is to build sustainable centres of academic excellence.

Editorial

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Preventing Another Ondo Toxic Drink Tragedy

THE sudden death of dozens of people in Ondo State recently after consuming a locally produced alcohol-based herbal concoction is a tragedy from which many people must learn a lesson, and which must put relevant government agencies on their toes. More than a hundred other people who were also affected are still battling to regain their health.

Expectedly, the government has responded by banning the killer-drink but that should not be the only action to take. The incident exposed a dangerous gap between the existence of regulatory bodies and their capacity to prevent hazardous substances from reaching consumers. The authorities must take urgent measures to close this breach and forestall future occurrences. Besides rigorous forensic investigation and treatment, the immediate response must include decisive action against illegal production and distribution. For a longer-term response, surveillance and regulation of informal alcohol production must be strengthened. There must also be an improvement in public awareness and a commitment to ensuring that communities have access to safer alternatives.

News that the police have arrested the suspected producer and over a dozen others, while substances suspected to contain methanol have been recovered for forensic examination, is welcome. The state government must now establish precisely what was consumed, where it was produced, how widely it has been distributed, who participated in the chain and how the product was able to reach consumers across three local government areas. The government should also trace and dismantle the supply chain and bring all culpable to justice.

The sudden death of 49 citizens, and 170 others reporting visual disturbance, weakness of the body, breathing difficulty and altered consciousness, after consuming the drink demands hard evidence of what was really responsible, rather than speculation. When the death toll stood at 29, the Ondo State Commissioner for Health said there were 60 suspected cases and a provisional case-fatality ratio of about 48.3 per cent. He stated that there was no laboratory evidence yet identifying the toxic agent, cautioning against rushing from epidemiological suspicion to definitive attribution.

Many fingers have been pointed to methanol poisoning as the most likely culprit, and with good reason. Preliminary findings by the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC), based on gas chromatography of tested samples, confirmed the presence of high concentrations of methanol, a substance capable of producing metabolic acidosis, blindness, neurological damage and death. Cannabis indica was also detected in a significant number of samples, raising the possibility of a more complex toxic profile. Yet the preliminary findings are not the same as a completed forensic record. The authorities must still establish the precise chemical composition of what was consumed, determine whether methanol alone or in combination with other substances caused the deaths, and examine production methods to establish whether contamination occurred deliberately, accidentally or through grossly unsafe processing in the course of producing the product.

That sudden deaths linked to a common exposure could occur in several communities before the precise source is established points to a gap in community-based disease surveillance. The state said it became aware of an initial cluster after reports of sudden deaths in New Town on September 3, before identifying another cluster in Araromi-Obu. Later reports placed affected communities across Odigbo and Irele local councils. Traditional rulers, primary healthcare workers, patent medicine vendors and community leaders are often the first to observe unusual patterns. An integration of efforts among these groups and health agencies such as the World Health Organisation (WHO, NAFDAC and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) is needed to provide effective early warnings before an emergency develops.

The ban on the drink may achieve little result if the economic environment that produces the substance remains in place. Where regulatory oversight is ineffective, it could only be a matter of time before another dangerous batch will emerge after public attention moves elsewhere.

Authorities, therefore, need to map informal production centres and understand how ingredients for production are sourced. This should include establishing minimum production and hygiene requirements where informal production can legitimately be brought within regulation, while dismantling operations that deliberately evade the law.

NAFDAC, regardless of its operational challenges, has been a laudable addition to efforts to protect the country's health through product registration and verification. Ironically, the mere existence of an agency does not automatically translate into regulatory control. The Ondo incident continues to show that Nigeria still has a bustling health-related economy that operates beyond formal systems. Public safety cannot depend solely on consumers knowing how to distinguish a registered and safe product from an unregistered and unsafe one. Enhanced regulatory intelligence is needed at the point of production. NAFDAC and relevant stakeholders in the states should have mechanisms for identifying unregistered alcohol and herbal preparations before they become associated with mass illness.

Care must be taken to avoid turning the tragedy into an indictment of traditional medicine. Herbal remedies in Nigerian communities have historically provided complementary healthcare. The Ondo incident concerns the circulation of preparations whose ingredients, alcohol content, production conditions and safety profiles may be unknown. Beyond that, there is no reason to jeopardise the livelihoods of many Nigerians who operate in this informal sector.

There is an uncanny precedent in the latest deaths. In 2015, the state was gripped by rumour of a strange disease outbreak blamed for almost 30 fatalities. The reported symptoms included sudden blurred vision, headache and loss of consciousness, followed by death. As with the latest incident, two communities in Irele council were reportedly affected.

At a media briefing, the Minister of State for Health, Fidelis Nwankwo, disclosed that initial epidemiological and laboratory investigations ruled out any infectious disease. He was, however, quoted as saying: "Epidemiological findings indicate a strong linkage of the outbreak with the consumption of local gin that might have been contaminated with methanol."

Once bitten, the federal and state authorities should have become twice shy. Nigeria has indeed encountered similar trends before. Six weeks after the 2015 incident in Ondo, 84 persons in five local government areas of Rivers State suffered methanol poisoning, following a celebration that included ingesting local gin alongside a local dog meat delicacy. The poisoning claimed about 70 lives. The recurrence of a similar pattern raises questions. What was learned after previous incidents? What lessons failed to enter routine public-health practice? What are the chances of any recurring tragedy?

The Ondo investigation should be channelled towards producing a national review of the country's preparedness for poisoning outbreaks, including the availability of toxicology testing and treatment capacity, especially outside major urban centres.

LETTER

2027 General Elections: Are We Prepared?

SIR: The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is the institution set up by the Federal Government and saddled with the responsibility of conducting elections in Nigeria. The commission is also mandated to register political parties that meet its requirements. In discharging its statutory mandate, the commission has released the timetable for the conduct of the 2027 general elections. According to the timetable, the presidential and National Assembly elections will be held in January 2027 while that of the governorship and House of Assembly are slated for February 2027. We hope that the 2027 general elections will be peaceful, free, fair and credible. Let us keep our fingers crossed. Let me pose a question: Is INEC ready for the 2027 general elections?

This question sounds funny! The reason I ask is because a few days ago, the INEC Chairman Prof. Joash Amupitan (SAN) disclosed that as of September 3, 2026, the commission had not received funds meant for the conduct of the elections. He further stated that the commission needed to procure some equipment such as accreditation machines that are needed for the poll.

Obviously, the commission has to place an order for the equipment and it might take some months before they arrive in the country. I think we need to be more proactive in the way we handle issues relating to election matters. I think there shouldn't be any delay in providing funds for the commission. It is quite unfortunate that since 1999 that we have been conducting general elections in this country, we have not been able to put our house in order. Nigeria, being the Giant of Africa is supposed to lay good examples for other African countries to emulate. Over the years, I have watched on television several occasions how hoodlums hijacked ballot boxes, burnt down polling booths and destroyed election materials. Elections in Nigeria have been a do or die Affair. The question is: Why do we have to kill ourselves because of elections?

Of great concerns are some signs already manifesting ahead of the planned 2027 general elections. According to media reports, some members of the ruling party have been alleged to have made inflammatory statements, threats and taken actions that are inimical and capable of disturbing the peace in the country. I think it is imperative that INEC and relevant security agencies should warn these people.

It would be recalled that the last Osun State governorship election witnessed chaotic situations. However, we give glory to God for making the election a hitch-free. We also have to commend both the INEC and the security agencies for their hard work and professionalism. They did a fantastic job. One of the major challenges that we have in this country as far as elections are concerned is that some of us are not disciplined at all. For instance, despite the fact that prior to any general elections, the INEC chairman always warn all the political parties, candidates and their supporters to conduct themselves responsibly and that any attempt to disrupt the elections will be met with the force of the law, some hoodlums always like to take the laws into their hands.

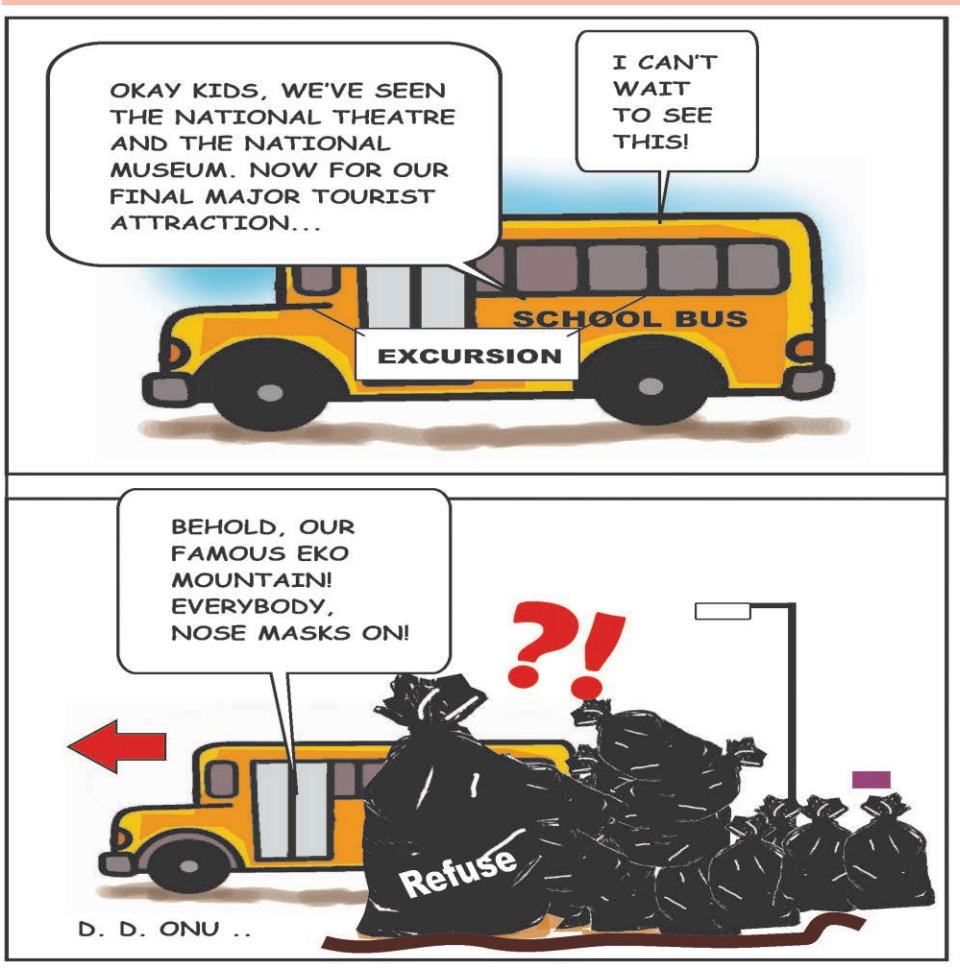
Nigerians are seriously praying for the success of the 2027 elections. However, to make the exercise hitch-free, I would like the INEC chairman to take note of the following suggestions:

First, is Funding: It is obvious that for any Election to be peaceful, free, fair and credible, funding is very crucial. To be on safer side, the INEC chairman should as much as possible do follow-up on the requests made for the conduct of the 2027 poll. He should remember that all eyes are on him and time is not on his side.

The second issue is that of security of lives and property before and during the elections: It is important that the INEC chairman liaise with the Inspector General of Police (IG) and the heads of other relevant security agencies to provide adequate security measures before, during and after the elections. The security agencies should protect the voters, candidates, party agents, electoral officials and electoral materials without discriminations.

• *By Oladele Oladipupo*

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Opinion

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Why NAL Advocates Redesign Of Mother Tongue Policy

By **Victor C. Ariole**

Irony! The very crises which have prompted Nigeria's turn towards STEM are not technical crises at all... not crises of insufficient engineering, inadequate mathematical modelling, insufficient laboratory science ... They are crises of meaning, narrative, identity and moral community humanistic and social.

G.S. Ibileye (Vice Chancellor FUL) in 2026 p.25.

IN this era of Artificial Intelligence (AI) over 6000 mother tongues in Africa needed to overwhelm extant epistemic process with that of Africans as Africans remain more humanistic and mindful of human interaction with seen and unseen realities than other sub-human races. There is only one human race and the knowledge processes coming from humans must be inclusive and helpful for the existence of the race, not detrimental to it.

The languages spoken by humans contain knowledge processes yet unexplored and Nigeria with over 500 languages should map-out what it takes to harvest such knowledge contents to assuage current danger of looming human extinction caused by excessive, dehumanistic arsenals in the hands of the "wicked". Harvesting humanistic knowledge contents comes with exploring the values of African languages.

Neuroscientists agree that human brain is operating at barely 10% of its capacity and that every child is capable of acquiring at least five languages at earlier stages of life, hence a firm foundation to allow for tolerance, creativity, openness to others, innovation and peaceful behaviour for a better humanity. Stopping wars, insurgency, greed, insatiable political turbulence are challenges that are proactively nipped in the bud by a great dose of humanistic knowledge, and as well, speaking and creating narratives in the languages of the weaker ones to woo them to accept terms of governance and social contract that make them give their best in nation building like it is done in Ethiopia and closer to Nigeria, Chad.

The Nigerian Academy of Letters (NAL) at its 28th convocation, induction of new members and investiture of regular and honorary fellows, chaired by its President Prof Andrew Haruna, appealed to the Federal Government not to abolish the Mother Tongue (MT) Policy but to re-design it and re-position it as "A Second Generation Mother Tongue Policy" so as to see it serve as "Path To Nation-Building" as it is seen in Ethiopia, Senegal, South Africa and Chad.

At the event, 46 new members were inducted, 10 Fellows were crowned, and honorary Fellow was bestowed on the El-Kanemi of Borno, HRH Shehu of Borno; Humanistic Practice Award to Tunde Kelani, and Distinguished Life Fellow to Professor Emeritus Femi Osofisan.

For Professor Imelda Udoh who anchored her presentation on "The First Pathway To Nation-Building", MT draws attention to the mooring infrastructure of a nation like stated by Prof Ishaq Oloyede- cultural consciousness, linguistic heritage, functional literature consumption of the young ones from the homes where mother tongues are used, to ground them and induct them into human beings distinct from animals. Like mother tongue like mother suckling - very humanistic and resourceful; and leads to human optimisation pathway in the labyrinth of pathways.

For Professor Vicky Sylvester who anchored her presentation on "Policy and Practice Mismatch", Federal Government was ignoring the folcrum of mother tongue practice as enunciated by UNESCO in 1953 not as cultural idealism but as an intellectual boost for the young ones who must still face colonial languages as well as the Nigerian pidgin. Hence, the need to fund it so as to gratiate the self-esteem of the Nigerian child into well-rounded adult.

Developing contents in this age of AI could be very original and greatly universalisable if mother tongue practice is well planned, and that is where Professor Yinusa Salami brings in what he calls epistemic order and pluriversalism that is, no matter the number of mother tongues in Nigeria or Africa, their epistemic values and contents must be isolated and uploaded into a universal data base. It takes research, and producing good curricula to do that. It must not be just a translation from European languages to the mother tongue or vice-versa. Here linguists will tell you that semantic unit of African proverbs or expressions cannot be rendered word by word.

Epistemic order could as well create semantic units specific to mother tongues and model, to be appreciated by universalisation. Just like Professor Muhammed Sulaiman Audu mentions in his paper about Twi and Ga in Ghana. Two languages well developed by the Ghanaians to upload their own knowledge process notwithstanding the official English in Ghana and the official French in Togo. Ga has helped to create harmony between Ghanaians and Togolese, albeit as exhibited in Aflao border. This seems not obtainable in Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad borders–Fulfude, Kanuri and Hausa seem on centrifugal drive. How to reconcile them for centripetal purposes beckons; and it is humanistic and social.

At the induction ceremony, the EL-Kanemi mentioned 1500 years of existence, museum and unconquered state, and it should matter in nationhood building.

In Ethiopia, the official languages are Ethiopian languages with a dominant one known as Amharic. It is expected that each of the official languages takes care of its region of origin and educate its citizen along the local needs of Ethiopia, and that expectation to work at federal level must be the knowledge of Amharic - not federal character quota basis.

Just like in Canada where you must speak and write French and English to aspire to be a confederal worker in Ottawa, most people in British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Labrador, Alberta do not care about speaking French and prefer staying and working within their provinces, thereby localising their development drive and keeping the provinces relevant and active, unlike in Nigeria where people rush to the centre Abuja, Lagos, Kaduna, Port Harcourt, neglecting or leaving the rural areas to non-state actors.

In Ghana or Senegal, the concept of Town and Krom (it is a town, it is my ancestral home) make Twi and Wolof greatly relevant in the development of the rural areas, slow it may be though, it is not left to insurgents or Boko Haram-type of activities. Nigeria, nay Africa, needs a good dose of humanistic education capable of uploading the epistemic pathways embedded in mother tongues that drive Ubuntu philosophy - I am because you are.

Like G.S. Ibileye mentioned, Africa's problem for now and in near future is more of humans and their environment cohesion than deep science and technology. According to him, "what does a camera see that a historian cannot name, and what does a drone detect that a linguist cannot read... if the spokesperson of the armed forces' life could not be preserved (Major General Rabe Abubakar) what precisely are we asking five thousand cameras to do?"

So, in effect, for a nation building process, where inclusiveness and brotherhood counts and where insurgents are banished, re-design mother tongue policy to look like what obtains in Ethiopia or Senegal.

• *Victor C. Ariiole is a Professor of French and Francophone Studies, University of Lagos.*

Professor Adebayo Williams At 75

By **Atah Pine**

ON Wednesday, September 9, 2026, Professor Adebayo Williams, the renowned author, literary critic, and public intellectual, turned seventy-five. He also holds the traditional chieftaincy title of Asiwaju Otun Olufi Gbongan in Osun State. We felicitate with him on this milestone.

This writer is a student of Political Science and Anthropology. Adebayo Williams is a Professor of English Studies and Literary Theory. As far apart as these disciplinary specialities may seem, the former is a student of the latter. I am his Open and Distance Learning (ODL) student. I met him in the classrooms of *Newswatch, The Guardian, Nigerian Tribune, The News, Tempo, Africa Today*, and much later, the Internet.

I am a connoisseur of the wine of good prose. Once I read any writer whose pieces are infused with sophisticated literary merit, I draw close to such an author like a bee to a sweet nectar.

Professor Adebayo Williams is a master prose writer. He writes with ease and elegance; his turns of phrase are sharp and witty; his expressions are full of vigour, and his cadence, rhyme and rhythm musically mellifluous. In his pen, the social sciences and humanities seamlessly interweave in the discourse of society and development. His commentaries on social theory, post-colonialism, political sociology, federalism, nation-building, culture, and democracy are conceptually deep and analytically profound. He is without a scintilla of doubt among the first flight of public intellectuals who have shaped the tenor and direction of contemporary society.

In the era of military authoritarianism, he was a turn in the flesh. He was at the forefront of the struggle against the barbarians who had invaded the gates of our polity. The bile dripping out of his pen was so biting and painful that he was marked down to be taken on the Appian Way of Golgotha. As a clever guerrilla, he melted into the shadows of darkness and materialised in the metropolises.

It was in these climes that he deployed his pen and intellect to the service of the nation and democracy to the fullest. The imagination of the owl of Gbongan was in full flight. His pieces in Africa Today irritated tyrants and antidemocratic forces. His piece in Africa Today, entitled The Road to Kigali, for instance, is a masterpiece that would be a leading article in any anthology on anti-authoritarianism.

His intellectual contributions to the return of democracy in Nigeria in 1999 are massive and beyond the pale of this piece. It is deeply surprising to keen observers that his contributions to Nigeria's democratic transformation have not been celebrated, especially under the present administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, his friend and fellow sojourner in exile.

I will appeal to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to confer the prestigious honour of Commander of the Federal Republic (CFR) on him in addition to the medal of the National Productivity Order of Merit (NPOM). Professor Williams should also be appointed Special Adviser on Arts and Culture to establish and manage a national arts endowment fund to mentor and develop talent.

Adebayo Williams is a fine novelist. Some of his novels are: The Year of the Locust; Bulletin from the Land of Living Ghosts; and, The Remains of the Last Emperor. I read these novels while on a fellowship in South Africa in 2006. His works were popular with South African fiction readers. I stayed at the Garden Centre and observed this firsthand. At the Garden Centre bookshop, it was a common sight to see readers trooping in and out to pick up his works.

In *The Remains of the Last Emperor*, for instance, Adebayo Williams demonstrates literature's power as an instrument of revolutionary transformation. The forces of dialectical and historical materialism coalesce in the masses to pull down a dictator diseased by power. The novel's lessons remain essential to the practice of democracy in contemporary Africa. I will plead with Professor A Williams to compile all his works into book form for the benefit of readers and posterity.

We thank God for making him a blessing to Nigeria and humanity. We wish him a happy birthday and all the best in his endeavours.

• *Atah Pine wrote from Ikpayongo Town, Benue State.*

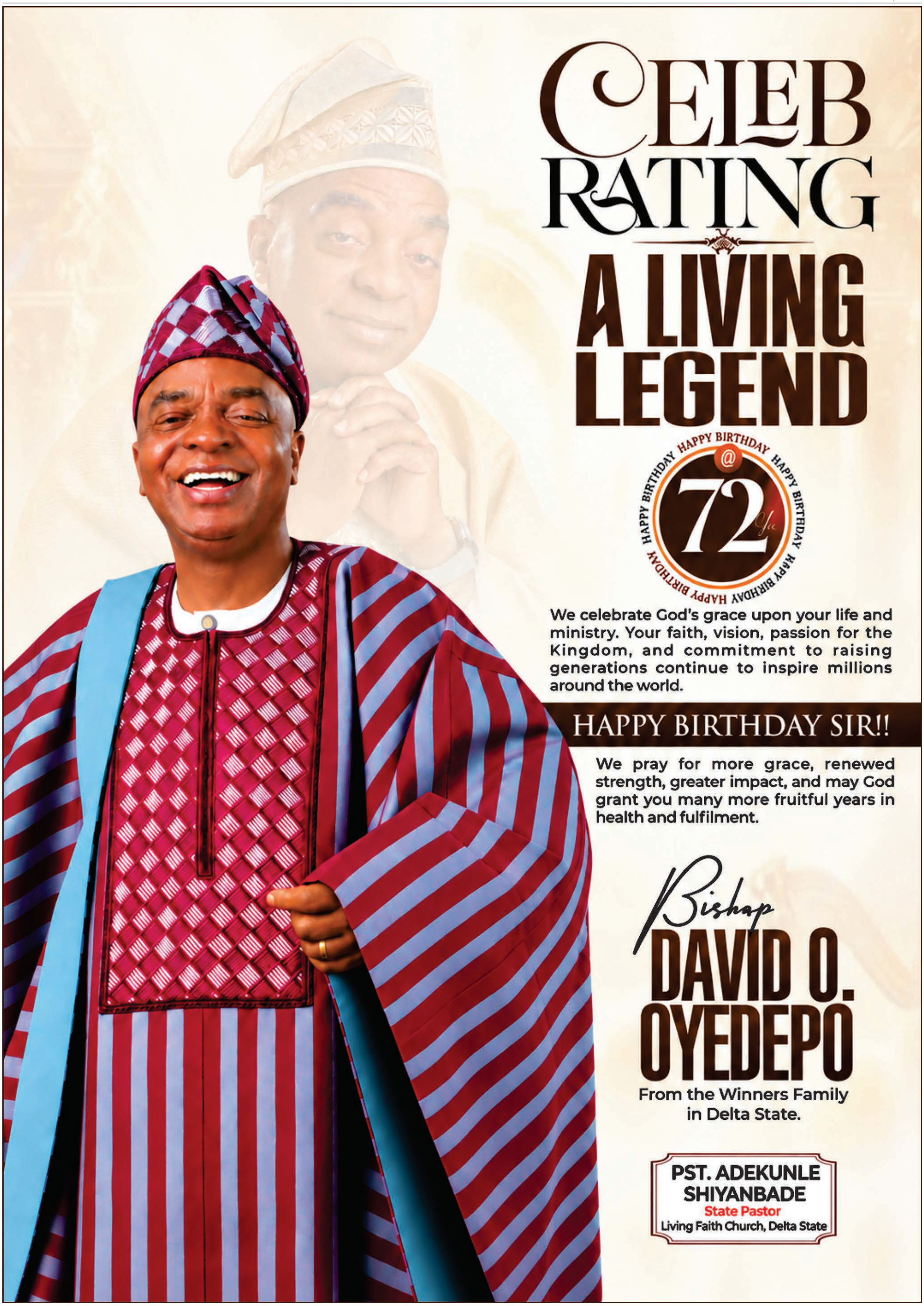
Happy 72nd Birthday DADDY

BISHOP DAVID
OLANIYI OYEDEPO

We celebrate God's Faithfulness upon your Life and thank Him for the Grace, Wisdom, and Kingdom Impact He has bestowed upon you. May the Lord continually renew your Strength, preserve you in sound Health, and grant you many more Fruitful years in His service.

"With Long Life will I satisfy Him, and Shew Him my Salvation." (Psalm 91:16).

Signed by:
Pastor Kola Ralph Omorinoye
(State Pastor, Living Faith Church, Ogun State)
On behalf of the entire Winners' Family in Ogun State


CELEB RATING
A LIVING LEGEND
HAPPY BIRTHDAY @ 72 Yrs
We celebrate God's grace upon your life and ministry. Your faith, vision, passion for the Kingdom, and commitment to raising generations continue to inspire millions around the world.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY SIR!!
We pray for more grace, renewed strength, greater impact, and may God grant you many more fruitful years in health and fulfilment.
Bishop
DAVID O. OYEDEPO
From the Winners Family in Delta State.
PST. ADEKUNLE SHIYANBADE
State Pastor
Living Faith Church, Delta State

HAPPY GLORIOUS BIRTHDAY TO OUR FATHER

BISHOP DAVID OYEDEPO



What a gift you are to this dying world? Our hope suddenly came alive because God sent you and our mourning has been turned to songs of joy.

Daddy, you have liberated this generation and the generation yet unborn by the mandate God placed in your hand.

You have repositioned nations that were meant to be slaves forever by men and by the devil and has given us dominion.

You have raised children after your kind that will keep the liberation mandate alive forever to help men live to fulfilled why Jesus came.

Daddy, we love you dearly, we are glad God sent you, we are grateful you were not disobedient to the liberation vision, through your light we have seen light. We appreciate God that you have not drop an ounce of grace, strength, zeal, love and faithfulness to and for God since God called you sir.

We are very, very proud of you daddy and we are shoulder high that you are our father.

Therefore, on this occasion of your birthday, all your children from Ghana with a heart of gratitude say **"HAPPY GLORIOUS 72ND BIRTHDAY DADDY"**

Our prayers is that God will continually multiply his grace upon your life for greater and global impart. Your strength be renewed day by day as the Liberation mandate keep speaking louder and louder.

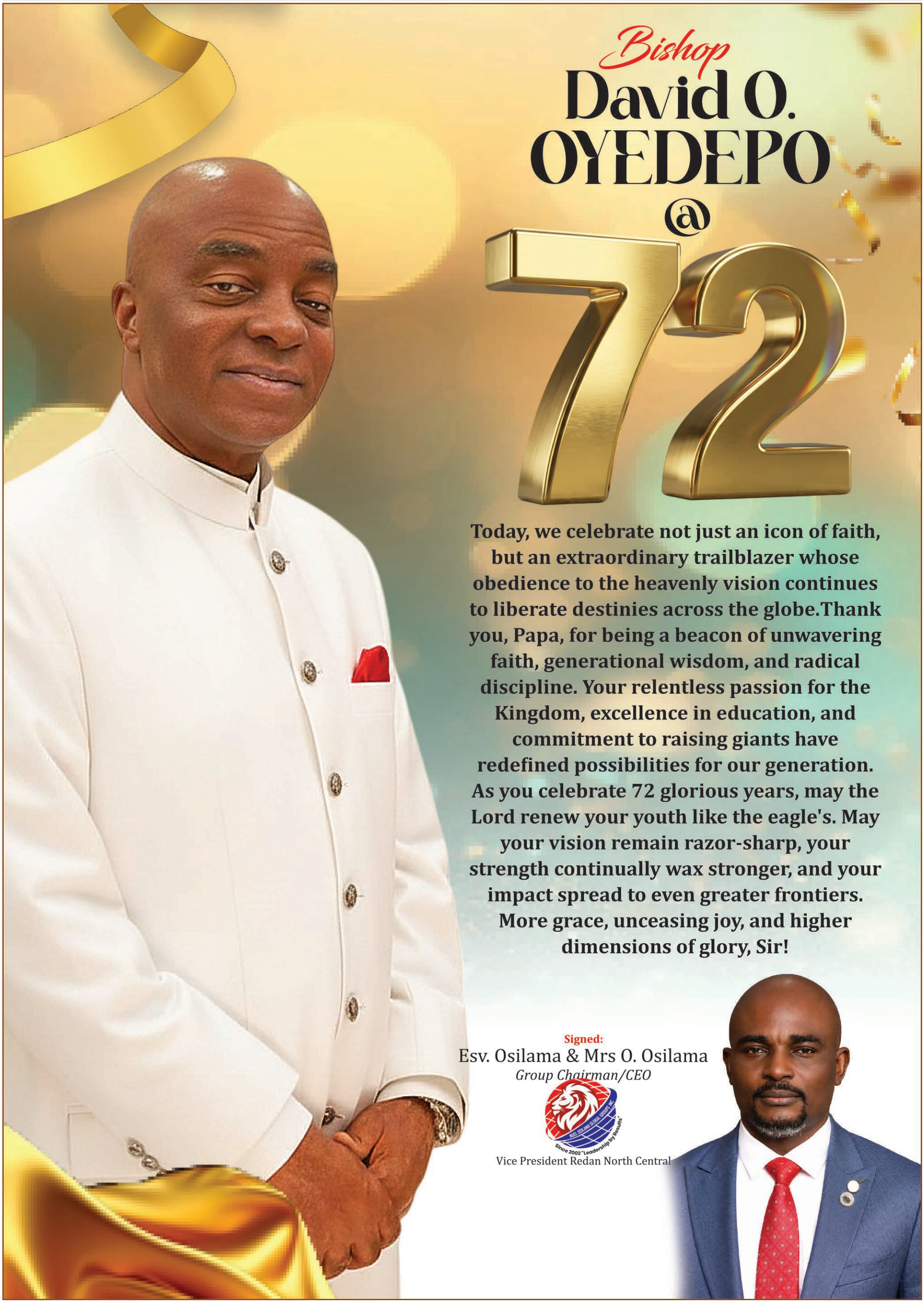
We honour God for your life on this day of your seventy second (72nd) birthday.

We love and cherish you forever because the Liberation Mandate is evident in our lives and in our nation Ghana.

CONGRATULATIONS!! AND HAPPY 72ND BIRTHDAY!!!

Pst. Ben. Andrew
For,
All Your Children in GHANA




Bishop
David O.
OYEDEPO
@
72
Today, we celebrate not just an icon of faith, but an extraordinary trailblazer whose obedience to the heavenly vision continues to liberate destinies across the globe.Thank you, Papa, for being a beacon of unwavering faith, generational wisdom, and radical discipline. Your relentless passion for the Kingdom, excellence in education, and commitment to raising giants have redefined possibilities for our generation. As you celebrate 72 glorious years, may the Lord renew your youth like the eagle's. May your vision remain razor-sharp, your strength continually wax stronger, and your impact spread to even greater frontiers. More grace, unceasing joy, and higher dimensions of glory, Sir!
Signed:
Esv. Osilama & Mrs O. Osilama
Group Chairman/CEO
Since 2002 "Leadership by Results"
Vice President Redan North Central

LIVING FAITH CHURCH WORLDWIDE

Aka Winners Chapel Int`l

Happy 72ND BIRTHDAY

BISHOP DAVID OYEDEPO

FATHER • TEACHER • MENTOR • APOSTLE



We celebrate God's faithfulness in the life of His servant, our Father, Teacher, Mentor and Apostle over this Commission.

We thank God for 72 years of impactful living and over four decades of unwavering commitment to the gospel, to faith, and to the liberation of mankind from all oppressions of the devil.

Your life has taught us to love God, to believe in His Word without wavering, and to pursue excellence. You have been a shining light to our generation and a father to nations. You have proved to the world that the word of God works wonders and following Jesus pays both in the now and the hereafter.

On this special day, I pray that the Lord renew your strength, increase your anointing, and grant you many more years in health, joy, and supernatural vitality.

Happy Birthday, Papa!

We love and honor you greatly.

Pastor Yakubu Kezi
(State Pastor, Kaduna)

On behalf of
Living Faith Churches,
Kaduna State.

MAY THE GOOD LORD CONTINUE TO BLESS YOU ABUNDANTLY.

Guardian Arts

www.guardian.ng THE GUARDIAN WEEKEND, September 26 – 27, 2026 Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

Abuja Festival Of Literature, Ideas Set For October 9, 10

By **Gregory Austin Nwakunor**

ALL is set for the inaugural Abuja Festival of Literature and Ideas, which is scheduled to hold from October 9 and 10, 2026. The inaugural festival is a fulfilment of the dream of Book Buzz Foundation Director, Lola Shoneyin, who first conceived the idea 14 years ago, when she was curating *Infusion*, a popular monthly gathering for music, art and culture in Abuja.

The festival, which is epected to attract writers, thinkers, scientists and cultural voices from Nigeria and around the world,reflects a broader ambition to establish Abuja as an important destination for intellectual exchange, while strengthening cultural connections between Nigeria, Europe and the wider world.

For Shoneyin, founder of the Book Buzz Foundation, "Abuja deserves to be part of the global conversations around literature, ideas and culture. We're presenting an event that brings different worlds together to discuss peace, technology, identity, democracy, creativity, and some of the big questions of our time about. From 2009 – 2012, I organised a monthly event called *Infusion* in Abuja, so, I am confident that this event will be exciting for book-lovers and people in search of high-quality, engaging literary events in Abuja."



Shoneyin

The festival is more than a promotional event, it is a welcome call to reimagine the role of books as dynamic agents of cultural and educational transformation in the country's capital. The two-day gathering is expected to bring writers, thinkers, policymakers, artists and audiences for conversations about some of the most urgent questions shaping human lives today.

The Festival, which holds at The Nordic, Jabi, Abuja, is presented in partnership with the European Union Delegation to Nigeria and ECOWAS, with the participation of the Embassies of Italy, Spain and Sweden.

The participating European missions have helped bring an exceptional group of international writers, thinkers and practitioners to Abuja, creating a programme that moves confidently between literature, politics, technology, science, culture and public life.

Among the festival's international guests is Sergio Jaramillo, former High Commissioner for Peace in Colombia and one of the principal architects of the Colombian peace process.

In his event, *How Divided Societies Learn to Dialogue,* Jaramillo will explore what becomes possible when people on opposite sides of conflict find ways to listen, negotiate and rebuild trust.

Zimbabwean writer and academic, Simukai Chigudu, will discuss his acclaimed memoir, *Chasing Freedom*, a deeply personal exploration of family, colonialism, race, migration and the complicated meaning of freedom after empire.

Science and imagination meet in Roberto Trotta's *Starborn*, while Gloria Chinyere Okwu discusses *On Close Examination*, her account of survival, womanhood, illness and reclaiming personal agency.

In response to some of the defining debates of the time, the festival will host Stephane M. Grueso who will discuss the impact of artificial intelligence on culture and creative work.

Shoneyin said: "Nigerians need to start having serious conversations about how AI could affect critical sectors, including banking, businesses and personal security, while considering appropriate regulations and safeguards."

According to the festival curator, "we need to understand what kind of regulations need to be put in place. We need to have some kind of response and know where to even start should we find ourselves in certain situations."

She said the rapid development of AI means its potential risks can no longer be treated as distant concerns, particularly as technology becomes increasingly integrated into everyday life.

"We will also host Swede Carl Heath who will provide insight in a session, aptly titled, *Musings on the Internet,* which will examine what AI means for authorship, intellectual property, privacy, artistic labour and the future of human creativity."

AFLI will also turn its attention firmly towards Northern Nigeria. A panel on Exciting Themes in New Northern Nigerian Women's Fiction brings together Nana Sule, Hadiza El-Rufai, Fatima Bala and Edify Yakusak, while Youth Speak session asks what the future looks like for young people in the region, featuring Khadija Sanusi, Maryam Laushi Dasilva, Raymond J. Yusuff, Usman Hayatu and Nana Fatima Bello.

Other conversations range from to an evening of poetry featuring Deborah Johnson, Moyosola Olowookure, Salim Yunusa and Mariam Abdullahi.

Accessible Publishers Celebrate Academic Excellence, Digital Innovation

By **David Emokpae**

FRIDAY, September 18, 2026, marked a significant moment in the 30-year journey of Accessible Publishers Limited as the company hosted the grand finale and prize-giving ceremony of the 2026 Accessible Summer Competition, powered by SmartEdu Hub, its digital School Management and Learning Management System.

The event was a celebration of academic excellence, digital innovation and purposeful corporate social responsibility. It also provided a practical demonstration of Accessible Publishers Limited's 30th-anniversary vision, captured in the theme: "Beyond Print: Scaling Digital Products for Inclusive Publishing."

The announcement of the winners by Esther Bamgboje generated excitement as the outstanding students were recognised. First prize went to Happiness John, a JSS 1 student of Joy Prime Model Secondary School, Akwa Ibom. She went home with N1 million (One Million Naira) Second prize went to Agaga-Oamen Dave-Wisdom of The Oasis Schools, Ekpoma, Edo State and got N500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand Naira). There was a tie in the third Prize, with Daniel Barry Monsigia of Teko School, Rivers State and Okunoye Mojolaoluwa Deborah of Oritamefa Baptist Model School, Ibadan going home with N250,000 (Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Naira) each.

The grand finale brought together stakeholders from government, education, publishing, technology and the private-school sector, alongside parents, teachers, students, staff and well-wishers.

In his address, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Accessible Publishers Limited, Mr. Gbadega Adedapo, reflected on the company's three decades of contribution to educational publishing and its determination to remain relevant in a rapidly changing educational environment.

He emphasised the importance of innovation and the need for publishing to evolve beyond the conventional printed book. The company's investment in SmartEdu Hub, he explained, represents part of that evolution, connecting its rich educational-content heritage with the digital needs of schools, teachers, parents and learners. The message was clear: Accessible Publishers is not abandoning print; it is extending the reach and possibilities of publishing through technology. The technology dimension of the event was presented by the Team Lead of Best Technologies Limited, the technology company responsible for developing SmartEdu Hub, Mr. Mayowa Bernard. SmartEdu Hub seeks to simplify educational processes, improve communication among schools, teachers, parents and learners, and provide a digital platform through which educational content and activities can be accessed more efficiently.

The 2026 Accessible Summer Competition provided a practical demonstration of this vision. According to the Summer Competition Team Lead, Mr. Moses Akintola, the competition was organised as a two-week national academic challenge for students in JSS 1 to JSS 3. Participants competed in Mathematics, English and Science, with questions drawn from the national BECE question bank. The competition recorded an impressive 5,226 participants from across Nigeria, with students participating at no cost.

The geographical spread of participation demonstrated the ability of digital technology to break physical barriers. Students from states including Akwa Ibom, Edo, Rivers and Oyo, among others, competed through the same platform. In effect, SmartEdu Hub created a national digital classroom without physical walls, giving learners from different locations an opportunity to test their knowledge on a common platform.

The winners represented more than individual academic achievement. They reflected the reach of the competition and the opportunity created for young learners to participate in a national digital academic experience regardless of geographical location.



Agaga-Oamen Dave-Wisdom (left, second position from Edo State); Happiness John (First position from Akwa Ibom); Okunoye Mojolaoluwa Deborah (Third position from Oyo State), and Mr. Gbadega Adedapo, (MD/CEO Accessible Publishers Limited)... in Ibadan

Black Market Targets Guinness Record As Stars Shine Ahead Attempt

By **Eniola Daniel**

NIGERIAN movie, *Black Market,* is gearing up for Guinness World Record attempt.

Written by Abdul Tijani-Ahmed and Fatimah Binta Gimsay, *Black Market* will be released in Lagos on September 26, 2026 at Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos.

In collaboration with Filmone Studios, Signet Ring Studios and Switch Visuals Production, Black Market will host 50,000 people for a single screening of *Black Market* in an official Guinness World Records attempt to surpass the current record of 43,000 – the largest number of people to screen a film in a single location.

Shot in Abeokuta, Nigeria, *Black Market* was directed by Fatimah Gimsay and stars Lateef Adedimeji, Linda Ejiofor-Suleiman, Itele D Icon, Scarlet Gomez, Omowunmi Dada, Teniola Aladese, Susan Pwajok and Uzor Arukwe.

At Book Launch, Dignitaries Extol Amuta's Memoir, *Homage: Return To Familiar Places*

By **Sunday Akinolu**

DIGNITARIES from all walks of life converge on Lagos for Chidi Amuta's 'Homage' a memoir of his journey from modest rural childhood through academia, journalism and public affairs.

The special guest of honour, Former military president, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (IBB), represented by Abbey Ibrahim, described Amuta as a national asset, praising his bold, courageous and balanced writing, as well as his ability to examine Nigeria's challenges beyond ethnic, regional, religious and partisan considerations.

According to Babangida, 'Homage' offers readers an insight into the modest life of a fine writer and a notable intellectual. The memoir is "literary and refreshing in style" and rich in insight into both Amuta's life and Nigeria's complex national history, he added

In their separate remarks, The Abia State Governor, Alex Otti and Rotimi Amaechi, who were among Amuta's former students at the University of Port Harcourt, described the author as a blessing, not only to Nigeria, but to the world at large.

Broadcast Content Across Borders

Compiled by **Shaibu Husseini**

Toronto International Film Festival Announces Winners

THE Toronto International Film Festival has unveiled this year's award winners during a live press conference at TIFF Lightbox. Among the top honours announced were the People's Choice Awards, presented by Rogers, voted on by TIFF's public audience; the Platform Prize, the Festival's only juried programme; two Canadian feature film awards, Short Cuts, FIPRESCI, and NETPAC awards. In total, 12 awards were handed out, celebrating standout films and breakout talent. In a historic first this year, winning TIFF's Platform Prize grants a non-English-language film direct eligibility for Best International Feature Film at the Academy Awards, alongside top winners from five other qualifying festivals. Audiences can catch this year's People's Choice Award–winning films for free at the Lightbox, beginning at 12pm today. Over the past 11 days, TIFF presented 294 films from 72 countries, welcoming over 800 talents across 98 red carpets. The Festival hosted 2,000 accredited media, close to 7,000 TIFF: The Market delegates, and 279 directors from around the world. Launched in 1978, the TIFF People's Choice Award, presented by Rogers, celebrates the Festival's top title as chosen by Toronto's famously passionate and discerning public audience. The honour now spans four categories: overall, International, Documentary, and Midnight Madness. The People's Choice Award presented by Rogers went to La Bola Negra, dirs. Javier Calvo and Javier Ambrossi while the International People's Choice Award presented by Rogers went to Elsinore, dir. Simon Stone. The People's Choice Documentary Award presented by Rogers went to Darlene Love: I Know Where I've Been, dir. Barry Avrich while the People's Choice Midnight Madness Award presented by Rogers went to Ladies and Gentlemen, Brian Mulroney, dir. Matthew Rankin

TIFF Appoints Head Of Jury

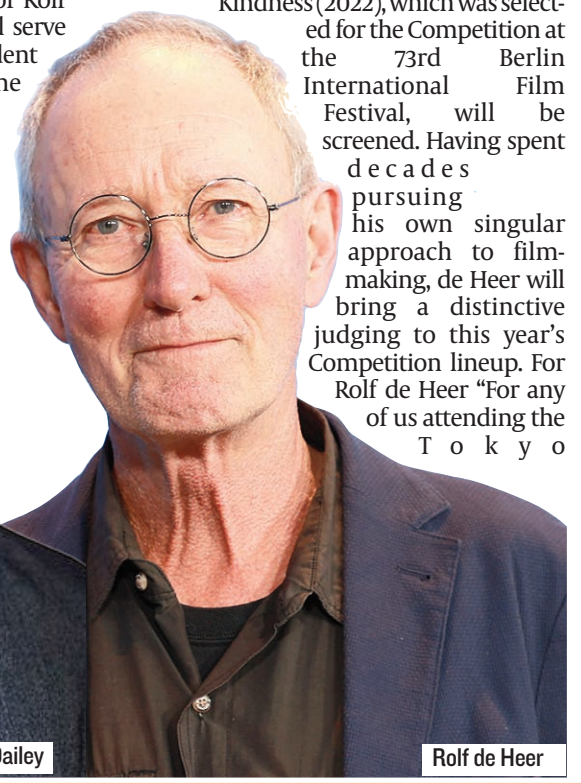
THE Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) is pleased to announce that director Rolf de Heer will serve as President of the International Competition jury at the 39th TIFF. Based in Tasmania, Australia, Rolf de Heer has worked for more than 40 years as a film director, screenwriter and producer, taking on a wide range of subjects and forms of cinematic expression while training his gaze on humanity and society, earning widespread international acclaim. His film, Bad Boy Bubby (1993), won the Special Jury Prize and the FIPRESCI Prize at the Venice International Film Festival. Four of his films have been selected for the Official Selection at the Cannes Film Festival, including Ten Canoes (2006), which won the Special Jury Prize in the Un Certain Regard section. This year, TIFF's World Focus section will feature 'Australia Spotlight', a special showcase of Australian cinema presented in cooperation with the Australian Embassy in Japan. As part of Australia Spotlight, de Heer's The Survival of Kindness (2022), which was selected for the Competition at the 73rd Berlin International Film Festival, will be screened. Having spent decades pursuing his own singular approach to filmmaking, de Heer will bring a distinctive judging to this year's Competition lineup. For Rolf de Heer "For any of us attending the Tokyo International Film Festival, it is a privilege. For me, as a filmmaker, it is even more so. The more films I manage to make, the fewer films I manage to see, especially on the big screen. But as a part of this jury, I have the duty, the obligation, to see at least 15 films and talk about them with other filmmakers! And not just any old 15 films, but the 15 films in Competition, drawn from films made all over the world by all sorts of extraordinary filmmakers! And to do this in a city that plays host to one of the most formidable film cultures in the world! Can life ever get much better than this?" Festival Director of TIFF Hisamatsu Takeo remarked that with Rolf de Heer appointment as President of the International Competition jury at the 39th Tokyo International Film Festival, the festival looks forward to the fresh dialogue and discoveries that his wealth of experience and deep insight will bring to this year's Competition and its diverse selection of films. After graduating from AFTRS (the Australian Film, Television and Radio School) decades ago, Tasmania-based Rolf de Heer wrote/co-wrote 14 original and adapted screenplays that have been made into feature films, and probably more than 14 that haven't. De Heer has also produced/co-produced 16 fiction features and five feature documentaries



Fidelis Duker



Cameron Dailey



Rolf de Heer

October 20 Is Start Date For Abuja International Film Festival

FILMMAKERS interested in submitting their films for the 23rd Abuja International Film Festival still have a late entry window open. They have up until September 30 to enter their films for what is obviously the longest running film festival in West Africa. The 23rd Abuja International Film Festival (AIFF 2026, by far Africa's premier cinematic gathering, takes place between October 20 to 24, 2026. Held yearly in Abuja, Nigeria's capital territory, past editions of AIFF has brought together over 11,250+ film submissions from 115 countries in 23 years. The festival welcomes feature films, compelling shorts, animations, and insightful documentaries. The theme for the 2026 edition is Frames Without Borders: Ai, Ethics and The Future of Filmmaking.

LIMCAF: A Festival That Grows Into Its Promise

By **Gregory Austin Nwakunor**

LIFE in My City Art Festival (LIMCAF), now in its 19th edition, is heading towards its grand finale in Enugu, with six distinguished art personalities appointed to its National Jury Panel and Jerry Buhari named curator of the exhibition. This edition of the festival, themed, Open Letter, holds its grand finale exhibition in the final week of October at the International Conference Centre of the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu.

Next year, this flagship event of the Life in My City Art Foundation will be 20. And that is a long run for an art competition that began in 2007 on a much smaller scale. Recall that Robert Orji, founder of Rocana Nigeria Limited, started the festival as a yearly competition for young artists. Since then, LIMCAF has spread its net across the country, built up a sizeable purse of prizes and seen some of the artists who passed through its competition establish themselves on the Nigerian visual arts scene.

Chike Obeagu chairs the panel this year. A contemporary artist, scholar and curator, he is an associate professor at the Federal University of Lafia and has curated LIMCAF three times. Also included are Adiwu Talatu Onkala, an artist and associate professor of painting at the University of Maiduguri. She has worked around gender, identity and the social realities of contemporary Nigeria, particularly the experiences of women in the Northeast. Ugochukwu-Smooth C. Nzewi, an artist and art historian and the Steven and Lisa Tananbaum Curator at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Before joining MoMA, he held curatorial positions at the Cleveland Museum of Art and Dartmouth's Hood Museum; Bella Anne C. Ndubuisi, a cultural affairs specialist, who has worked in culture, community development and international development and has been involved with LIMCAF in Taraba; Dotun Popoola is known for his sculptures made from discarded scrap metal. Frank Omoh Agbiyoa Ugiomoh, an artist, art historian, critic and educator, has more than four decades of experience in the field, with African art history and its historiography central to his scholarship.

Buhari, who will curate the Grand Finale Exhibition, has been a professor of fine art at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, since 1982. His career has included studio practice, teaching and curating exhibitions in Nigeria and abroad.

The jury will have 100 artists to consider, following the selection process in the festival's different regional centres. More than N60 million is up for grabs. The overall winner's prize, formerly simply the festival's top prize, was renamed the Elder Kalu Young Artist of the Year Prize last year. It is now worth the naira equivalent of $2,000 and is sponsored by the family of the late Elder Kalu Uke Kalu, a former LIMCAF chairman and visual arts aficionado.

The category prizes cover photography, painting, sculpture, drawing, ceramics and digital art. They range from 500,000 to' 1 million, with the Chinelo Chime Prize for Best in Photography carrying 1 million. The prizes for painting, sculpture, drawing and ceramics are 500,000 each.

There are awards with more specific briefs. The Armstrong Agoreyo Prize is for the best artwork made from waste paper, while the Kanyeyachukwu Tagbo Prize recognises an outstanding work by an artist living with a disability.

Some prizes have been established by individuals, families and organisations. Among them are the Justice Anthony Aniagolu Prize for Originality, the Dr Pius Okigbo Prize for Technical Proficiency, the Mfon Usoro Prize for Best Entry from Uyo Centre and the VinMartins Ilo Prize for Best Entry from Enugu.

LIMCAF's offer to young artists extends beyond the prizes. A two-week, all-expenses-paid trip to Dakar for the Dakar Art Biennale, or Dak'Art, is one of the festival's rewards. There are also residencies and boot camps.

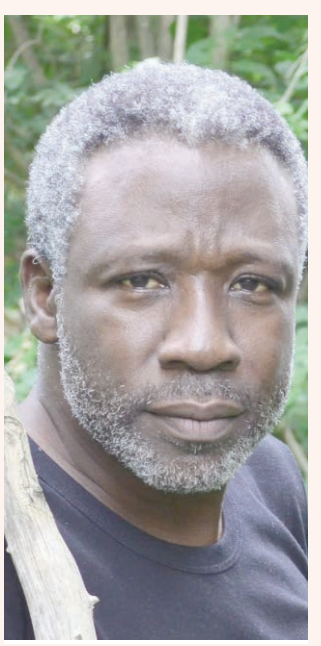
The festival has a place for gender-specific awards, too, with special prize categories for female artists. Its activities extend to children through workshops for primary and secondary school pupils, with particular attention to those living with disabilities. Abuja and Enugu have hosted some of these workshops in recent years.

LIMCAF has also drawn support from a range of institutions and organisations. Its partnerships include the Alliance Française network in Nigeria, the Institut Français and the French Embassy. Other supporters include Clam Lab, Paris; Rocana Nigeria Limited; the Pan African Circle of Artists; Honeywell Group; FBN Holdings; the Enugu State Council for Art and Culture; the Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos; and Thought Pyramid Art Centre, Abuja.

The prizes, too, have attracted individual and institutional backers, including the Justice Anthony Aniagolu family, Vin Martin Ilo, Thought Pyramid Art Centre, Mfon Usoro, the Pius Okigbo family, Art Is Everywhere, the Centre for Contemporary Art, Professor El Anatsui and Engr. Gesi Asamaowei, among others.

For some former participants, LIMCAF has been an early break. Several past overall and category prize winners have gone on to establish themselves on the Nigerian visual arts scene.

The competition Robert Orji started in 2007 now has regional centres, a national jury, a growing list of prizes and 100 artists in contention for its latest finale.



Jerry Buhari, exhibition curator



Chike Obeagu, chair, national jury panel

Billboard In Yaba Screaming Truth About *Japa* Job Offers

By **Maria Diamond**

IS that dream job abroad actually a trap? Instead of excitement about 'living the abroad dream' shouldn't the concept of 'free flights, free housing and free training for unskilled work' raise suspicion?

At the Herbert Macaulay junction in Yaba, Lagos State where *danfo* horns and hawkers' cries usually drown out everything else, a new billboard, With the inscription, 'Don't Get Trapped, The Reality' is managing to get noticed.

This billboard campaign, an initiative of Seed Mentors Africa, is designed as part of Dream Builders Child Education and Empowerment Foundation, lands at a time when Nigeria's own anti-trafficking agency, National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), continues to flag the country as both a source and a transit point for victims moved into forced labour, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation abroad.

This billboard positioned close to the University of Lagos and Yaba Tech, stops passers-by with an uncomfortable question: is that dream job abroad actually a trap while showing a young woman in visible distress and lays out, in plain street language, how trafficking recruiters operate.

The billboard insists that being lured with freebies and rushed to sign a contract is a pressure tactic, not urgency. Jobs advertised in vague special economic zones far from any city or embassy is a warning sign. And no genuine employer will ever ask to hold your passport.

Yaba was picked deliberately. It is a district full of students and recent graduates, the exact group that recruiters chase with offers of study-work programmes and pay packages that sound impossible for a reason.



The campaign lands at a time when Nigeria's own anti-trafficking agency, NAPTIP, continues to flag the country as both a source and a transit point for victims moved into forced labour, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation abroad. Lagos, with its universities and its steady stream of young people chasing a way out of the country, sits squarely in that pipeline. Community-level warnings like the Yaba billboard matter precisely because official rescue operations tend to arrive only after a victim has already left Nigerian soil, when far less can be done.

The Pointed Intervention

The Yaba billboard is a small but pointed intervention:

. Check the employer before you travel.
. Read every contract in full.
. Keep your passport.
. Treat any offer that asks you to keep quiet as the clearest red flag of all.

Fela Durotoye: 'It Takes 230 Million Leaders To Fix Nigeria'

By **David Emokpae**

THE need for Nigerians to take personal responsibility and contribute to national development took centre stage at the 2026 Diamond Award for Excellence, where leadership expert and keynote speaker, Mr Fela Durotoye, declared that Nigeria needs about 230 million leaders to fix the country.

Durotoye, who spoke on the theme, 'Collective Efforts Towards National Development,' told Nigerians to stop waiting for government alone to solve the country's problems, stressing that every citizen has a role to play in building the Nigeria they desire.

Speaking at the sixth Diamond Award for Excellence, an initiative of the Double Diamond Global Empowerment Initiative, which held on Thursday, September 17, 2026, at the Airport Hotel, Lagos, he said leadership should not be restricted to people occupying positions of authority.

Durotoye explained that an individual does not have to hold a political or public office before becoming a leader, noting that leadership could begin with small acts of positive change within one's community.

"It will take 230 million leaders to fix Nigeria, meaning every Nigerian must be a leader to fix Nigeria," he said.

He challenged Nigerians to become solution providers rather than spectators, saying that the country would only change when citizens accept responsibility for contributing to its development.

The leadership expert also criticised the popular idea that young people are 'leaders of tomorrow', describing the concept as deceptive because it could encourage people to postpone responsibility.

"The idea of 'we are leaders of tomorrow' is diabolical. Tomorrow is a mirage. The closer you get, the further it goes," he noted.

Durotoye also drew a distinction between leaders and rulers, saying that the presence of genuine leadership should result in positive changes in a society.

"Whenever a leader shows up, things get better. But when a ruler shows up, things get bitter," he remarked.



Experiencing Master Of Ceremonies Beyond Microphone

By **Maria Diamond**

SKILLED and professional master of ceremonies (MC) does more than merely filling the silence between speakers, they hold the event together. They manage transitions, introduce speakers properly, keep the programme moving, and shape the tone of the room from beginning to end.

Most people spend weeks getting every part of an event right, the venue, the food, the branding, stage setup etc. Then they leave the MC decision until late and treat it like a minor detail – but it is not.

According to Joyce Daniel, popularly called Queen of Talks, more often than not, the choice of an MC comes down to someone who is familiar, available and good with people. "Sometimes it is because they have hosted a wedding once and turned out to be very funny. However, the MC does much more than fill silence between speakers. They hold the event together. They manage transitions, introduce speakers properly, keep the programme moving, and shape the tone of the room from beginning to end."



For an AGM, conference, or product launch, you need a corporate MC who works in Nigeria at that level and understands the audience, the setting, and the standard the event has to meet.

A strong corporate-specific experience MC knows when to lift the energy and when to stay out of the way. "They know how to move along with a speaker who has gone over time without making it awkward. They know how to keep 300 people engaged at 2:00pm, after lunch, when attention is dropping and phones are starting to look more interesting than the stage," Daniel stated.

There are times when everything does not go to plan, the late VIP, the missing speaker, the microphone that cuts out halfway through a sentence etc.

Magical Kenya Travel Expo To Host Akwaaba, Others In Nairobi

By **Maria Diamond**

THE 16th Magical Kenya Travel Expo (MKTE), an East Africa's tourism trade fair connecting local and international travel and tourism stakeholders, will, alongside other professionals across the region, host Akwaaba African Travel Market as exhibitors on October 6 to 8, 2026 at the Uhuru Gardens National Monument and Museum in Nairobi, Kenya.

Akwaaba will once again participate at the three-day event, which is themed 'Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence: Shaping the future of Tourism' focusing on modern technologies that redefine destination exploration, management and booking.

Akwaaba, in the last 22 years, has consistently participated at several Travel Fairs around the world including the World Travel Market (WTM) London, the EMITT Travel Expo Istanbul, Turkey, the ITB Berlin Germany, Magical Kenya Travel Expo, Kenya, the Pearl of Africa Travel Expo POATE, Uganda, the Kilifair Expo Arusha,Tanzania, Sanganai In Zimbabwe, South Africa Travel *Indaba*, and many others. In 2025, Akwaaba made its presence at MKTE as an exhibitor for the first time and will again participate this year as an exhibitor.

Targeted mainly at Africans promoting Africa to Africans, Akwaaba has successfully opened up intra African travel connecting Africans to each other. In its 22 years of existence, it has networked African tour operators, hospitality, aviation and other travel professionals. It attracts over 3000 tourism professionals from over 20 African countries.

Ankara Festival Africa Is Coming To Lagos

By **Adaku Onyenucheya**

COMING to Africa with a shared commitment to preserving and celebrating Ankara as an important part of the continent's cultural story, beginning with Nigeria, Ankara Festival Africa (AFA) a franchise of Ankara Festival is set to launch in Lagos.

Ankara Festival, founded by Peter Lentini, and celebrated across Los Angeles and other major cities in North America for over 15-years, is created to give this story a bigger stage and expected to bring together designers, fashion and creative entrepreneurs, artisans, artists, historians, cultural practitioners, brands, collectors, entertainers, and consumers for an immersive celebration of everything Ankara.

The African franchise is being led by three Nigerian industry professionals: Laura Udoh, a media sales and marketing expert; Isi Atagemen, a renowned fashion icon and Xavier Akinyemi, an award-winning marketing and brand expert.

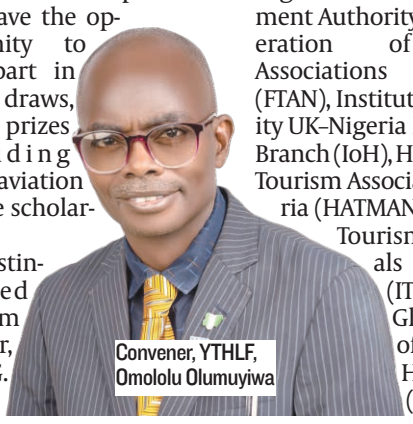
Forum To Promote Social, Cultural, Economic Value Of Tourism, Hospitality Sector

By **Maria Diamond**

DESIGNED to sensitise, educate and motivate young people while promoting the social, cultural and economic value of the tourism and hospitality industry, the 14th edition of the Youth Tourism and Hospitality Leaders Forum (YTHLF) is set to hold in Ibadan on October 29, 2026.

The Convener, YTHLF, Omololu Olumuyiwa, who is the Managing Editor of Travelscope Magazine, disclosed that the yearly gathering of young people, stakeholders and entrepreneurs who have contributed to the advancement of tourism in Nigeria.

The 2026 edition is expected to bring together participants from across different backgrounds for a day of tourism education and industry engagement. Participants will also have the opportunity to take part in raffle draws, with prizes including free aviation college scholarships.


Convener, YTHLF, Omololu Olumuyiwa

A distinguished tourism scholar, Dr. T.G. Yusuf of the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, will deliver a keynote address on "Youth Innovation, Digital Marketing & Tourism Development."

In recognition of the positive impacts of YTHLF, the event has the endorsement of Federal Government tourism agencies and several bodies, including the National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism (NIHOTOUR), Nigerian Tourism Development Authority (NTDA), Federation of Tourism Associations of Nigeria (FTAN), Institute of Hospitality UK-Nigeria International Branch (IoH), Hospitality and Tourism Association of Nigeria (HATMAN), Institute of Tourism Professionals of Nigeria (ITPN), and Global Institute of Tourism and Hospitality (GITH).

KSA @ 80: 'Young Artistes Need To Sit Down, Learn From Him'

By **Daniel Anazia** and **Eniola Daniel**

FROM live band to Grammy ballots, the story of Sunday Adeniyi Ishola Adegeye, the man Nigerians call King Sunny Ade or KSA, 'Minister of Enjoyment', King of Juju, tracks almost exactly alongside the story of the music genre, a popular genre that originated from Southwest Nigeria.

Long before Afrobeats carried Nigerian sound to a global audience through streaming platforms and viral algorithms, KSA had already proven, entirely on his own terms and largely in his native Yoruba, that it could be done.

Hence, on Tuesday, September 22, when he turned 80, it was a celebration that reads less like a personal milestone and more like a checkpoint in the story of modern Nigerian music itself, an industry he did not simply perform in but helped build, export and, in the process, made his own.

Born on September 22, 1946 to royal parentage — his father, from Ondo town, his mother from Akure — the master guitarist and cultural ambassador had spent over half a century as the definitive figure in Nigerian music.

His father, Samuel Adeniyi Adegeye, was a church organist in the Methodist Church; his mother, Maria Adegeye, a member of the Adesida dynasty of Akure, was a trader. Music was never absent from the household, but it was not intended to be his vocation.

Growing up in Osogbo, he was raised in a family that believed a prince belonged in a courtroom or a classroom, not in a bandstand, then regarded as a common trade. At home, his father's gramophone nurtured his musical passion through records, both foreign and local.

His parents vehemently rejected his musical aspirations, which they viewed as an unserious pursuit, one likely to pull a child out of school, and in KSA's case, it eventually did. Though his parents maintained their disapproval for decades, he followed his instincts.

According to him, at the age of seven, he would follow his mother to the Cherubim and Seraphim church, where percussion was played alongside traditional worship, and he liked nothing more than standing among the percussionists.

He later traced his love of music to those services. "In that church, Cherubim and Seraphim … you have so many enticing music there; music that would really entice you to dance. So that's where my love started," he said.

Knowing his mother disapproved, his friends kept watch whenever he played percussion so she would not catch him. "I always liked to be in between those people playing percussion. So what I did was make sure some people covered me, so when my mother looked back, I could dodge her," KSA added with a smile.

Before leaving school around 1963 for Abeokuta and from there to Lagos in the mid-1960s, an escape, in effect into music, he attended African School, Methodist School, and St. Charles Grammar School Osogbo.

In Lagos, he joined a highlife band; though he was too young by the group's reckoning - barely 17, he added a couple of years to his age and claimed to be 19 to be allowed in. He worked his way up from percussion to a self-taught command of the guitar and eventually from band member to bandleader.

His influences in those years included I.K. Dairo and American musicians: James Brown, Brook Benton, and Jim Reeves. He passed through the mentorship of music figures like Sanni Ariyo and Idowu Owoeye, and later joined Moses Adejumo Olaiya's Federal Rhythm Dandies, a highlife outfit fronted by the man later known as the comedian Baba Sala.

Drawn by the music style of Juju pioneer Earnest Olatunde Thomas, popularly known as Tunde Nightingale or The Western Nightingale, from whom he borrowed stylistic elements from his 'So wa nbe' style, KSA moved from highlife toward Juju music.

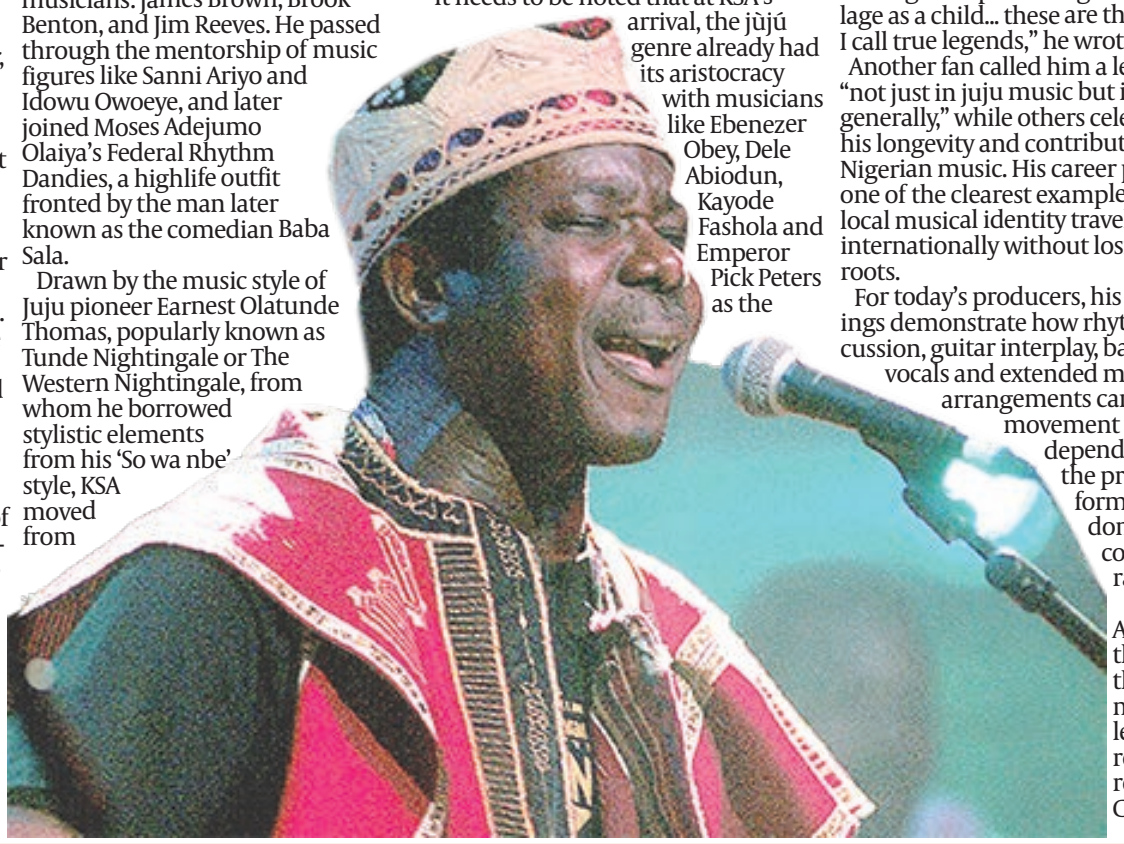
Taking a cue from Bobby Benson, who encouraged him to perform standing rather than seated, as was customary at the time, he broke away from the traditional orchestration by moving his front line to their feet, introducing synchronised choreography across a 20-man band that transformed concerts into high-energy spectacles.

Commenting on the innovation, the newly minted Octogenarian said, "Before I put in anything or add anything, I will go back and do research. I make sure all kinds of music are in there. You can find any kind of music in the world in my music.

"The aim is to send this particular music to the whole world and let everybody have that feeling. So if you're a fanatic fan of jazz, it's within this music. If you're a fanatic fan of rock and roll or R&B, you'll find that in my music."

Attesting to the innovation, the *New York Times* in 1984 wrote: "What Mr. Ade has achieved is the revitalisation of juju through a series of daring musical innovations. He has added synthesisers, a Hawaiian steel guitar and phalanxes of electric guitars and conga drums to the traditional juju ensemble."

It needs to be noted that at KSA's arrival, the jùjú genre already had its aristocracy with musicians like Ebenezer Obey, Dele Abiodun, Kayode Fashola and Emperor Pick Peters as the established names. Obey in particular had already begun modernising the sound with trap drums and a three-guitar format.



KSA's response was to go further, layering in more guitars, more drums, and a theatrical flamboyance that turned jùjú concerts into full stage spectacles rather than sit-down performances. The template is visible today in live shows of Afrobeats heavyweights: Burna Boy, Wizkid, Adekunle Gold, and Asake, who has adopted it.

For generations of music lovers, KSA's catalog is less a collection of songs and more a soundtrack to life's most defining milestones. From high-society weddings and chieftaincy conferments to family gatherings, his music provided the emotional and celebratory backdrop for millions.

For older listeners, his music evokes particular moments in their lives. For younger musicians, it represents a library of ideas to study, reinterpret and sample. For cultural historians, it is part of the recorded history of Yoruba popular music.

One admirer, @Gods Son, recalled listening to music icon's records as a child in his village and described him as a true legend. "KSA is the man I grew up listening to in my village as a child... these are the people I call true legends," he wrote

Another fan called him a legend "not just in juju music but in music generally," while others celebrated his longevity and contribution to Nigerian music. His career provides one of the clearest examples of a local musical identity travelling internationally without losing its roots.

For today's producers, his recordings demonstrate how rhythm, percussion, guitar interplay, backing vocals and extended musical arrangements can create movement without depending on the production formulas that dominate contemporary pop.

Analysing the factors that have made the legend remain relevant, Christian Onyenji Elum, CEO of 9iza Records, a label based in Igando, Lagos, pointed to his reinvention. He noted that KSA has "repeatedly embraced new sounds and production approaches without abandoning the musical foundation that defined him.

"His career was built not only on records but on live musicianship and an ability to turn performances into communal experiences. His stagecraft helped make juju accessible as spectacle as well as sound.

"The third is cultural confidence. He did not have to discard his language (Yoruba), rhythms or traditions to gain international recognition. Instead, those elements became part of his international appeal. And fourth is catalogue depth. Six decades have given him a body of work that continues to provide material for listeners, musicians and producers," 9iza added.

Speaking on the impact of his music,Sola Olumuyiwa, said: "King Sunny Ade is my best artiste. His music is impactful. He's still agile at 80. He's a role model I look up to in many ways."

Martins Eje said: "He has stayed relevant for decades, he's a living legend, an icon and master in the music industry. Many musicians that came after him are no more because they faded with time. His music educates and very nostalgic."

On what young artistes can learn from him, he said: "Consistency is his hallmark and young artistes can learn that; the voice is still retained and maintained but young artistes now are more of vulgar and explicit. I wish him a long life and continue to reap the fruits of his labour."

There are two juju musicians that have stayed relevant since they started their career, they are King Sunny Ade and Chief Ebenezer Obey. We can't do without his music while I was young, no party without King Sunny Ade or his song. I lived in Ebute Metta, I knew him when I was young, I knew his manager then.

"I don't think we have any other artiste that can meet up the standard set by King Sunny Ade and Ebenezer Obey."

Young artistes have a lot to learn from him; King Sunny Ade grow stronger in instrumental. They don't just have expensive cameras or go into studios to produce beats, they work. I don't think the new musician can operate on his level or embrace his standard. Sunny Ade can play guitar with his eyes closed.

TEETH 4 TEETH ... With Justin Akpovi-Esade

Like Charly Boy, Like 'Charly Girl'?

THE Nigeria social media space was shaken to its marrows last week when controversial artiste, Charles Oputa, aka Charly Boy, celebrated his daughter on her engagement to her female partner.

For a society like Nigeria where same sex relationships of any kind is not only a taboo but a criminal offence, even though some engage in it, secretly, it came as a shock to many, but considering that it involved a Charly Boy, "anything can happen" as was his slogan of his now rested 'Charly Boy Show'. It is, however, important to note that Charly Boy's daughter lives outside the shores of Nigeria.

The reactions were mixed. Some did not, however, express any surprise, 'sebi na Charly Boy na, lion dey born goat?' Others saw CB as a disappointment and a 'failed father'.

In reaction, the controversial artiste wrote: "How you wan tell 50-year-old woman how to live her life? At that age, she don already live enough life to know herself," he wrote.

He said that as a father, he can advise and express his opinion, but does not have the right to control another adult's life.

Charly Boy revealed that his daughter has five children and a great-grandson, adding that she will always remain his daughter regardless of the choices she makes. He also revealed she was previously in a marriage where she "see pepper" and later entered another relationship after leaving it. "I no fit choose her happiness for her. My own father couldn't stop me from becoming Charly Boy, the man I wanted to become. So who am I to stand in front of my daughter and try to control the life she has chosen for herself? At the end of the day, na love remain. Make everybody live their truth and find their own happiness," he added.

Well, T4T is of the opinion that CB has a point. A 50-year old child is no longer a child in the real sense. He or she can take full responsibilities for their actions and inaction. So, for his daughter, she can decide to be 'Charly Girl' at 50. *Lion nor dey born goat, truly*.

Zazzu At It Again!

ANOTHER controversial Nigerian singer, Habeeb Okikiola, popularly known as Portable or Zazzu, has demanded DNA tests for his two children with actress, Akinyanju Omobolarinde, popularly known as Ashabi Simple, before taking responsibility for their upkeep.

The duo had been at each other's jugular for over a year now in what has been a troubled affair and every time, the internet was entertained by both parties with sordid, unprintable details of their private life.

So, it did not come to T4T as a surprise that Zazzu is demanding a DNA test for the two children they had together when the affair was rosy. But something also tells T4T that Zazzu may be trying to dodge responsibility and what other smart way to do that than to stall the process of child support knowing well enough that a DNA demand really riles some Nigerian women up.

Ask Wunmi, the acclaimed wife of late singer, Mohbad. This is three years now that she has been dodging a DNA on a son she claimed she had for the singer who died in a controversial circumstances in 2023. Any time Wunmi hear D, even when the NA has not been said, fiam, she will run into her room, bring out her ring lights and record a video crying that they want to kill her beloved son and probably her, and take the 'billions' in property and cash his 'husband' left behind.

DNA to some women in Nigeria is like COVID-19 or rather, a death sentence. Zazzu may have realized this fact and may be trying to use it to create another Wunmi and Mohbad's father stalemate.

Sharp guy.

Soludo And His Babalawo Ambassador

ANAMBRA State Governor, Prof Charles Soludo, granted a convicted traditional native doctor Chidozie Nwangwu (Akwa-Okuko) state pardon and made him an Ambassador for the youths.

As Akwa Okuko was breathing the air of freedom, another Anambra Babalawo was being sent to prison for 11 years for the same offence of preparing supposed get rich money ritual charms for desperate young men in the state.

Now, what T4T is trying to understand is the Ambassadorial award Governor Soludo dashed Akwa Okuko. When T4T saw the video of his 'welcome back' to his home where his shrine was located, it was obvious that the young man will not stop doing what sent him to prison in the first place, maybe in a hush hush scale now unlike the annoying loud advertorials online he was running his former operation, promising wealth like he is some god of money sent from a mysterious world.

Well, maybe Soludo would be closely monitoring the Babalawo going forward and before he leaves office, he should extend the same courtesy to the other Babalawos serving time in the state, and also make them Ambassadors. What is good for Akwa Okuko is also good for other Anambra Babalawos.

Beyond The Title:

What Alim Abubakre's CIPD Fellowship Represents

By Suliyat Tella

DR Alim Abubakre's Academic Fellowship of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development adds a new distinction to a career focused on connecting scholarship with practical leadership. At a time when organisations are confronting rapid technological change, geopolitical uncertainty and complex decisions, the ability to keep learning has become an important part of leadership.

For Dr Alim Abubakre, that principle has now received formal recognition with his award of Academic Fellowship of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). The fellowship, awarded following assessment against the CIPD's Academic membership criteria, allows Abubakre to use the designation Academic FCIPD.

But beyond the designation itself, the recognition provides an opportunity to examine the work behind it, particularly Abubakre's efforts to connect academic research with executive education, organisational practice and the development of leaders. His work sits across several spaces. He is an academic, executive educator and practitioner whose interests include leadership, international business, institutional development and the challenges confronting organisations operating in complex environments. That intersection between knowledge and practice is central to understanding the significance of the fellowship.

More than an academic title

ACADEMIC fellowships can represent different things depending on the institution and criteria involved. In this case, the CIPD describes Academic Fellowship as recognition of the contribution academics make through teaching, research, thought leadership and the development of future leaders. Victoria Winkler, Chartered FCIPD, Standards & Professional Development Director at the CIPD, described the fellowship as a recognition of "expertise, credibility, and authority", particularly in advancing the people profession through academic work and leadership development.

For Abubakre, the significance therefore extends beyond adding another designation after his name. His own interpretation of the recognition is revealing. "Recognition should increase responsibility, not simply status," he said. That distinction is important because it reflects a central theme running through his work: knowledge has limited value if it cannot be applied.

Where research meets practice

THE relationship between academic research and the real-world decisions made by organisations has long presented a challenge. Research can identify patterns and provide evidence that may not be immediately visible through experience alone. But research that remains within academic circles may have limited practical influence. Conversely, decisions based entirely on experience can reproduce assumptions that have never been properly tested. Abubakre's work has sought to operate between these two spaces. Rt Hon Graham Stuart, MP for Beverley and Holderness, who co-delivered a series of leadership sessions with Abubakre, pointed specifically to his ability to translate academic research into practical learning for political and corporate leaders. "Converting the insights of the latest academic research into inspiring, practical and effective courses for political and corporate leaders sets Dr Abubakre apart," Stuart said. That observation goes to the heart of executive education. The objective is not just to give experienced professionals more information, it is to help them reconsider assumptions, interpret new evidence and make better decisions in situations where there may be no straightforward answer.

The practical value of education therefore depends partly on whether leaders can carry what they learn into the situations in which they exercise authority. It is this movement from knowledge to judgment that has become a recurring theme in Abubakre's work.

Research shaped by complex problems

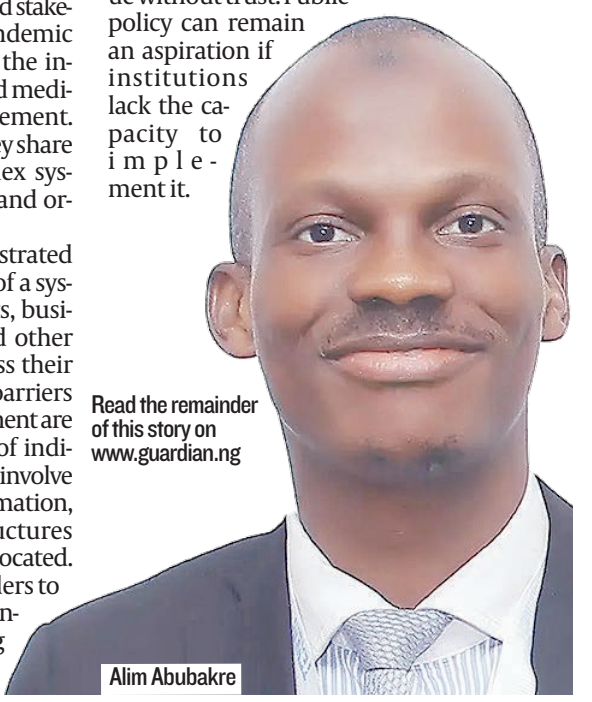
THE academic dimension of his work also reflects an interest in problems that do not exist in isolation. His research has examined stakeholder collaboration during the pandemic across Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the interconnected barriers facing small and medium-sized enterprises in public procurement. Although the subjects are different, they share an underlying concern: how complex systems can work better for the people and organisations that depend on them.

The pandemic, for example, demonstrated how quickly a disruption in one part of a system could affect others. Governments, businesses, employees, communities and other stakeholders could not always address their challenges independently. Similarly, barriers to SME participation in public procurement are not necessarily limited to the ability of individual businesses to compete. They can involve institutional processes, access to information, relationships, capacity and the structures through which public resources are allocated. These kinds of challenges require leaders to look beyond individual decisions and understand the systems surrounding them. That systems perspective is relevant to organisations operating in an environment where economic, technological and geopolitical issues are becoming more closely connected.

Leadership in an age of uncertainty

THE context in which leaders now operate has also changed. Artificial intelligence is accelerating the speed at which information can be produced and decisions can be made. Geopolitical tensions can affect investment, trade and supply chains. Organisations must respond to technological opportunities while considering questions of governance, accountability and trust. The result is a leadership environment in which technical knowledge alone may not be sufficient. The supplied material makes this point through a series of tensions. Strategy requires people to execute it. Technology can create new capabilities while introducing new risks. Capital can generate growth but may struggle to create durable value without trust. Public policy can remain an aspiration if institutions lack the capacity to implement it.

Read the remainder of this story on www.guardian.ng



Alim Abubakre

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY
IN THE ABUJA JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT NYANYA-ABUJA
MOTION No. FCT/HC/M/4986/2026

BEFORE HIS LORDSHIP: HON. JUSTICE BABANGIDA HASSAN

BETWEEN

1. POLLEEN CORPORATION
2. IVY HUNG

AND

1. SAHARA TOOLING LIMITED
2. C.N. GLOBAL LIMITED
3. PC POLLEEN LIMITED
4. CHIEDU NWOSU
5. MAY IFEANYICHUKWU NWOSU

CLAIMANTS/APPLICANTS

DEFENDANTS

COURT ORDER

Upon this Motion Exparte dated and filed on the 2nd April, 2026 and its accompanying affidavit and having listened to A.M. Lukman Esq of Counsel to the claimants/applicants Esq praying the court for the following:

1. AN ORDER OF THIS HONOURABLE COURT granting leave to the Claimants/Applicants to serve the originating processes (Writ of Summons, Statement of Claim and all other accompanying processes) in this suit on the Defendants/Respondents by substituted means, to wit: by advertisement/publication in the Federal Gazette and/or in two (2) national newspapers circulating within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court (one of which include Lagos and Delta States)
2. AND FOR SUCH FURTHER ORDER(S) as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make in the circumstances.

AND IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

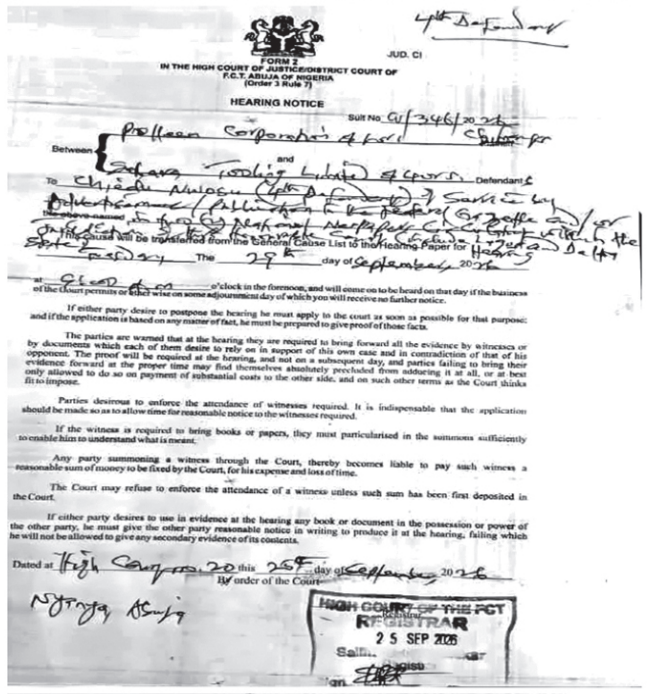
1. That the application is granted as prayed.
2. That leave is hereby granted to the Claimants/Applicants to serve the originating processes (Writ of Summons, Statement of Claim and all other accompanying processes) in this suit on the Defendants/Respondents by substituted means, to wit: by advertisement/publication in the Federal Gazette and/or in two (2) national newspapers circulating within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court (include Lagos and Delta States)

The matter is adjourned to 19th day of May, 2026 for hearing

ISSUED AT ABUJA under the seal of the Court and hand of the presiding Judge this 23rd day of April, 2026

HON JUSTICE B. HASSAN
(Presiding Judge)
23/4/2026

Salihu Idris Abubakar
(Court Registrar)



FORM 2
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE/DISTRICT COURT OF F.C.T. ABUJA OF NIGERIA
(Order 3 Rule 7)

HEARING NOTICE

Suit No CV/3466/2026

Between: Polleen Corporation & Ors. — Claimants
and
To: Sahara Tooling Limited & Ors. — Defendants

This cause will be transferred from the General Cause List to the Hearing Paper for Hearing

Tuesday The 29th day of September 2026

at 9:00 A.M. o'clock in the forenoon, and will come on to be heard on that day if the business of the Court permits or other wise on some adjournment day of which you will receive no further notice.

If either party desire to postpone the hearing he must apply to the court as soon as possible for that purpose; and if the application is based on any matter of fact, he must be prepared to give proof of those facts.

The parties are warned that at the hearing they are required to bring forward all the evidence by witnesses or by documents which each of them desire to rely on in support of this own case and in contradiction of that of his opponent. The proof will be required at the hearing, and not on a subsequent day, and parties failing to bring their evidence forward at the proper time may find themselves absolutely precluded from adducing it at all, or at best only allowed to do so on payment of substantial costs to the other side, and on such other terms as the Court thinks fit to impose.

Parties desirous to enforce the attendance of witnesses required. It is indispensable that the application should be made so as to allow time for reasonable notice to the witnesses required.

If the witness is required to bring books or papers, they must particularised in the summons sufficiently to enable him to understand what is meant.

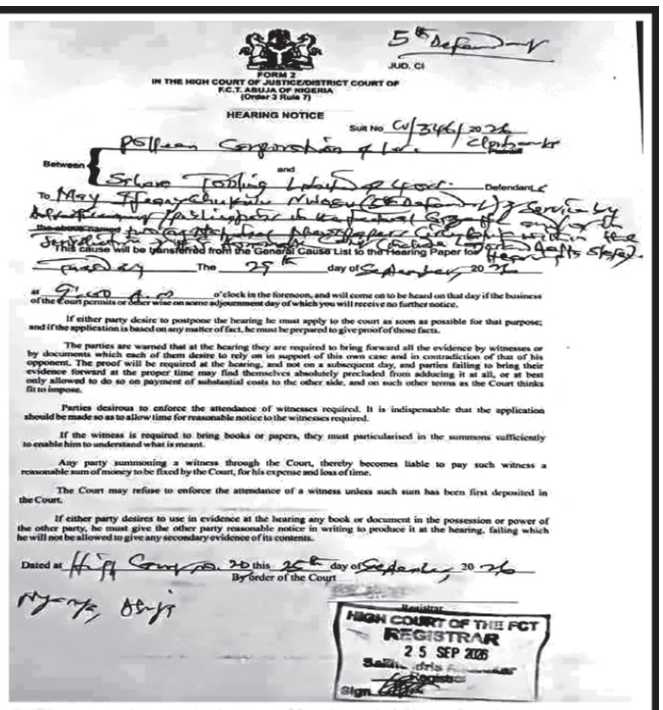
Any party summoning a witness through the Court, thereby becomes liable to pay such witness a reasonable sum of money to be fixed by the Court, for his expense and loss of time.

The Court may refuse to enforce the attendance of a witness unless such sum has been first deposited in the Court.

If either party desires to use in evidence at the hearing any book or document in the possession or power of the other party, he must give the other party reasonable notice in writing to produce it at the hearing, failing which he will not be allowed to give any secondary evidence of its contents.

Dated at High Court no. 20 this 25th day of September 2026
By order of the Court

HIGH COURT OF THE FCT REGISTRAR 25 SEP 2026



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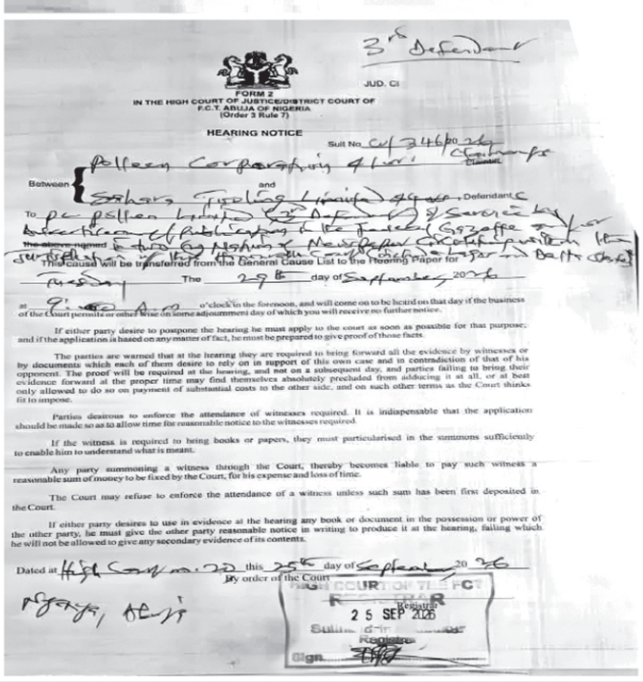
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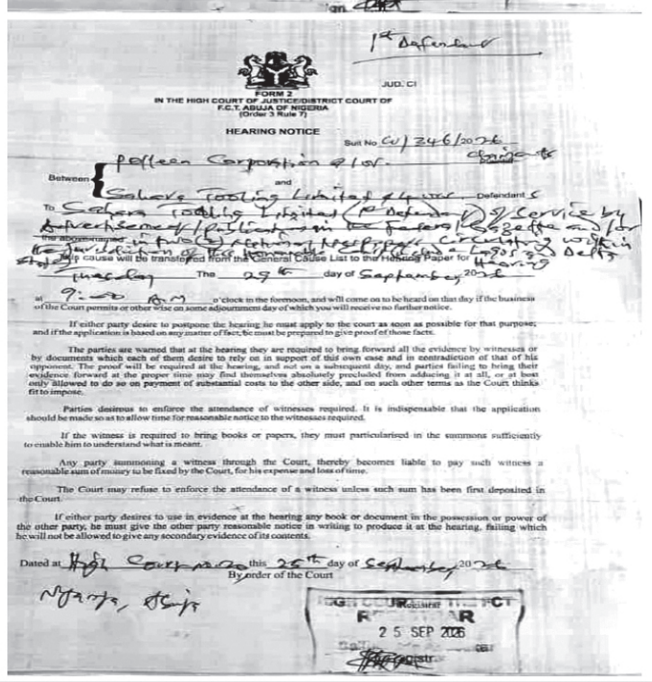
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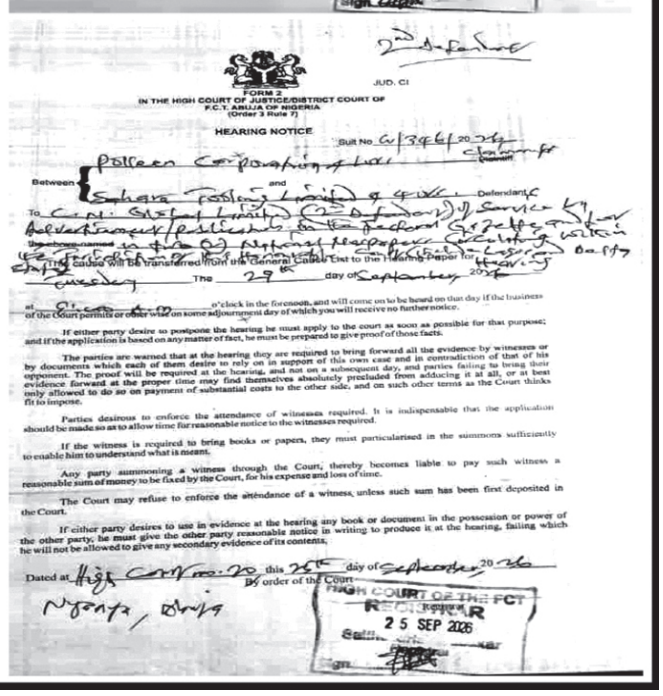
Any party summoning a witness through the Court, thereby becomes liable to pay such witness a reasonable sum of money to be fixed by the Court, for his expense and loss of time.

The Court may refuse to enforce the attendance of a witness unless such sum has been first deposited in the Court.

If either party desires to use in evidence at the hearing any book or document in the possession or power of the other party, he must give the other party reasonable notice in writing to produce it at the hearing, failing which he will not be allowed to give any secondary evidence of its contents.

Dated at High Court no. 20 this 25th day of September 2026
By order of the Court

HIGH COURT OF THE FCT REGISTRAR 25 SEP 2026



FORM 2
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE/DISTRICT COURT OF F.C.T. ABUJA OF NIGERIA
(Order 3 Rule 7)

HEARING NOTICE

Suit No CV/3466/2026

Between: Polleen Corporation & Ors. — Claimants
and
To: Sahara Tooling Limited & Ors. — Defendants

This cause will be transferred from the General Cause List to the Hearing Paper for Hearing

Tuesday The 29th day of September 2026

at 9:00 A.M. o'clock in the forenoon, and will come on to be heard on that day if the business of the Court permits or other wise on some adjournment day of which you will receive no further notice.

If either party desire to postpone the hearing he must apply to the court as soon as possible for that purpose; and if the application is based on any matter of fact, he must be prepared to give proof of those facts.

The parties are warned that at the hearing they are required to bring forward all the evidence by witnesses or by documents which each of them desire to rely on in support of this own case and in contradiction of that of his opponent. The proof will be required at the hearing, and not on a subsequent day, and parties failing to bring their evidence forward at the proper time may find themselves absolutely precluded from adducing it at all, or at best only allowed to do so on payment of substantial costs to the other side, and on such other terms as the Court thinks fit to impose.

Parties desirous to enforce the attendance of witnesses required. It is indispensable that the application should be made so as to allow time for reasonable notice to the witnesses required.

If the witness is required to bring books or papers, they must particularised in the summons sufficiently to enable him to understand what is meant.

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Dated at High Court no. 20 this 25th day of September 2026
By order of the Court

HIGH COURT OF THE FCT REGISTRAR 25 SEP 2026

Birthdays

LAWAL, Dr Olakunle Muhammed - Dharaen Alamu, will be 62 on October 1, 2026. Born in Lagos, he grew up in Surulere, also in Lagos.

He attended Elizabeth Fowler Memorial Primary School, Mercy Eneli, Surulere Lagos. For his Secondary School education, he attended Gaskiya College Ijora, Lagos. He did his A Levels at Igbobi College, Yaba, Lagos.

He obtained BSc degree in Physiology at the University of Ibadan before proceeding to the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital for his Medical Degree, which he obtained in 1992. He had a brief stint at the General Hospital, Lagos.

He started his Post Graduate Career at King George Hospital, London. Then, Queens Hospital, llford , London. He Rose to become a Registrar in Emergency Medicine at the University College Hospital London.

He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians; a Member of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow; and holds Post Graduate degrees in Acute and Emergency Medicine.

This highly-precocious and diligent Medical Consultant had also worked in various medical facility in Saudi Arabia for five years. He is presently a Consultant in Acute and Emergency Medicine; and a Stroke Lead. He is also an Honorary Senior Lecturer in Anglia Ruskin University Medical School, London.

He is a prodigious and versatile Medical practitioner. Married with beautiful children.



Lawal



Ihimekpen

IHIMEKPEN, Mr. Godwin, Medical Laboratory Scientist, is 77.

Born on September 22, 1949 in Ekpoma in present day Edo State, he had his early education across the North and Southern part of the country.

He acquired best–of-breed technical proficiency training and experience in professional service, teaching and administration in his career. He commenced his professional training at the Federal School of Medical laboratory Technology, Lagos in May 1967 and completed Associateship Diploma Programme (AIBMS) of the Institute of Biomedical Sciences in Chemical Pathology at the Courtauld Institute of Biochemistry, Middlesex Hospital Medical School, London, England from 1972 to June 1974.

He earned a Fellowship of the Institute (FIBMS) by passing a Special examination in Chemical Pathology in 1976. Mr. Ihimekpen attended a course for Teachers of Biomedical Sciences at the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, London in 1980. He was also at the University of Ibadan where he earned an MSc in Chemical Pathology in 1986.

He is a Fellow of the Medical laboratory Science Council of Nigeria (MLSCN) and the West African Postgraduate College of Medical Laboratory Science (WAPCMLS). He is also a member of the Association of Clinical Chemists, the African Society for Blood Transfusion and the African Society of Laboratory Medicine.

Ihimekpen joined the services of the Federal Ministry of Health at the Federal School of Medical Laboratory Technology, Lagos, in 1977 on his return from England to help nurture younger entrants into the profession.

He was actively involved in the early plans and actual movement of the School to its present location in Jos, in 1978. He became a Chief Medical Laboratory Technologist at 37 in 1986 and the Principal of the School in 1989.

In 1996 he was posted to Lagos as the focal person for Medical laboratory issues in the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) Headquarters, where he acquired further extensive administrative experience for over a decade.

He served on many national health initiatives and committees concerned with several health issues in his long career in the Federal Ministry of Health, among others.

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

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

Events



Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Megastar Media Communications/Executive Producer, Megastar Man of the Decade Award, Dr. Adeniyi Ifetayo and Her Majesty, Olori Atuwatse iii, Queen Consort of Warri kingdom during the presentation of letter of invitation to serve as Royal Mother of the Day at the Award ceremony in October in Abuja.



Convener, Ankara Festival Africa, Los Angeles, Peter Efezokhae(left); Convener, Ankara Festival Africa, Lagos, Laura Udoh and Co-convener, Ankara Festival Africa, Lagos, Isi Atagamen during a press conference organised ahead of the inaugural edition of Ankara Festival Africa in Lagos and holding next year.

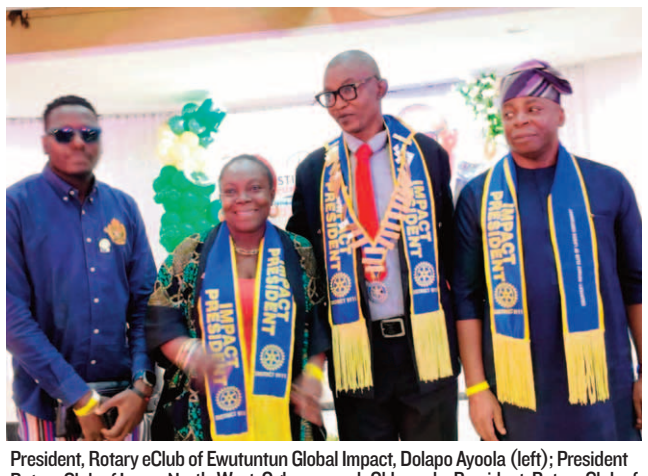
PHOTO: AYODELE ADENIRAN



Past District Governor, Jide Akeredolu of RC Ogudu (left) and Past District Governor, Ifeyinwa Rita Ejezie of RC Ikoyi Metro (right) decorating the newly installed president of Rotary Club of Ikoyi Metro, Emeka Nwosu while his sons watch in Lagos.



A cross section of management staff and participants at the three-day Train-the-Trainer Workshop on Medical Application Safety, organised by the Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (NNRA), held from September 21–23, 2026 in Abuja



President, Rotary eClub of Ewutuntun Global Impact, Dolapo Ayoola (left); President Rotary Club of Lagos North-West, Oghenemaroh Okhumale; President, Rotary Club of Okota, Ibrahim Sogunle; and President, Rotary Club of Ago Palace Way, Obah Chigbo Franklin, during the 40th anniversary and Investiture of Sogunle held at Zion Events Centre, Okota, Lagos.



Immediate Past President of the Nigerian Baptist Convention (NBC), Dr. Israel Akanji (left); President, NBC, Dr. Olusola Idowu and his wife, Folashade, during his induction as the president of the NBC at the Baptist International Convention Centre (BICC),Lufuwape, Lagos/Ibadan Expressway, Ogun State.

Maximise Your Newly-acquired Skills, Resist Temptation Of Selling Off Start-up Equipment, Fatima Aliyu Advises Women

WIFE of the Sokoto State Governor, Dr. Hajiya Fatima Ahmed Aliyu, has charged 300 women beneficiaries of a state-sponsored vocational training scheme to maximise their newly acquired skills and resist the temptation of selling off their start-up equipment and capital grants.

She made the call, on Saturday, while presiding over the graduation ceremony, presentation of certificates, and empowerment distribution in Sokoto. The beneficiaries completed intensive training across six high-demand artisanal trades: tailoring, knitting, weaving, henna artistry, beadwork, and shoe/bag manufacturing, with 50 women trained per trade.

Highlighting the administration's substantial financial commitment toward economic self-reliance and women-led micro-enterprises, she revealed that over N150m was invested in the empowerment initiative.

"The idea is to enable you to start up your business without any delay. The state government has expended over N150m on this programme, therefore you must live up to expectations," she said.

To ensure immediate operational readiness, the empowerment package was tailored to the specific needs of each trade: Tailoring & Knitting: Start-up machinery alongside a N20,000 cash grant for equipment installation and logistics;Shoe & Bag Manufacturing: N100,000 start-up capital grant per participant; Bead Making, Henna Artistry & Weaving: N50,000 take-off cash grant per participant.

The governor's wife noted that human capital development and youth empowerment remain central to the leadership of Governor Ahmed Aliyu. She emphasised that the state's socio-economic strategy focuses on poverty alleviation, curbing unemployment, and driving grassroots wealth creation across all 244 political wards of Sokoto State.



Dr. Fatima Aliyu with a cross section of the women at the event

She further contextualised the event within broader state and federal interventions. She highlighted cross-ministry collaborations across the Ministries of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Humanitarian Affairs, and Women and Children Affairs, as well as capital support provided under the Ahmadu-Cares scheme. Additionally, she acknowledged the impact of social welfare and food security interventions delivered through the Renewed Hope Initiative (RHI), spearheaded by the First Lady of Nigeria, Senator Oluremi Tinubu.

Commending the Governor's foresight in establishing the dedicated Ministry of Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development", she reiterated that the institutionalisation of trade training aligns directly with the administration's Nine-Point Smart Agenda. She urged well-meaning individuals and corporate organizations to complement government efforts through community-level mentorship and support.

The Commissioner for Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development, Hon. Abba Muhammad Mu'alledi, commended the beneficiaries for their exemplary discipline and commitment throughout the training period. He reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to delivering market-relevant vocational programs that align with local economy demands.

Guardian Fashion

STYLE ELEGANCE LIFESTYLE

Spot-on *Bubu Criss-Cross*

By **Maria Diamond**

AS innovation continues to define the world of fashion, there are certain styles that stay spot on through the seasonal evolution of designers' collections, *Bubu Criss-Cross* blouses and dresses in all its varieties is one of those.

With a *bubu criss-cross* dress or blouse, comes a designer's expertise in intersecting straps and overlapping fabric panels across the neckline and chest with a final finishing of nothing short of elegant perfection.

The place of elegance, poise, class and sophistication that a *Bubu Criss-Cross* blouse or dress will take you effortlessly, random styles would not fit in.

While there are a lot of criss-cross designs, the *bubu criss-cross* takes precedence in Nigeria due to its African essence of full regalia features.

Whether it is the fabric panels cross over the chest or wrap around the neck like a halter to highlight the collarbone and shoulders, the style comes out in full aesthetics that depicts class and elegance.

Perfect Fabrics For Making *Bubu Criss-Cross*

Organza – Plain or print organza has become designer's first choice when making bubu criss-cross styles due to its crisp texture, subtle sheen and ability to hold structured shape. Organza lightweight also adds volume to the style.

. Satin – Peculiar for its glossy smooth weave, satin in all its varieties including Duchess, Charmeuse, Crepe-back, Antique, Stretch, Double-Faced, Baronet etc also works perfectly for making bubu criss-cross as the weave places long floats while the soft drape creates a flexible fluid structure for a graceful fall flow.

. Net Lace – The lightweight and sheer open structure textile allows layering of the bubu criss-cross lines without excess bulk, thus allowing smooth flow of the regalia.









'The place of elegance, poise, class and sophistication that a Bubu Criss-Cross blouse or dress will take you effortlessly, random styles would not fit in.'

Staying Fit For The 30s Going On 100

By **Suliyat Tella**

THERE is no biological switch that flips on a person's body from age 30 that makes exercise more difficult, neither does crossing 30 suddenly make the body unfit.

Yet for many adults, their 30s are when physical activity begins to take a back seat. Exercise that once came naturally through school, sports or an active social life becomes something that has to be deliberately scheduled. Gradually, movement becomes less frequent while sedentary routines become normal.

Is Age A Barrier To Fitness?

Above thirty is not the point at which the body gives up. It may simply be the point at which maintaining it requires a little more intention.

The Director of Physiotherapy at the Lagos State Health Service Commission, Alfred Folorunsho, said, "age should not be treated as a barrier to fitness, with regular exercise, you can stay fit. Physical activity helps the body to maintain its function and prevent diseases."

While ageing comes with physical changes, being 30 and above does not mean a person is destined to become weaker, gain weight or lose their fitness. How a person lives also plays a significant role in how their body functions over time.

Above Thirty Is Not The Problem

While it is true that the body does change with age and those changes can affect different aspects of physical health, Folorunsho identified changes involving the muscles, metabolism, cardiovascular fitness and sleep among the changes that can occur as people move through adulthood. But these changes should not be confused with an automatic loss of fitness. In fact, the difference between two people of the same age can be considerable. One may remain active, exercise regularly and maintain good strength and mobility, while another may spend most of the day sitting and rarely engage in structured physical activity.

This is why the idea that someone simply becomes unfit because they have crossed 30 is misleading.

Physical Activities Is Key To Fitness

The National Institute on Aging notes that physical activity is beneficial at every stage of life and can help protect against age-related loss of muscle mass, strength and physical function. Regular activity is also associated with lower risks of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

Rather than viewing 30 as a deadline, it may be more useful to see it as a point at which maintaining physical health requires more conscious effort.

When Life Gets In The Way

For many adults, the biggest change after their 20s may not be their age but their routine.

A young adult who once walked to lectures, played sports with friends or spent hours moving around during the day can become an office worker who sits for eight hours, drives home through traffic and spends the evening on a phone or laptop.

The result can be a significant reduction in everyday movement without the person necessarily noticing it.

Fitness Recommendations

The World Health Organisation recommends that adults aged 18 to 64 get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity, with additional benefits from doing up to 300 minutes of moderate activity. It also recommends muscle-strengthening activities involving the major muscle groups on at least two days a week.

This does not mean everyone needs to spend hours in a gym. Walking, cycling, household activities, recreational sports and movement incorporated into everyday life can all contribute to physical activity.

WHO also stresses that some activity is better than none. For people whose jobs require them to sit for long periods, this becomes particularly important. The point is not just to burn calories. Regular movement helps the body continue doing the things it is designed to do.

Fitness Is More Than A Smaller Waist

In recent times, much of the popular conversation around fitness is centred on appearance. People talk about losing weight, reducing belly fat, fitting into smaller clothes or achieving a particular body shape. Those goals are valid, but they represent only a fraction of what physical fitness does.

Being physically capable also means being able to climb stairs without becoming excessively breathless, carry groceries, get up from a chair, walk reasonable distances and perform everyday tasks without unnecessary strain.

The National Institute on Aging says physical activity improves physical function and can make everyday activities easier, while helping people maintain independence. It also notes that exercise can help protect against age-related loss of muscle mass, strength and function. This becomes much more important with age.

Muscle Strength

Muscle strength does not exist merely to make the body look toned. It supports movement and everyday function. Strength training can help maintain existing strength, slow the loss of muscle mass and make activities such as climbing stairs and carrying groceries easier.

This is why staying active in your 30s is not necessarily about preparing for a beach holiday or fitting into a particular outfit. It is also about preserving physical capacity for the years ahead.

Start Small But Start

For someone who has spent most of their adult life being inactive, the prospect of suddenly meeting recommended exercise levels can be intimidating.

The answer, however, is not to do nothing because the target seems difficult. Folorunsho recommends starting gradually, particularly for people who have not exercised consistently. Walking for 10 to 15 minutes a day can provide a starting point, after which the duration and intensity can gradually increase.

This approach also reduces the temptation to overdo things at the beginning. Someone who has been inactive for several years may decide to compensate by immediately taking on intense workouts, only to develop severe muscle soreness or an injury and abandon exercise altogether.

The goal is therefore not to transform one's lifestyle overnight. It is to make movement sustainable.

For people who cannot afford a gym membership, that can mean brisk walking, climbing stairs, dancing, bodyweight exercises or other forms of activity that can be incorporated into everyday life.

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



Group Donates 20 Laptops To Improve Students' Digital Skills

By **Suliyat Tella**

AS part of efforts aimed at improving digital literacy at rural communities, the Luminarians have donated 20 laptops to a Roy-dek Academy, a school in Makoko, Lagos.

Speaking during the donation, Olubunmi Kushimo flanked by other members of the group, noted that the world is now going digital and it is very important that everyone has digital skills. "And that is why we are donating these laptops to the school through the support of other people. We will appreciate if you focus on learning the necessary skills with the laptops. I can tell you that every member of the Luminarians, our career requires laptop and that is what has been helping us. And I am so sure that the laptop that you have now is going to help you."

The school Principal, Iliya Polycarp, thanked the benefactors, recalling that they visited the school during summer, saw a need and promised to intervene. "They saw that we have four laptops for the entire 154 students of the school. And today we are proud owners of additional 20 laptops. We are sincerely grateful first to the people that supported them and deemed it fit to make the project a reality.

"To members of the Luminarians, we say a big thank you because you could have turned it to personal use but instead you donated them to the school. In the years ahead, most jobs are going to be computer based and this is putting us on the platform where we can help these children, their curiosity and prepare them for the future."

He promised that the school will make good use of the laptops aside ensuring they are in good shape.

Speaking on behalf of the students, Esther Ejiogu also thanked the group for supporting their school with the 20 laptops, noting the laptops will go a long way to improve the students in developing valuable digital skills.



Firm Backs 10th Calabar Entertainment Conference, Festival

By **Gbenga Salau**

HIT 95.9 FM, the leading radio station in Cross River State and organisers of the Calabar Entertainment Conference & Festival (CECF), has announced that MultiChoice Nigeria has renewed its partnership with CECF for the 10th consecutive year, marking a decade of sustained support for one of Nigeria's leading platforms for the creative and entertainment industries.

The Calabar Entertainment Conference & Festival has evolved into a major gathering for stakeholders across Nigeria's entertainment and creative industries, It morphed into a two day festival since 2024 and this year's edition will hold on Friday and Saturday 23 and 24, October 2026 respectively.

The Festival is the fun hub of the event, bringing together young people and audiences from all walks of life for an exciting celebration of live music, food, drinks, games and shared experiences. With a vibrant atmosphere and a wide range of engaging activities, the festival offers attendees an opportunity to connect, unwind and enjoy the very best of entertainment, culture and fun.

Speaking on the renewed partnership, the Executive Producer of the Calabar Entertainment Conference & Festival and CEO of Hit FM, Patrick Ugbe, described MultiChoice's decade-long support as a significant part of the festival's journey.

"Ten years of partnership is more than sponsorship; it represents shared belief, consistency and commitment to the growth of Nigeria's creative industry. MultiChoice has supported the Calabar Entertainment Conference & Festival from the beginning, and to have them renew their sponsorship for the tenth year is something we deeply value."

Lagos Hosts 2026 West Africa Sustainability Summit, Awards

By **Balikis Ademuyiwa**

THE West Africa Sustainability Summit & Awards (WASSA) 2026, the region's premier annual platform dedicated to advancing the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) agenda across West Africa and the broader African continent, will convene key stakeholders to advance dialogue, learning, networking and practical action on sustainability, scheduled to hold on October 2, 2026, in Lagos.

This year's summit, themed "Accelerating Africa's Green Transition: People, Planet & Prosperity," is organised by The Sustainable Report Africa Media Limited, a global news and ratings leader focused on sustainability, providing Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) research, ratings and analysis on organisations and institutions, including assessments of their environmental and social impact and their contribution to the continent's transition towards a more sustainable future.

This year's summit reflects the need to pursue climate and sustainability objectives without losing sight of human development and economic opportunity. The three pillars place social inclusion, environmental protection and broad-based prosperity at the centre of Africa's transition.

Discussions at WASSA 2026 will focus on six thematic pillars: ESG Integration and Corporate Accountability; Climate Finance and Green Investment; Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security; Youth, Gender and Inclusive Sustainability; Policy, Regulation and the Green Economy; and Technology, Innovation and the Digital Green Transition.

The event will explore issues ranging from sustainable business practices and climate financing to renewable energy, green investment, sustainable agriculture, carbon markets, biodiversity, digital technologies and inclusive economic development.

The summit will also place strong emphasis on the role of young people and women in Africa's green transition. With a large and youthful population, West Africa has an opportunity to turn its demographic strength into an engine for green entrepreneurship, innovation and job creation.

Another major highlight will be the West African Sustainability Awards, 2026, which will recognise organisations and individuals making measurable contributions to the environmental, social and governance landscape across West Africa and the wider continent.

The Awards will span Corporate Excellence, Leadership & Impact, and Innovation & Sector Awards, celebrating sustainability initiatives and leadership across different sectors, the awards process is designed to maintain credibility and transparency, with nominations evaluated by an independent panel drawn from academia, civil society, the private sector and international development organisations.

Foundation Celebrates New Generation Of Teachers

By **Gbenga Salau**

A TOTAL of 4,704 public secondary school teachers have completed the 16-week MTN SAIL Teachers' Fellowship Programme, aimed at strengthening their digital skills and equipping them with new approaches to teaching and learning. The teachers received training in digital literacy, innovative teaching methods, inquiry-based learning, and emerging technologies for use in the classroom.

The graduation comes as Nigeria steps up efforts to address persistent gaps in the quality of education, with teacher capacity emerging as a critical part of the response.

At the graduation ceremony, the Secretary to the Lagos State Government, Abimbola Salu-Hundeyin, underscored the importance of building teachers' capacity, urging the graduates to share the knowledge and skills they had gained with their students and fellow educators. "Your participation in this programme goes beyond personal development. It presents you with an opportunity to transfer the knowledge, digital skills, and contemporary teaching methods acquired to young children and fellow educators, thereby multiplying the impact of this initiative across our schools and communities," she said.



The call for teachers to extend the knowledge gained through the fellowship reflects the thinking behind the programme. Co-founder of SAIL Empowerment Foundation, Feyisola Abiru, said the fellowship was built on the recognition that teachers are central to improving educational outcomes. "When SAIL started the fellowship in 2023, we began with a simple observation: equip the teacher, and the possibilities are endless. Leave the teacher unsupported, and no amount of investment will transform education. The real achievement is what happens in the classroom, so take what you have learned, practise it, and use it to impact lives."

The emphasis on equipping teachers also forms part of MTN Foundation's approach to its social investment programmes. Speaking at the graduation ceremony, Executive Director Odunayo Sanya said the Foundation's investment in the fellowship reflects its focus on building sustainable impact through capacity development. "For us at MTN Foundation, our approach is centred on capacity building, health and empowerment. We believe in long-term investment because sustainable impact goes beyond individual projects. Through the Teachers' Fellowship, we are strengthening the quality of education across Nigeria.

We have invested over 200 million in the programme because we believe investing in teachers is an investment in the future."

World Cleanup Day: Clean Energy, Effective Waste Management Top Agenda

By **Gbenga Salau**

AS organisations across the globe observe World Cleanup Day, JMG Limited, a leading electro-mechanical company in Nigeria, has called for a broader approach to environmental conservation and waste management for a healthy and habitable society.

The company's position comes as this year's World Cleanup Day, marked annually, with the theme, "From Clean Plates to Clean Cities," draws attention to food waste, responsible consumption, circular economy and sustainable urban waste management.

For JMG, the message aligns directly with its sustainability approach, which combines community action with cleaner, more efficient energy solutions.

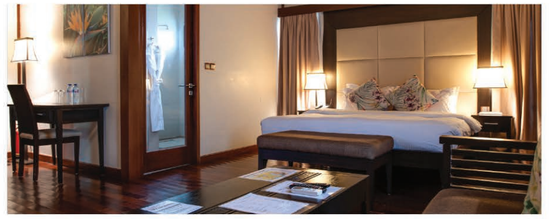
The company demonstrated the community side of this commitment last year when its leadership and employees joined residents in Gbagada, Lagos, for a clean-up exercise that focused on removing waste, encouraging proper waste separation and promoting shared responsibility for the environment.

But JMG's environmental responsibility doesn't end with physically removing waste. Through its renewable energy solutions, the company is also helping organisations adopt cleaner and more reliable alternatives to conventional power. One such intervention is its solar hybrid power installation at the Agboyi-Ketu Primary Health Care Centre in Lagos, providing reliable electricity for critical services including emergency care, maternity services, immunisation and diagnostics.











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'We Are Building A Framework To Make Uninterrupted Grid Power The Standard Across All Of Lagos'

TEMITOPE GEORGE is the Chief Executive Officer of Lagos State Electricity Regulatory Commission, LASERC. She is a qualified legal practitioner in Nigeria, a Barrister of Gray's Inn, England and Wales, an accredited mediator, and a recipient of the Lagos State Government Productivity Merit Award. As a seasoned Commonwealth Lawyer and Energy Executive with over 20 years of experience advising governments, multinational corporations, and development institutions on infrastructure, energy, and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects, George's expertise spans regulatory compliance, project finance, stakeholder management, and dispute resolution with a proven track record of leading high-impact projects, managing multi-million-dollar funds, and driving strategic initiatives in dynamic environments. She previously served as Head of Mini-Grids and Productive Use Components at the Rural Electrification Agency under the World Bank and African Development Bank–funded Nigeria Electrification Project, where she led and oversaw large-scale renewable energy investments. She also served as the Pioneer Head of the Legal and Risk Management Department at the Office of Public-Private Partnerships (OPPP), Lagos. In this interview with MARIA DIAMOND, she talks about her role in leading a change in electricity regulation, the challenges in facilitating sustainable electricity and the ultimate efforts put into enhancing power supply for all residents of Lagos State.



Temitope George

Since you assumed the role as CEO of Lagos State Electricity Regulatory Commission (LASERC) late last year, what have you done differently to improve electricity supply in the state?

SINCE assuming office, my immediate priority has been establishing complete operational clarity across the state's electricity landscape. We have instituted active monitoring of feeder performance to verify strict compliance with the Service-Based Tariff framework and consequences for non-performance. LASERC has also developed the Retail Electricity Supply Code (published for consultation at laserc.com.ng/consultation), which establishes clear rules for customer connections, metering, billing, tariffs, service standards, disconnections and consumer protection. It also introduces stronger mechanisms for consumer choice, guaranteed service standards, compensation for service failures and independent dispute resolution through an Electricity Ombudsman, laying the foundation for a more transparent, accountable and customer-focused electricity market in Lagos.

> *'Leadership in energy is increasingly defined by competence rather than gender. Walk into every space knowing you belong there. Command respect not by being the loudest voice, but through quiet confidence, thorough preparation, undeniable competence, and consistent character'*

Eko Power Energy replaced Eko DisCo, while IE Energy Lagos replaced Ikeja Electric in 2025 – what prompted the replacements of these subsidiaries?

The creation of these entities was prompted by Lagos State's readiness to take over regulatory oversight of its electricity market from NERC pursuant to the fifth alteration of the Constitution, and the Electricity Act 2023. Following the enactment of the Lagos State Electricity Law 2024 which established LASERC and the transition of regulatory responsibility to the State, the Electricity Act required the existing DisCos operating in Lagos, Eko DisCo and Ikeja Electric to incorporate State-specific subsidiary companies and transfer the relevant Lagos assets, liabilities, employees and contractual obligations to those subsidiaries. Hence Eko Power Energy was established under Eko DisCo and IE Energy Lagos under Ikeja Electric. The important point is that the parent DisCos were not abolished; rather, their Lagos operations were separated into State-specific SubCos to operate under LASERC's regulatory jurisdiction.

Although it's a nationwide agenda, kindly shed more light on the ideology behind the sectioned electricity bands and how it works in Lagos?

The service-based band system was designed nationally to establish a direct link between tariff rates and actual hours of supply delivered. It structures service into 4-hour decreasing tiers, ranging from Band A (minimum 20 hours daily) down to Band E (minimum 4 hours daily). While LASERC inherited this structure, we recognise significant inequities in its current execution. For instance, Band A consumers pay 209.50/kWh for a 20-hour minimum baseline, whereas Band B consumers pay between 61.00 and 64.07/kWh for 16 hours –a disproportionate price jump for a 4-hour difference. We are currently conducting rigorous empirical studies to design a Lagos-specific tariff methodology. Our ultimate objective is a transparent, equitable framework where consumers pay for reliable value delivered, driving us toward state-wide power sufficiency by 2030.

There's been a lot of talk on corporate energy supply restructuring under LASERC's directives – but consumers are still wallowing in electricity supply anguish. Is this what restructuring really is in LASERC's definition?

Restructuring is an intentional, phased transition from a centralised market with monopolies to a competitive decentralised market. We fully understand and validate the frustrations of Lagosians, both Band A customers paying high tariffs for interrupted service and lower-band customers facing systemic supply deficits. At LASERC, restructuring is defined by accountability and structural reform. It involves establishing firm legal frameworks to strip underperforming operators of exclusive rights, opening non-performing feeders to competitive suppliers, scaling embedded generation, and investments in distribution networks. True restructuring takes time and effort; the objective is clear: move away from the sector's historical structural deficits and build an electricity market that is more responsive to and accountable to consumers.

What are the parameters used in the classification of bands A, B, C, D, E, and how does this affect electricity billing and tariff rates?

The defining parameter for band classification is the guaranteed daily minimum duration of supply delivered to a specific feeder and the pricing for the same.

Band A: Minimum of 20 hours/day
Band B: Minimum of 16 hours/day
Band C: Minimum of 12 hours/day
Band D: Minimum of 8 hours/day
Band E: Minimum of 4 hours/day

Under the current pricing structure, higher supply attracts significantly higher per-unit costs. However, because actual delivery often deviates from these benchmarks, LASERC's ongoing tariff review is focused on aligning billing directly with verifiable service delivery and eliminating price disparities across tiers.

Despite regulations, Lagos State remains a major market for power generator set and petrol/diesel fuelling amongst others, as a source of alternative power supply. What is LASERC doing about this, and when will constant electricity become a way of life in Lagos?

Given the historical supply gaps across the value chain, consumers cannot be blamed for relying on self-generation to keep their homes and businesses running. Our objective is not to arbitrarily restrict generators, but to render them obsolete through grid reliability and alternative environmentally friendly power sources.

In several industrial and residential clusters across Lagos, targeted off-grid and embedded power solutions already deliver near 24-hour supply, effectively eliminating reliance on generators. By aggressively scaling embedded generation, expanding independent power projects (IPPs), and holding DisCos accountable to strict operational standards, we are building a framework to make uninterrupted grid power the standard across all of Lagos, our long-term strategy.

There are accusations that petrol stations and DisCo suppliers collaborate in low-brow areas to deliberately disrupt electricity supply to drive sales. What's your take on this?

LASERC maintains an absolute zero-tolerance policy for market manipulation, anti-consumer conduct, or unethical practices. The idea that electricity supply could be deliberately suppressed for commercial gain elsewhere is unacceptable.

We take such allegations seriously, but we would not conclude that there is a deliberate collaboration between petrol stations and DisCos without evidence. The regulator's responsibility is to investigate objectively, establish the facts and take appropriate action where a regulatory breach is established.

We encourage consumers and community structures to report suspicious supply patterns to the Commission. Any verified instance of collusion between distribution personnel and commercial fuel vendors will face severe regulatory sanctions, operational license review, and immediate criminal prosecution.

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

From Wardrobe To Marketplace, **Yemisi Fadahunsi** Is Giving Every Woman's Fashion A Second Life

By **Maria Diamond**

FOR EVERY WOMAN with the correct female gene 'XX', this comes as a familiar problem, a wardrobe filled with beautiful things she no longer wears. Some pieces had been bought for weddings, birthdays, holidays, career milestones and other special occasions. Others had been purchased for plans that never quite materialised, some barely worn; a few still have their tags attached, still, there is a constant humorous reality of buying clothes for the woman she hoped to become, for impromptu events she anticipates to attend in order to avoid being caught off guard – she needs to have every clothing appropriate for all functions, so long as she can afford it.

The reality however is, a lot of these women still gets to a crossroad of helplessness where they feel like they don't have any clothing at all when it's times to attend a new function, automatically condemning every beautiful clothing in the wardrobe to a stale state of unusable – going again with the need for something new.

This unfathomable women's reality, especially lovers of fashion, is why Oluyemisi Fadahunsi sees this idle clothing hanging in the wardrobe beyond a state of stale fashion. For her, "It is value. It is commerce. It is culture. And increasingly, it is also an opportunity to rethink how society consumes and disposes of the things it owns."

Value Sitting Idle

For Fadahunsi these were not simply unwanted clothes. They represented value sitting idle in the wardrobe. She realised there was immense value locked away in people's closets and there was a need to create an opportunity to connect that value with people who would genuinely love and wear those pieces sitting idle in the wardrobe.

This realisation is the reason behind Eko Fashion Loop (EFL), the curated preloved fashion platform founded by Fadahunsi to give quality fashion pieces a second life while encouraging Nigerians to think differently about ownership, consumption and value.

"This is a familiar problem with most women; even some men have become guilty of this. I see a lot of people around me with wardrobes filled with quality dresses, designer pieces, handbags, shoes and accessories they hardly used. At the same time, there were people actively looking for those very items but who might not have been able, or willing, to pay the full retail price for them."

The Insight

In Nigeria, many people still do not think of clothing and accessories as assets once they have served their immediate purpose. When they declutter, they may give items away, pass them to relatives or simply put them away and forget about them.

Fadahunsi believes there is another possibility. "We already understand this concept with cars, electronics, furniture, and even property. We comfortably buy and sell pre-owned assets because we recognise their value. Our question is: why should quality fashion be any different?"

At the heart of this is a simple concept: create a trusted marketplace where people can buy and resell quality fashion pieces, unlock value from their wardrobes and participate in a more circular way of consuming fashion.

This was the insight that eventually led Fadahunsi to the rebranding and expansion of Eko Fashion Loop. But for her, this is not merely another online marketplace. It is an attempt to change a mindset

Circular Fashion

According to Fadahunsi the philosophy of Eko Fashion Loop is that a beautiful dress should not necessarily have only one owner. A designer handbag does not lose its usefulness because its first owner has moved on. A quality pair of shoes, blazer or Nigerian-designed outfit can continue creating value when it moves into another wardrobe.



Oluyemisi Fadahunsi

This is the essence of circular fashion: keeping products in use for longer rather than constantly producing, purchasing and discarding new ones.

Beyond Environmental Sustainability

Beyond environmental sustainability, there is also access. "Nigeria has one of the world's youngest populations, and young Nigerians are more connected to global fashion than ever before. Social media, e-commerce and digital platforms have exposed consumers to brands and designers from around the world. The challenge in Nigeria however, is that awareness does not always translate into access," Fadahunsi stated.

She continued: "There are young people who know exactly what they want but may find certain brands too expensive or difficult to obtain.

Mariam Zakariyah: An Inspiration To The Girl-Child, A Reflection Of Professional Competence

By **Suliyat Tella**

FROM heading universities to managing academic institutions and shaping policies, women are increasingly taking on responsibilities that extend beyond the traditional classroom in Nigeria's education sector. Their contributions to the country's educational development continue to attract attention.

Mariam Adetoun Zakariyah is one of those women driving this excellent narrative. Her appointment as the 10th Bursar and first woman to occupy the position at the University of Ibadan (UI), Nigeria's premier university marks a significant milestone in the institution's 78-year history.

While women have made significant contributions to the country's education sector, their presence in top administrative positions continues to attract attention, particularly when appointments represent a departure from established institutional patterns.



Mariam Zakariyah

At the University of Ibadan, Zakariyah's emergence as the first female Bursar provides an example of a woman attaining a senior leadership position through years of professional service within the institution.

Zakariyah's appointment follows more than two decades of service in the university's financial administration, where she has risen through the ranks and gained experience across various departments.

In a congratulatory message signed by the Muslim Ummah of South-West Nigeria (MUSWEN)'s president, Alhaji Rasaki Oladejo, and the Executive Secretary, Professor Wole Abbas, describes her appointment as an inspiration for the girl-child and a reflection of the confidence placed in her professional competence and record of service.

As she takes on the responsibilities of the office, Zakariyah brings with her an extensive understanding of the university's financial operations and the demands of managing the resources of a complex academic institution.

Her journey at the University of Ibadan began on August 29, 2000, when she joined the Bursary Department as a Higher Executive Officer (Accounts) in the Loans and Advances Section.

Over the years, she worked across various sections of the university's financial administration, gaining experience in accounting, revenue management and institutional finance.

She subsequently served as a Finance Officer in several faculties, institutes and the Postgraduate College before becoming Chief Accountant in the Treasury Office. In 2019, she was appointed Deputy Bursar, a position she held until her elevation to the office of Bursar.

Her career progression reflects a professional journey that has largely taken place within the university she now serves as a principal officer. She worked her way through various positions in the Bursary Department, building an understanding of the university's financial systems and administrative processes over the years.

At the University of Ibadan, Zakariyah has been involved in several initiatives aimed at improving financial management. One of the initiatives associated with her work was the digitisation of the Receivable Unit through the introduction of an electronic receipt system. According to MUSWEN, the initiative reduced paper usage by about 80 per cent and helped address revenue leakages. She also participated in clearing financial statement backlogs covering the period from 2016 to 2019 and contributed to the institutionalisation of tax compliance procedures, which reportedly reduced regulatory queries. Through monitoring the Government Integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS), she helped facilitate the timely processing of staff salaries following the release of funds. She was also involved in the NELFUND refund process.

In addition, Zakariyah participated in the procurement process for the JOEL JEM 1400 Flash Transmission Electron Microscope for the university. The equipment was described in the congratulatory message as the only one of its kind in West Africa, while the procurement process reportedly saved the institution millions of naira.

Beyond her administrative responsibilities, Zakariyah has continued to develop her professional credentials. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), having become an associate member of the institute in 2002 and attaining fellowship in 2014. Her academic background includes a National Diploma and Higher National Diploma in Accountancy from The Polytechnic, Ibadan. She also holds a B.Sc. in Economics from Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, an MBA and an M.Sc. in Accounting from the University of Ibadan, as well as a Diploma in Information Technology from HiiT Plc, Ibadan. Her professional achievements began attracting recognition early in her career. In 1998, she was named the Overall Best Graduating Student in Accountancy at The Polytechnic, Ibadan. She also received the Best Graduating Female Accounting Student Award from the Society for Women Accountants of Nigeria (SWAN), alongside the Best Student Award from the National Association of Polytechnic Accountancy Students, The Polytechnic, Ibadan Chapter.

In 2020, she received the SWAN Award for Woman of Excellence.

However, the significance of the appointment will extend beyond its historical value. Her tenure will also be shaped by the financial and administrative demands of the university, including the need to strengthen accountability, improve revenue management and support the institution's broader operations.

Qillahboy: Another Rivers-born Talent Rising On Afrobeats Scene

By **Ann Godwin**

FOLLOWING in the footsteps of Rivers-born music stars such as Burna Boy and Duncan Mighty, a new generation of artistes is gradually finding its voice on Nigeria's vibrant music scene.

Among them is young Afrobeats singer and songwriter, Qillahboy, who is steadily building a name with his distinctive sound and storytelling.

Born Precious John Ogisi, but popularly known as Qillahboy, the rising artiste is carving a niche for himself with songs including *Hallelujah, Nobody, Superstar*, and *Everyday*.

For Qillahboy, however, music goes beyond entertainment. It is a reflection of life — its struggles, triumphs, celebrations and changing seasons. His music, he says, draws heavily from his personal experiences.

At the heart of his emerging musical identity is a simple but powerful symbol — the rose. To him, the flower represents the different emotions, experiences and phases that define the human journey.

From weddings and birthdays to marriage proposals and even burial ceremonies, Qillahboy believes the rose can take on different meanings depending on the moment.

"Just as the rose fits into different moments and emotions, my music is made to connect with different parts of life," he said.

He captures this philosophy in his signature phrase: "One Rose. Many Stories. Different Phases. One Qillahboy."

"I don't just want to make songs; I want to tell stories and create music for different phases of life," he said.

A Childhood Shaped By Music

Qillahboy's relationship with music began long before he entered the recording studio professionally.

As a child, his grandmother took him to Baptist Church conventions and music and dance gatherings across communities in Odual, his place of origin in Rivers State, as well as in Bayelsa State.

There, he encountered people singing, playing drums and dancing together — experiences that introduced him to the emotional power and communal spirit of music.

Those early encounters, he says, laid the foundation for his love of music and eventually influenced his decision to make it a career.

At six, he joined his local church choir, initially not as a singer but as a drummer. "I've always been surrounded by music. From a young age, I remember going with my grandmother to Baptist Church conventions in different communities of Odual, where I come from, and even in Bayelsa State, as well as music and dance gatherings where people would sing, play drums and dance together.

"At the age of six, I joined the church choir, not as a singer at first, but as a drummer. I played the drums in our local church and whenever we went for conventions. I still play the drums and keyboard in my church till today.

"That experience made me fall in love with music. Eventually, I started singing myself and realised that music was the best way for me to express my emotions, share my life experiences, and allow people to connect with both my struggles and happiest moments," he said.

That early exposure continues to influence his approach to music, which combines personal experiences with melodies intended to resonate with listeners across different stages of life.

Building the Qillahboy identity

Beyond his songs, Qillahboy is also building a community around his brand. His fans, whom he calls Qillahbeings, are central to his vision of creating music that goes beyond individual releases to foster a sense of belonging.

Looking ahead, the artiste hopes to establish himself as an African act with an audience beyond the continent.

"In the next five years, I see myself as an established African artiste with a strong global presence. I want my music to reach different parts of the world and connect with people from different cultures.

"I also see myself building a strong community of Qillahbeings, releasing meaningful projects, performing on bigger stages, collaborating with great artistes and creating opportunities for other young talents.

"Most importantly, I want Qillahboy to become more than just a name. I want the rose to represent a story of growth, resilience and the different phases of life. I want people to hear my music and feel like their own story is being told," he said.

New music, bigger plans

As part of efforts to deepen his connection with his growing audience, Qillahboy has released a new single, *Go Qillah*, on September 25 and plan is underway to follow up with an EP scheduled for release on October 30. The artiste will round off the release calendar with his Homecoming Concert on November 28.

For Qillahboy, however, the journey is bigger than the releases, performances and growing fan base. It is about using music to document his experiences while giving listeners a soundtrack for their own.

"I'm not just making music; I'm telling my story. And I promise to make my supporters, the Qillahbeings, proud. Always remember, it's Qillahboy when you see the rose," the artiste said.

'In the next five years, I see myself as an established African artiste with a strong global presence. I want my music to reach different parts of the world and connect with people from different cultures. I also see myself building a strong community of Qillahbeings, releasing meaningful projects, performing on bigger stages, collaborating with great artistes and creating opportunities for other young talents.'

'I'm not just making music; I'm telling my story. And I promise to make my supporters, the Qillahbeings, proud. Always remember, it's Qillahboy when you see the rose.'



Salawa Abeni: Jealousy, Spiritual Attacks Nearly Ended My Career

By **Daniel Anazia**

VETERAN singer, Salawa Abeni, popularly known as the 'Queen of Waka Music', a crown bestowed on her by the late Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Lamidi Olayiwola Adeyemi III, in 1992, has opened up about some of the difficult moments in her decade-long music career, claiming that jealousy and diabolical (spiritual) acts by senior colleagues who felt threatened by her early rise nearly brought her journey to an end.

Speaking on Channels Television's 'Rubbin' Minds' recently, the 65-year-old singer, who began her professional career in 1976 with the release of her debut album, *Late General Murtala Ramat Mohammed*, is widely recognised as one of the prominent voices in Nigerian waka music, said she faced challenges that went beyond the usual struggles associated with the entertainment industry.

According to Abeni, some people were uncomfortable with her success and allegedly worked against her career because of jealousy. She claimed that she experienced what she described as spiritual or diabolical attacks, which at some point threatened her ability to continue making music.

Recalling a childhood shaped by an early passion for music, the *Gentle Lady, Kadara, Mo Tun De*, among others, said she developed an interest in music performance at the age of nine, and often joined older musicians on stage whenever they invited her along. That early exposure, however, came with its own difficulties.

The renowned singer noted that rather than facing mere professional rivalry, she encountered sinister plots orchestrated to sabotage her health, voice, and livelihood. She recounted how, because of her small stature, she needed a stool just to reach the microphone whenever it was her turn to sing.

"So, they (the elderly ones) would sing before I got there. But when it was time for me, they would give me a stool to stand on so my mouth could reach the microphone. So when it was time for me to sing, my brother, my voice would go. I couldn't sing," she recalled.

Further Speaking, Abeni attributed the repeated physical breakdowns during the period not to ordinary stage fright, but to something more deliberate. "Sometimes, I would even vomit blood. But what could I do? It's a long journey. There are a lot of obstacles. You know, how do I say it in Yoruba… in English. Like, 'You, this small girl, who are your parents? Where do you come from?"

She rejected the suggestion that the incidents were mere superstition and insisted the attacks were both real and intentional. "In English, it is known as jealousy," the *Iba Omode Iba Agba, Iroyin Mecca, Ija O Dara*, and *Ikilo* crooner said, as she recounted an occasion when technical equipment allegedly prevented her voice from being heard during a performance.

"Diabolical is not superstition," Abeni said as she illustrated her point with two specific memories. "Let me take you back to one experience, at a venue another artiste/band was performing; we were made to wait backstage until they had finished performing. They were singing before I arrived, but my band was there too.

"So we decided to wait. I sat down, and we watched. When it was my turn to sing, the equipment linking the microphones —the amplifier— to bring out our voices and tone mysteriously failed, So nobody could hear me and listen to me."

In another instance, she recalled sitting close to a fellow performer before a show when rain suddenly began falling directly over the spot where she was due to sing, scattering the crowd that had gathered to watch her.

"Another time, we went together to play; when it was my turn, as you were sitting here and I was sitting here…as we sat beside each other, very close like this, rain suddenly started falling right where I was standing. People who wanted to watch me perform ran away. It is tough," Abeni stated.

Her latest revelation offers another glimpse into the personal battles behind a career that has survived for decades. For her, what could have been the end of her musical journey ultimately became another chapter in a career defined by resilience.



Pix: Salawa Abeni

The Rising Journey Of Olatunji Abosede Imoleayo

By **David Emokpae**

IN the world of music, not every remarkable voice begins in the spotlight. Some voices are first discovered behind the scenes, supporting other artistes, strengthening melodies, adding depth to performances and quietly helping to create the moments audiences remember.

For Olatunji Abosede Imoleayo, that journey from supporting others to establishing her own identity as a musician is a story of passion, persistence, versatility and an unwavering love for music.

Born on 11 July 1993 in Sagamu, Ogun State, Nigeria, Abosede Olatunji, popularly known by her other name Imoleayo, has steadily carved a place for herself within Nigeria's vibrant entertainment and live-performance landscape.

Her journey is a reminder that musical greatness is not always measured by how quickly an artiste becomes famous. Sometimes, it is built gradually, one rehearsal at a time, one performance after another, one song after another, and through years of learning how to understand music, audiences and the stage.



Imoleayo

For Abosede, "music is more than simply singing words to a melody. It is a means of expression, connection and communication."

A gifted vocalist understands that a song can communicate emotions that ordinary conversation sometimes cannot. A well-delivered note can evoke memories; a carefully controlled harmony can transform a performance; and the right vocal interpretation can turn an ordinary musical presentation into an unforgettable experience.

It is this understanding that has continued to shape Abosede's development as a musician. Her experience in live performances has exposed her to different audiences, musical arrangements, stages and performance environments. Rather than limiting herself to one setting, she has "embraced opportunities to sing at shows and events, developing the confidence and adaptability required of a modern performing artiste.

For Abosede, "this experience has been an important part of my musical education. Working alongside other musicians has allowed me to understand the discipline that comes with professional performance. It has also provided opportunities to observe different musical styles, learn how artistes interact with bands and audiences, and appreciate the importance of teamwork in producing a successful performance."

Behind the scenes, she has "learned that great music is rarely the achievement of one person alone. It is often the result of several talented individuals working together, listening to one another and understanding their individual roles."

Bigi Soundcity On Tour Ends On High Note

YABA College of Technology, Lagos, came alive recently as music, dance and youthful energy took over the campus, bringing the YABATECH edition of Soundcity OnTour to an electrifying close.

The three-day campus experience, which kicked off on September 15, brought together music, talent and entertainment, culminating in the much-anticipated final of the Bigi Music competition. With a 1 million cash prize and the opportunity to take their talent to an even bigger stage at stake, emerging artistes took to the stage to compete for the campus crown.

When the final performance ended, Oladapo Taiwo Opeyemi emerged winner, earning the top spot after a keenly contested competition.

Iheanacho Favour Emeka emerged first runner-up, while Anikene Victor Chidera finished as second runner-up, rounding off a competitive night that showcased the diverse sounds, personalities and performance styles of YABATECH's emerging talents.

But the Bigi Music Competition was only one part of the excitement.

The Fearless Dance Challenge added another burst of energy to the experience, as students took over the stage with impressive moves, creativity and self-expression. The performances, cheers and crowd reactions captured the free-spirited atmosphere that defined the YABATECH edition of Soundcity OnTour.

The energy continued into the concert, as Modola, Táríq, Syemca, Slimcase, Mr P and Kodee, alongside Duuwa and Rukmani, delivered performances that kept students singing, dancing and fully immersed in the moment.

For a campus already buzzing with excitement, the performances transformed the evening into a vibrant entertainment experience, bringing students together through music, dance and shared moments.

Beyond the lights, music and celebration, however, was a broader purpose: creating platforms where young Nigerians can express themselves, showcase their abilities and connect talent with opportunity.

Speaking on the activation, Ekuma Eze, Head of Corporate Affairs and Sustainability, Rite Foods Limited, said the Bigi and Fearless brands remained committed to creating meaningful platforms for young Nigerians to express their creativity.

"Young people are not waiting for culture to happen; they are creating it every day. Through the Bigi and Fearless brands, we want to meet them where that creativity is most visible and give them platforms where they can express themselves, discover their capabilities and connect with opportunities beyond the immediate moment," he said.

By **Maria Diamond**

WTD 2026: FG, Carnival Calabar X Nugi Technologies Driving Nigeria's Travel, Tourism, Hospitality Digitisation

IN a constantly evolving global sphere where digitisation is the architecture of fundamental innovations in all sectors even as Artificial Intelligence (AI) rapidly takes precedence, there is no wondering why the theme for the 2026 World Tourism Day (WTD), a yearly global commemoration on September 27 to raise global awareness on the social, political, economic and cultural impact of travel and hospitality, is 'Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence to Redesign Tourism'.

To ensure the travel and hospitality industry is on track, the 2026 WTD theme according to the United Nations (UN) Tourism, explores how AI can help create smarter, more inclusive and sustainable tourism by enhancing decision making, strengthening skills, and improving the way destinations are experienced and managed.

"Artificial intelligence is increasingly shaping how we travel, how we work and how we connect and AI can help build a more efficient and resilient tourism sector," Secretary-General of UN Tourism Shaikha Al Nuwais stated.

Nuwais also reiterated on a clearly global challenge of technology disconnect on bookings, payments and data. So for the 2026 WTD "We commit to connecting what's disconnected and to building a tourism sector where technology strengthens every livelihood – this is the future worth travelling towards."

For Antonio Guterres, the Secretary-General UN, WTD celebrates the many ways tourism connects cultures and enriches lives. "This year, it also asks what kind of future we want for tourism. The theme, "Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence to Redesign Tourism," reflects one of the defining transformations of our time.

"AI is changing how travellers choose destinations, how the industry operates, and how travel experiences are designed. It can strengthen small businesses, improve services and create new opportunities. Yet left unchecked, it can funnel tourists to the same few places and platforms, leaving many worthwhile destinations behind."

Guterres underscores the necessity for technology to serve humanity by building a digital future for tourism that is open, inclusive and human while harnessing these new tools to drive sustainable development for all. "Tourism workers, local communities and emerging destinations must help shape what comes next. This requires investing in digital skills, widening access to technology, and ensuring innovation benefits the people and places that make tourism possible."

Amidst the global commemoration of the 2026 WTD is the resounding question of where Nigeria's tourism stands on digitisation and AI?



Ugi Augustine Ugi

While the Federal Government is putting efforts into digitising tourism through national tech platforms, public-private partnerships and data driven coordination tools such as the National Tourism App and Database; NITOUREY platform launched by the Nigeria Tourism Development Authority (NTDA); "Ember to Remember" Digital Calendar launched by the Federal Ministry of Art, Culture, Tourism and Creative Economy in partnership with MyCityApp to map out festivals, concerts and cultural celebrations across Nigeria from September to December, Carnival Calabar which was officially ranked on the international tourism documentation and festival calendar listing as the 4th biggest carnival globally and the 1st in West Africa in 2019, stands out in it new digital evolution and redesigning of Africa's biggest street party in partnership with Nugi Technologies.

Responding to how Carnival Calabar is using digital agenda and artificial intelligence to redesign Nigeria's premiere tourism product, the President, Nugi Group, Ugi Augustine Ugi said: "the Carnival Commission, in partnership with Nugi Technologies, is introducing digital solutions that will make Carnival calabar, popularly known as Africa's biggest street party more accessible, participatory, transparent and connected to audiences across the globe.

"One of the key areas of this transformation is the digitisation of Carnival membership and voting. Through the digital membership platform, people can register and become part of their preferred Carnival bands in a more structured way.



Hannatu Musawa

"Technology is not meant to replace our culture; it is simply giving our culture through tourism a bigger stage"

"This is particularly important because we want the Carnival to be able to connect with people beyond Cross River State and Nigeria. Someone sitting in Lagos, London, Johannesburg, or anywhere in the world should be able to engage with Carnival Calabar and feel that they are part of the experience," Ugi said.

Carnival Calabar X Nugi Technologies On Global Participation Via Digital Ecosystem

Ugi reiterates that the digital voting platform is another important step. It provides an opportunity to make participation in Carnival voting more accessible and transparent, allowing people to participate digitally rather than limiting the experience to those physically present in Calabar.

"We also see the My crossriver App playing an important role in this broader digital ecosystem. My crossriver App is designed as a digital gateway connecting citizens and visitors to Cross River State and its services, information and experiences. Carnival Calabar is one of the experiences that is benefiting from that ecosystem."

My crossriver App: Linking The Carnival With Global Audiences

According to Ugi, the opportunity is to make the Carnival discoverable and accessible through a digital platform that people can already use to connect with Cross River State. From information about Carnival activities and events to participation, tourism and engagement opportunities, the My crossriver platform helps create a stronger digital connection between the State, the Carnival and its audiences. "But digital transformation goes beyond simply creating apps. The real value is in the information and insights that these platforms generate and how we use them responsibly to understand our audience better. This is where Artificial Intelligence becomes increasingly important."

How AI opens up opportunities around tourism, sponsorship, ticketing, merchandise, vendors others

AI will help analyse participation patterns, audience interests and engagement around the Carnival. It can help the carnival commission organisers understand where visitors are coming from, what experiences they are interested in and how people are responding to different aspects of the festival – Ugi stated.

"That information can support better planning and open up new opportunities around tourism, sponsorship, ticketing, merchandise, vendors and other areas of the Carnival economy. For example, if we understand the interests and behaviour of the Carnival Calabar audiences better, we can create more relevant experiences for them and also provide sponsors and businesses with better insights into the people they are trying to reach."

Carnival Calabar: Towards Data-Driven, Globally Accessible Cultural Ecosystem

Technology is not meant to replace what makes Carnival Calabar special, which is the 'culture'. Ugi emphasises that culture remains the heart of the Carnival. Technology is simply giving our culture through tourism a bigger stage.

"Our vision is to see Carnival Calabar evolve from an annual street celebration into a connected, data-driven and globally accessible cultural ecosystem; one that creates opportunities for participants, businesses, sponsors, tourists and the people of Cross River State.

"The digitisation of membership and voting, together with platforms such as My CrossRiver app, represents an important step in that direction.

Ultimately, we want to preserve the soul, colour and excitement of Carnival Calabar while using technology, data and artificial intelligence to take its reach and impact to an even wider global audience," Ugi stated.

FG's 100-Day Tourism Calendar

Designed as a centralised digital gateway to aggregate Nigeria's festivals, concerts, cultural events, and lifestyle experiences, the 100-Day Tourism Calendar: Unveiled during the Ember to Remember National Stakeholders' Conference in Lagos, powers a 100-day festive calendar running from September to December. It connects domestic travellers, the diaspora, and international visitors with events across all 36 states and the FCT.

The initiative, according to the Minister of Arts, Culture, Tourism, and the Creative Economy Hannatu Musawa is targeted towards harnessing the year-end festive surge to unlock a projected $100 billion tourism and creative economy by 2030.

This according to the Minister will aid high-grade tourism statistics and data integration to map out travel trends and industry performance. "Visitors generate economic value across aviation, transportation, hospitality, entertainment, retail, technology, artisanship and local communities. This initiative would organise, package, promote and monetise one of the country's most economically active periods."

There is no doubt that Nigeria's travel industry is increasingly seeking digital solutions to improve how visitors discover destinations, attractions and tourism experiences and to achieve this optimally, Musawa during the just concluded 2026 Akwaaba Africa Travel Market implores tourism stakeholders to leverage accurate data, technology and collaboration to unlock the economic potential of the industry.

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From The Rector

Ibru International Ecumenical Centre, Agbarha-Otor Delta State. www.ibrucentre.org

Appreciation Brings Appreciation: Thank You, Is The Currency (2)

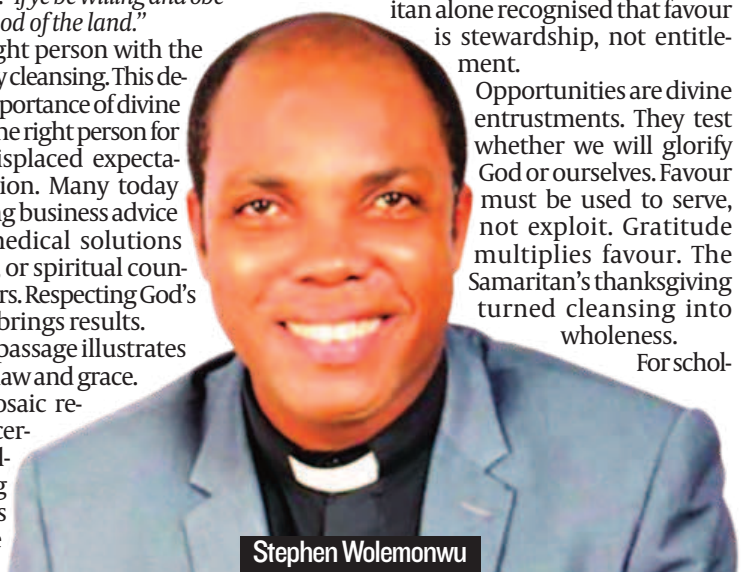
By **Stephen Wolemonwu**

Obedience Unlocks Miracles (Luke 17:14)

HEALING came as the lepers obeyed Jesus' command to show themselves to the priest. Obedience positioned them for miracles. Isaiah 1:19 declares: *"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."*

The priest was the right person with the right authority to certify cleansing. This detail underscores the importance of divine order. Not everyone is the right person for every assignment. Misplaced expectations lead to frustration. Many today confuse roles by seeking business advice from entertainers, medical solutions from spiritual houses, or spiritual counsel from secular mentors. Respecting God's order of assignments brings results.

For theologians, this passage illustrates the interplay between law and grace. Jesus honours the Mosaic requirement of priestly certification while simultaneously transcending it. He directs the lepers to the priest, yet He Himself is the ultimate High Priest who declares wholeness. Obedience to Christ's word bridges law and grace, ritual and reality.



Stephen Wolemonwu

Handling God's Favour (Luke 17:15–19)

The nine mishandled favour by forgetting the Source. They returned to families, priests, and businesses, but neglected gratitude. The Samaritan alone recognised that favour is stewardship, not entitlement.

Opportunities are divine entrustments. They test whether we will glorify God or ourselves. Favour must be used to serve, not exploit. Gratitude multiplies favour. The Samaritan's thanksgiving turned cleansing into wholeness.

For scholars, this passage raises questions of ethics and stewardship. How do believers handle divine favour in contexts of power, privilege, and opportunity? Do we treat favour as self-acquired, or do we return to the Source in gratitude?

The Samaritan's act of thanksgiving is both theological and ethical. It acknowledges God's sovereignty and models responsible stewardship.

How to Appreciate God and Life

Gratitude is not passive; it is active investment. It manifests in several ways:

- Say Thank You — Acknowledge the Source (Psalm 103:2). Gratitude is remembrance in action.
- Give Back — Sow into others (Luke 6:38). Appreciation is not just words; it is giving back.
- Show Loyalty — Commitment creates destiny (Ruth 1:16). Loyalty is appreciation expressed in covenant.
- Honour — Respect multiplies favour (1 Samuel 2:30). Honour is appreciation expressed in reverence.
- Sow Kindness — Every act of kindness is a deposit in heaven's bank (Proverbs 19:17).

For theologians, these practices embody a theology of reciprocity. Gratitude is not merely vertical (toward God) but also horizontal (toward others). It integrates doxology with ethics, worship with service.

Gratitude to Wholeness

Nine were cleansed; one was made whole. Jesus said: "Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." Gratitude plus faith equals total restoration.

Wholeness is more than physical healing. It is restoration of identity, dignity, and destiny. The Samaritan leper rose above his past, progressed forward, and entered fullness of life. Gratitude revealed his faith, and faith secured his wholeness.

For scholars, this distinction between cleansing and wholeness is crucial. Cleansing addresses the symptom; wholeness addresses the system. Cleansing removes impurity; wholeness restores humanity. Gratitude is the hinge that transforms healing into holistic restoration.

Conclusion

Gratitude is the divine economy for increase. Nine were cleansed, but one was made whole. Thanksgiving is not weakness but wealth. When you cultivate the culture of *"Thank You,"* your life appreciates.

• *The Ven. (Dr) Stephen Wolemonwu, Rector, The Ibru Ecumenical Centre, Agbarha-Otor stephenwolemonwu@gmail.com, 08035413812.*

Rescuing Your Loved One Who Is Blindly In Love

By **Charles Ighele**

IN my article in this column, I wrote about how I was blindly in love.

After about three days of my being sacked and consequent depression, my eyes became open to the fact that I was an idiot. The signals that this girl will never make a good wife were many but I ignored them.

Chai! It was much later that I realised if she had not sacked me, I would have ended up marrying her and would have been one of the miserable husbands on earth. I would not have also fulfilled my God-ordained destiny. I am still very grateful to God today that even while I was yet a sinner, He put insurmountable road blocks on my path without which I would have walked like a nama (cow) to the slaughter.

From my years of being a marriage and family counsellor, I have found out that the following are among the steps that people take to rescue their loved ones who are blindly in love.

• Some approach the matter like Samson's father and mother as can be seen in Judges 14:1516. All they could say as stated in Judges 14:3 was "Is there no other woman in the whole of Israel that you can pick to be a wife, apart from this pagan Philistine?" Samson, seeing that his parents were very soft on him took advantage of their softness and replied, "Get her for me; for she pleases me well"

• Another approach families use to rescue their loved ones who are blindly in love is to shout, scream and threaten that they will not attend the wedding. The way some blind lovers respond to this tactics is to abscond.

• A third approach some family members use is to go and threaten the lady or man their loved one is blindly in Iove with, with words such as, "leave my son alone" or "leave my daughter alone." A young man got angry with his mother and loved ones for going to harass his "innocent" girl. A woman whose son was blindly in love used this third approach some weeks ago in Ughelli, Delta State, Nigeria. She went to tell the girl her son was blindly in love with to leave her son alone.

A fight ensued and the mother of the girl was accidentally stabbed and she died. What then should be done to a blind, deaf and mad



Ighele

lover? Parents of such a person and loved ones should individually or collectively put such a serious matter into deep and constant prayer and fasting without tormenting the blind lover with quarrelsome words such as, "We are praying and fasting for you. You will never marry him/her."

Pray and fast secretly but once within respectable intervals, you sit the blind lover down and begin to paint the picture of how the marriage is likely to be and likely to end. Make the person know that you love him/her and you hate to see him/her in a marriage that will be filled with sorrow.

I pray that your children's marriages will bring joy to your life. Love you!

• ***Bishop Charles Ighele is the General Superintendent of Holy Spirit Mission, Lagos.***

'Why Life Of Purpose, Discipline, Excellence Should Be Embraced'

By **Chris Irekamba**

THE Venerable Joseph Adediji (FIELPN), has counselled the returning students of Igbobi College Yaba, Lagos to embrace a life of purpose, discipline, excellence and true greatness as they resume for the 2026/2027 academic session.

Adediji, who is the principal of the college, gave the admonition, while receiving the students for the new academic term.

In demonstration of his deep commitment to the welfare and success of every child entrusted to the College, the cleric, who clad in the school uniform, delivered a stirring message on the assembly ground, titled: "I Will Be Great," drawn from Genesis 12:1–3.

Explaining the importance of greatness, Adediji said that greatness is not measured by wealth, popularity, social status or worldly achievements.

According to him, true greatness begins with God, is sustained by obedience, and is ultimately expressed through service to humanity.

He called on the students to cultivate unwavering faith, discipline and obedience in their daily lives like Abraham whom God called and instructed that he should leave his comfort zone and journey into an unknown future.

He admonished them not to take their admission into the College for granted, stressing that their presence in the institution is neither accidental nor ordinary, but a privilege that carries responsibility.

Adediji said: "You have been brought here for a purpose. God has positioned you in Igbobi College to be trained, moulded and prepared for greatness. The question is whether you will embrace the discipline, hard work, character and obedience required to fulfil that destiny."

He urged the students to resist distractions, avoid negative influences and remain focused on their academic, moral and spiritual development.

The principal reminded them of the College's rich heritage and charged the students to see themselves as custodians of a legacy built by generations of distinguished Igbobians who have excelled in leadership, governance, scholarship and public service.

He told the students that notable figures such as former Vice President of Nigeria, Professor YemiOsinbajo; former Governor of Lagos State, Mr. BabatundeFashola; former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr. Femi Gbajabiamila, now Chief of Staff to the President and several other accomplished Nigerians whose lives continue to impact society, passed through the college.



College Chaplain, The Very Rev'd Philip Ilori (left); Vice Principal Academic, Ven Enoch Oyenuga; The Principal, Ven Joseph Adediji; Vice Principal Admin, The Rev'd Olajide Semako; School improvement Coordinator, Mrs Abimbola Onikoro; Bursar, Mr Olusegun Adeosun during the assembly.

God's Desire For All To Be Saved

Text: 1 Timothy 2:3–4 (KJV) *"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."*

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 08056889396



THERE is something precious about the heart of God toward humanity, and that is God's desire for all to be saved. Salvation is not God's desire for a selected few; it is His gracious invitation to every sinner, every broken heart, every wandering soul, every man and woman who will hear His voice and respond to His call. God does not delight in the destruction of the sinner, but His desire is that men should turn from their sins, receive His mercy, and live.

The Bible says in Ezekiel 33:11, *"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live."*

What a wonderful revelation of the heart of God! God is not looking for an opportunity to condemn you, but calling you to repentance. He is stretching forth His hand of mercy. He is giving you another opportunity to turn from sin and come back to Him.

From the beginning, God's plan has been to bring mankind into fellowship with His Maker. But sin separated man from God. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, sin entered the human family, and the relationship between God and man was broken. Since then, humanity has continued to struggle under the burden and consequences of sin.

The Scripture declares in Romans 3:23, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."*

Notice the word all. Nobody can claim that he does not need salvation. Wealth cannot save a man. Education cannot save a man. Position cannot save a man. Good family background cannot save a man. Religious activities cannot save a man. Human morality cannot remove the guilt of sin.

There is only one answer to the problem of sin, and that answer is Jesus Christ.

God loved humanity so much that He gave His only begotten **Son to die for sinners. John 3:16 says,** *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

This is the heart of the gospel. God loved the world. Not merely the righteous, but the sinner. Not merely those who were already serving Him, but those who were far away from Him. Christ came because humanity needed salvation.

Jesus did not come into this world merely to improve people's lives materially. He came to save us from sin. He did not come simply to give people prosperity, comfort, houses, cars, or earthly success. He came to rescue the soul from eternal destruction and reconcile man to God.

The angel said concerning Jesus in Matthew 1:21, *"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."*

The greatest problem of humanity is sin, and the greatest need of humanity is salvation.

Many people spend their lives pursuing things that cannot satisfy the soul. Some pursue money, while others pursue fame, pleasure, position, relationships, material possessions and worldly achievements. Yet after obtaining these things, they still discover an emptiness within.

The human soul was created for God, and nothing else can take God's place.

Jesus asked in Mark 8:36, *"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"*

What a question! A person may gain the whole world and still lose everything that matters eternally. You may have everything this world can offer and yet be spiritually bankrupt. You may have a beautiful house but an unprepared soul. You may have money in the bank but no assurance of eternal life. You may have many friends but still be separated from God.

The soul is more valuable than everything this world can give. That is why salvation must not be treated lightly.

The tragedy of our generation is that many people are postponing salvation and saying, "I will give my life to Christ later. I am still young. There is still time. I will repent when I am older." But nobody knows how much time he has.

The Bible says in Proverbs 27:1, *"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."*

Tomorrow is not promised to anybody. There are people who planned to repent but died before repentance. There are people who planned to surrender their lives to Christ but never got another opportunity. There are people who thought they had many years ahead of them, but their earthly journey ended suddenly.

Therefore, when God is calling you, do not harden your heart. 2 Corinthians 6:2 says, *"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."*

The word is now. If you are a sinner, now is the time to repent. If you have wandered away from God, now is the time to return. If you have been living a careless Christian life, now is the time to come back to the Lord. If you have never surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, now is the time.

The door of mercy is still open. Jesus gave Himself so that all may be saved. His blood was shed for the remission of sins. 1 John 1:7 declares, *"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."*

No matter how deep your sin may be, Christ is able to forgive you. No matter how far you have wandered, His grace can reach you. No matter how broken your life may have become, Jesus can restore you.

The prodigal son went into a far country and wasted his inheritance, but when he came to himself, he arose and went back to his father. His father did not reject him. He welcomed him.

This is the picture of God's mercy toward the repentant sinner. Jesus said in John 6:37, *"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."*

What a promise! If you come to Jesus sincerely, He will not reject you. You do not have to clean yourself up before coming to Him. Come as you are, but do not remain as you are. Come with repentance. Come with faith. Come with a broken and contrite heart.

Isaiah 55:7 says, *"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."*

The gospel is not merely an invitation to feel better; it is a call to become a new creature in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says, *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

The gospel is still God's power unto salvation. Jesus is still calling.

The words of Christ in Matthew 11:28 remain true: *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

Come to Jesus. Come with your burdens. Come with your failures. Come with your brokenness. Come with your past. Come with your tears. Come with your sins—but come in repentance and faith.

The Saviour is calling because He wants all to be saved. Do not let another opportunity pass you by. Do not wait until tomorrow. Do not allow pride, fear, pleasure, friends, possessions, or the cares of this world to keep you away from Christ.

The greatest decision you will ever make is the decision concerning your soul.

One day, this life will end. One day, you will stand before your Maker. On that day, the question will not be how much money you made, how famous you became, or how much property you acquired. The question will be whether you received Jesus Christ and lived for Him.

May our lives, our churches, our ministries, and our witness become instruments through which many souls will hear the gospel, repent of their sins, receive Jesus Christ, and be saved.

Testimony Of The Lord's Doing

First Timer Receives Salvation, Healing

BROTHER Miracle was full of joy as he mounted the testimony podium to give his testimony. Our brother who lives in Yaba, Lagos, said he was invited to The Lord's Chosen Charismatic Revival Ministries for the first time by his madam.

He said he regretted living his life in sin, smoking, drinking, dealing in illicit drugs and doing all manner of evil things.

Today, Brother Miracle is thanking God that after listening to the General Overseer's message, he had no other option than to give his life to Jesus Christ that very day.

Having received Jesus Christ into his life, our brother said he was ready for God's visitation. It so happened that as the General Overseer was praying, Brother Miracle said the man of God mentioned his case of seventeen years and thereafter urged those having problems in their legs to rise and walk. Immediately, our brother who had nursed an injury in his leg for seventeen years; suddenly stood up and began to walk normally. A feat he could not achieve before.

Before our brother received his healing, he was told to go to a place where he was charged N60,000 for him to be treated but here in The Lord's Chosen Charismatic Revival Ministries, our brother received his healing without spending money.

Appreciating God for what He has done, Brother Miracle prayed for the General Overseer, his family, and all Chosen members worldwide, heaven at last in Jesus' name.



Worshippers testifying after Pastor's prayer during the crusade organised by The Lord's Chosen Charismatic Revival Ministries at Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos ...recently.

Springs Of Wisdom

By Pastor W. F. Kumuyi



God Will Judge Sinners (2)

GOD is an impartial Judge and will judge "the dead, small and great...according to their works." He keeps record of everything everyone has done, including records of people that have ever lived from the creation of the earth until the time of the great white throne judgment. Those who died as sinners will be judged. "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." It will be the final reckoning day for unrepentant sinners, whether small or great.

The final day of reckoning will soon come when "the dead, small and great, [shall] stand before God... and [be] ...judged ... according to their works." God keeps the record of activity, character, action and behaviour of both the young and old. Young people who postpone their salvation until they are much older risk the wrath and judgment of God. Hence, the Scripture admonishes, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." God's judgment is for everyone–both small and great. But He will "give reward to the saints, and them that fear [His] name, small and great..."

There will also be a fearful retributive damnation for all unconverted souls, "small and great, [who will] stand before God [and be] judged." This should arouse concern in us for our children and youths. We should be interested in their salvation. Judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah in the Bible, came on the young and old, small and great. When the Antichrist shall come after the Church is raptured, he too, shall cause "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads." To escape the damnation that awaits both small and great, sinners must repent of their sins and receive the grace that exonerates from the imminent judgment.

Christ died so that everyone will escape the judgment of God. The foremost decision, therefore, of everyone, "both small and great", is to become unashamed of Christ and surrender to Him. The soul of everyone matters in the sight of God. Paul the apostle admonished Timothy and all believers to "Be not...ashamed of the testimony of our Lord... but be... partaker[s] of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God." If anyone is ashamed of the salvation of the Lord, judgment will come on them. The soul of the young is as precious as that of the old. The small and great will live forever either in heaven or hell. For this reason, we must not be "ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

The best part of God's plans for the end of time, is the glorious infinite joy He has reserved for saints in glory. Heaven is a place of infinite joy for all who will get there. Death will not function anymore, people who are in heaven will live forever in eternal bliss while those in hell will live forever in eternal pain and agony.

(i). The Eternal Satisfaction for Our Names in the Book of Life, Luke 10:20-24; Revelation 3:5; 21:1-7,27;19:7-9. There is eternal joy, happiness and excitement for those who have their names written in the Book of Life. How we need to tell recipients of miracles that the greatest miracle is for them to be saved and their names written in heaven! Those whose names are missing from the Book of Life will live in endless regret and suffering.

There is endless suffering in hell for "whosoever [will not be] found written in the book of life." People who practice religion, but do not have assurance that their names are written in the book of life should retrace their steps, make a decision and settle with the Lord to escape the eternal suffering that will come upon sinners and backsliders.

All whose names are written in the Book of Life will experience everlasting state of happiness and blessedness. Paul the apostle, having gone to the third heavens and seen angels, gave assurance to the brethren to "Rejoice in the Lord always" because they were not just servants of God, but people whose names were written in the Book of Life. As believers, irrespective of what we may be going through at the moment, we should always "Rejoice" because our names are written in the book of life.

• ***Further Reading (King James Version): Revelation 20:11-15; Revelation 20:12,13; 11:18; 19:18,21; Ecclesiastes 12:1,13,14; Revelation 20:12-15; Genesis 19:4,11,24; Jude 1:7;Revelation 13:16; 14:9-11; Acts 26:22,23,28,29; 2 Timothy 1:8,9; Romans 1:16; Mark 8:36-38; Revelation 20:14,15; Luke 10:20; Revelation 20:14,15; Exodus 32:31-33; Revelation 22:18,19; Luke 13:23-27; Philippians 4:3,4; Luke 6:22,23; 1 Peter 4:13-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:16,22-24.***

Biblical Womanhood

By Emeritus Prof. Mercy Olumide



Stop Talking And Listen (4)

God's methods of Communication (cont)

• **Voice of Jesus (in a Trance)**—*Acts 10:10, 13,15;11:5; 22:17; 22:18,21*

• **Jesus' voice (in visions)**—*Acts 9:10; 10:3, 9-20; 16:9; 18:9; 26:19; 2 Cor. 12:1-3.*

• **God's voice (in visions)**—*Gn. 15:1; Nm 12:6-8; Job 33: 14-18; 1s. 1,6; Dn. 2:19; 8:1*

• **Preachers, teachers and concerned friends through the Spirit**—*1 Sm. 20:4-42; Acts 21:4*

• **Prophecy and Prophets—All true OT Prophets,** *Heb 1:1; NT Prophets (Acts 21:9-10; Acts 21:10, 11; 1 Tm. 4:14;*

• **Verbally, God's voice–Gn** *12:1-4; 18; Ex. 7:8; 20:1-17; 31:18; Nm. 2:8; Dt. 4:33; 1 Sm 3:4-14; Mt. 3:13-17*

• **Inner conviction** —*Nm. 13:30; 1 Cor. 7:25, 40.*

• **People's thoughts or experiences, but they must be in harmony with God's Word, His nature and character**—*Gn. 45:5-7; 50:20.* God will never contradict His written Word.

• **Dreams**–*Gn. 28:10-15; 37:5-7, 9; 40:5; 41:7, 8; 1 Kgs. 3:5-15; Job 33:15-18; Is. 1:1; Dn. 2:1; 7:1,2; Mt. 1:20; 2:12,13; Num 12:6.*

• **Trials and suffering** — *Job 33:19-22*

• **Still small voice** — *1 Kgs 19:12, 13; 1s. 30:21*

• **Circumstances** — *1 Sm. 23:2; Dn. 9:13, 14*

• **Open and close doors, obstacles**–*Nm.22:22-35*

• **Angels** — *Gn. 32:22-32; Job 33:23, 24; Lk.1:13, 30; 2:10; Acts 8:26; 10:30; 11:13.*

• **Simple objects** — *Lv. 8:8.*

• **Pillar of cloud and fire** – *Ex. 13:21, 22; Ex 33:9, 11; Num 12:5-8,14.*

• **Fire** – *Ex. 3:2.*

• **Talking donkey**—*Nm. 22:21-35.*

• **Writing on the wall** — *Dn. 5:5-9*

• **Being swallowed by a fish** — *Jonah 2*

• **Whirlwind** — *Job 38:1*

God speaks through the Holy Scriptures

"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds" *(Heb 1:1,2)*

God used many approaches to send his messages to people in Old Testament times. He spoke to Isaiah in visions (Isaiah 6), to Jacob in a dream *(Genesis 28:10-22),* and to Abraham and Moses personally (Genesis 18; Exodus 31:18). Jewish people familiar with these stories would not have found it hard to believe that God was still revealing his will, but it was astonishing for them to think that God had revealed himself by speaking through his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the fulfillment and culmination of God's revelation through the centuries.

•***Email:ymolumide@gmail.com, Facebook: Yetunde Mercy Olumide***

RESTORATION HOUR

Text: 2 Corinthians 6: 1-2

Maximising God's Grace (8)

By Abel Ukachi Amadi



Key Verse: *2 Corinthians 6:2,"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (KJV)*

THE grace of the Almighty is one of the most profound gifts ever bestowed upon humanity. Grace is often defined as unmerited favour—receiving a blessing, we did not earn and could never deserve. But grace is more than just a passive safety net; it is a dynamic, empowering force designed to transform our lives, our character, and our destinies. The Apostle Paul, writing to the church in Corinth, delivers a stirring message about how we interact with this divine gift. In 2 Corinthians 6:1-2, he writes: "As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, 'In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.' I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation." Paul challenges us with a sobering reality: it is entirely possible to receive God's grace in vain. To receive it in vain means to let it go to waste, to treat it as cheap, or to leave it uncultivated. Today, God is calling us to move from merely receiving grace to maximising it.

Partnering with God as co-workers is the first key to maximising God's grace in our lives. Paul begins by identifying himself and the believers as "God's co-workers" in 2 Corinthians 6:1. Grace does not call us to spiritual laziness; it invites us into a divine partnership. When God saved us by grace, He did not intend for us to remain passive spectators in His kingdom. Grace provides the power, but we must provide the cooperation. We maximise grace when we offer our hands, our feet, our resources, and our time to the work of the ministry. Grace equips you with unique spiritual gifts, but those gifts must be deployed.

If you bury your talents, you are letting grace sit idle. To maximise grace, we must labour alongside the Holy Spirit, knowing that our efforts are energised by His divine strength.

We do not receive the grace of God in vain. To receive grace in vain means to accept the benefits of salvation without allowing it to change the way we live. It is the tragedy of a changed status without a changed life. Cheap grace says, "I am forgiven, so I can live however I want."

• ***Today's Nugget: God's favor is active right now. Prayer: Lord Help me to Maximise God's Grace. Prayer lines: 08033299824. E-mail: amadiabelukachi@gmail.com. Rev. (Dr) Abel UkachiAmadi, General Superintendent, Assemblies of God Nigeria.***

Martins Urges Christians To Build Strong Catholic Faith Within Families

By Sunday Akinlolu

THE Archbishop of the Metropolitan See of Lagos, Most Rev'd Alfred Martins has called on the Catholic faithful to build a strong Catholic faith within their families.

He made the call during the grand finale of Catholic Faith Family Project held recently in Lagos.

"It is what is going on in the family that reflects in the society, that is why we need to call the attention of the parents to the fact that it is their primary responsibility to take care and bring up their children," he said.

The Archbishop emphasised the importance of strengthening the Catholic faith within the family circle, adding that, the school could help, likewise the church but the family plays the major role in teaching children good values and helping them to grow in faith.

The initiative of the project, according to him, was designed to deepen the knowledge of the Catholic faith, while encouraging families to learn and practice the faith together.

In his welcome address, the Grand President, Brig. Gen. PaulinusNwankwo urged the parents to build their families on the study of sacred scripture and Catholic teachings.

He said: "It is fundamentally an evangelisation and faith-building initiative. Our objective is to encourage our families to study the Catholic faith, understand sacred scripture and church teachings, appreciate our traditions and become confident witness of Christ wherever the found themselves."

Nwankwo, who was happy to see regions being represented at the event by families, encouraged them to value Catechism as something to memorise for examinations or competitions.

He stressed that the knowledge they acquired should become a foundation for the way they live their lives, make decisions, relate with others and serve God.

More than 120 Catholic families participated in the 2026 Archbishop Alfred Adewale Martins Catholic Family Project Quiz, with four families making it to the grand finale.

The family from Lekki Region, Mr and Mrs Tobi Olalusi emerged the winner and received their grand prize of 2017 Toyota Corolla car.

While cash prizes and generators were given to other runner-up.

The couple expressed their joy/excitement and thanked the organisers, saying, "we are so happy. We thank God and the organisers and pray that God will honour them mightily in Jesus' name."



Archbishop of the Metropolitan See of Lagos, Most Rev'd Alfred Martins

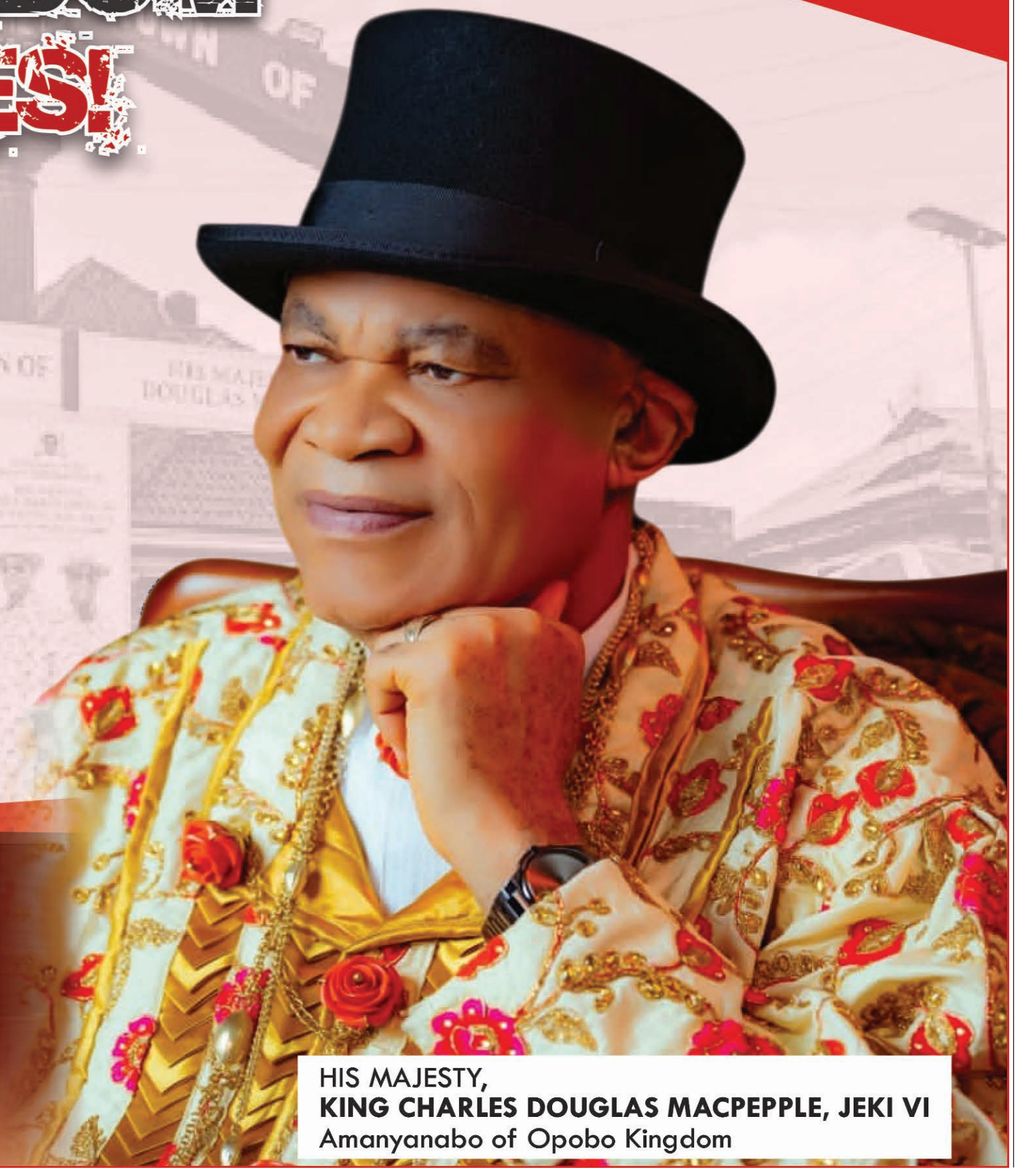
OPOBO KINGDOM CELEBRATES!

From September 18–27, 2026, Opobo Kingdom celebrates the coronation of His Majesty, King Charles Douglas MacPepple Jaja, Jeki VI, Amanyanabo of Opobo Kingdom. May his reign bring enduring peace, unity and prosperity.

Long live Jeki VI!
Long live Opobo Kingdom!!

Signed:

ALABO CHRIS FINEBONE
Chairman, Media & Publicity Committee,
Onbehalf of Alapu Council



HIS MAJESTY,
KING CHARLES DOUGLAS MACPEPPLE, JEKI VI
Amanyanabo of Opobo Kingdom

ROYAL CORONATION!



HIS MAJESTY, KING CHARLES DOUGLAS MACPEPPLE JAJA, JEKI VI,

AMANYANABO AND TREATY KING OF OPOBO KINGDOM

On behalf of the Government and good people of Rivers State, I extend my warmest and most profound congratulations to His Majesty, King Charles Douglas MacPepple Jaja, Jeki VI, on his historic coronation as the Amanyanabo and Treaty King of Opobo Kingdom today, Saturday, September 26, 2026.

Your Majesty's ascension to the revered throne of King Jaja — the great merchant prince, statesman, and founder of Opobo Kingdom — marks the beginning of a glorious sixth chapter in the annals of one of the most historic traditional institutions in the Niger Delta and Nigeria.

As you are formally crowned today in Opobo Town, at the climax of the ten-day coronation programme, I am confident that your reign will be marked by peace, unity, and sustainable development. I am assured that you will build on the enduring legacies of your illustrious predecessors to foster greater cohesion among Opobo people at home and in the diaspora, preserve our rich cultural heritage, and promote economic growth in Opobo Kingdom.

The Government of Rivers State pledges its full support and cooperation with your Majesty and the Opobo Council of Alapu as you lead your people into a new era of prosperity.

May your reign be long, peaceful, and blessed with divine wisdom.

Long live the King!
Long live Opobo Kingdom!
Long live Rivers State!

RIVERS STATE GOVERNMENT NIGERIA

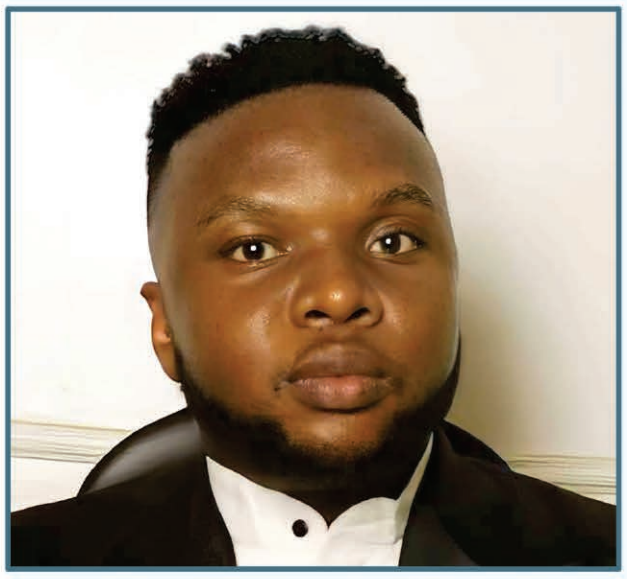
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Governor, Rivers State
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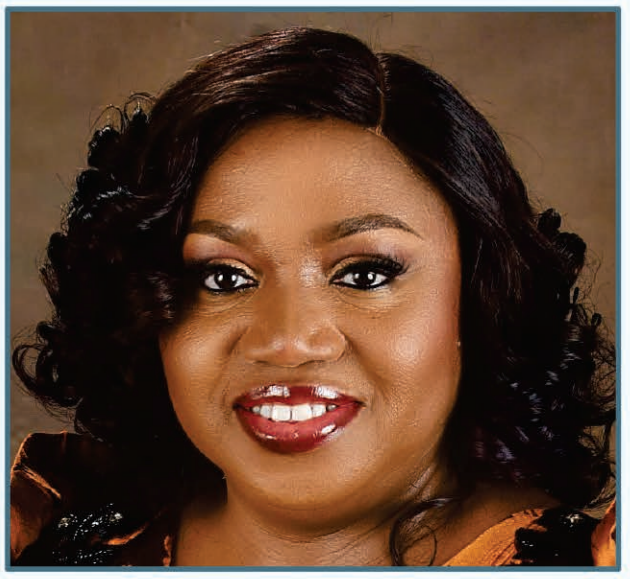
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WORLD TOURISM DAY 2026: CELEBRATING CHAMPIONS OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA'S TOURISM SECTOR



MR. YOMI TOYIN AKANBI
Executive Director, TBIL Travels



DR. EBIKABOERE SEIMODEI
General Manager, Ogeyi Place Hotel



MR. TREVOR WARD
Chief Executive Officer, W Hospitality Group

OGEYI PLACE HOTEL: Celebrating 25 Years of Authentic Nigerian Hospitality and Service Excellence

FOR 25 years, Ogeyi Place Hotel has been part of the hospitality story of Port Harcourt. More than a place to stay, the hotel has built its identity around authentic Nigerian warmth, personalised service and a deep understanding of the business and social community it serves. Speaking on the hotel's journey, Dr. Ebikaboere Seimodei, General Manager of Ogeyi Place Hotel, noted that while preserving the character that has made it a familiar name in the city, Ogeyi Place is entering a new chapter of transformation, combining its heritage with modern hospitality standards.

Redefining the Guest Experience in Modern Hospitality

In today's competitive hospitality landscape, providing accommodation is no longer just about offering a room or a meal. According to Dr. Seimodei, guest expectations have fundamentally evolved. Modern travelers seek immersive, memorable experiences grounded in reliability, safety, responsiveness, convenience, and flexibility. To address these needs, Ogeyi Place Hotel continuously adapts its operations while remaining deeply connected to Nigerian culture and the heritage of Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Germane to the hotel's success is a guest-centric culture where people take precedence over physical structures. While attractive facilities are essential, exceptional service relies on a dedicated workforce trained to prioritise the guest experience. Proudly Nigerian and proudly rooted in Port Harcourt, Ogeyi Place Hotel creates a synergy between global standards and local warmth. Whether serving international travelers or local residents who visit for breakfast, lunch, or dinner, the hotel guarantees consistent, high-value service.

Authentic Culinary Diversity and Cultural Pride

This dedication to genuine hospitality is prominently displayed in the hotel's culinary offerings. By balancing continental cuisine with rich Nigerian dishes, Ogeyi Place Hotel ensures that every guest enjoys a tailored dining experience. Alongside weekly theme nights featuring Chinese, Italian, Indian, and barbecue cuisine, traditional local staples remain available daily.

Guests can consistently savor authentic dishes such as garri and soup, jollof rice, plantain, beans, and potage. Celebrating Niger Delta heritage, regional specialties including fisherman's soup and native soup prepared with periwinkle are served daily. Both international and domestic guests value this seamless combination of local culinary traditions and international quality standards.

Uncompromising Standards and Continuous Modernisation

Operating a premier hotel in Nigeria presents distinct operational challenges, particularly rising energy costs. While energy constraints disrupt many businesses, Ogeyi Place Hotel maintains a strict policy of uninterrupted service. Utilising power generators, diesel reserves, UPS systems, and solar energy, the hotel provides 24-hour continuous power supply. Guests enjoy uninterrupted elevator operation and seamless comfort regardless of external cost pressures.

As a classic 25-year-old property, the hotel preserves its historical character while pursuing active modernisation. Uncompromising cleanliness remains the top operational priority across all guest rooms. Furthermore, its management is executing major renovations, including updated rooms, expanded meeting facilities, dedicated gaming and sports areas, a Sky Lounge, and a wellness spa. Rather than imitating competitors, Ogeyi Place Hotel continues to carve out a distinct, independent brand identity.

Human Capital Development and Community Impact

Dr. Seimodei highlights that long-term hospitality excellence relies fundamentally on human capital development. Overcoming earlier staffing transitions, the current management has built a cohesive workforce through continuous training. Supervisors and managers undertake four-month courses at hotel management schools, complemented by daily bite-sized training and monthly departmental learning.

This systematic investment in knowledge enhances staff skills, drives operational consistency, and promotes teamwork. Employee welfare is safeguarded through structured salaries, medical care, meal provisions, and transportation support.

Ogeyi Place Hotel also maintains strong community ties. Over 60% of the hotel's workforce is recruited locally from Rivers State. The hotel actively performs corporate social responsibility by supporting local orphanages, sponsoring hospitality industry events, and engaging with educational, government, and security institutions across Nigeria.

A Legacy of Recognition on World Tourism Day 2026

Earning recognition as a champion of service delivery on World Tourism Day 2026 is both an honor and a milestone for Ogeyi Place Hotel. For Dr. Seimodei, this recognition reflects collective teamwork, from hotel owners who trust professional leadership to employees who deliver authentic warmth daily.

Moving forward, Ogeyi Place Hotel remains dedicated to raising service standards through continuous improvement, hygienic dining, pristine accommodation, and genuine Nigerian hospitality. Every guest is welcomed as a valued tourist, departing Port Harcourt with memorable experiences and a lasting connection to Ogeyi Place Hote

BEYOND BRICKS AND MORTAR: How W Hospitality Group Is Shaping Nigeria's Tourism Landscape

TO celebrate World Tourism Day 2026, Mr Trevor Ward, Chief Executive Officer of W Hospitality Group, talks about the ongoing evolution, achievements, and future prospects of Nigeria's hospitality sector.

Recognised as one of the champions of service delivery in the nation's tourism industry, Mr Ward shares his expert insights on elevating guest experiences, driving sustainable growth, and navigating market complexities across Africa.

A Legacy of Excellence in Hospitality Advisory

W Hospitality Group has long been a pioneer of hotel development, investment advisory, and market intelligence across the African continent being founded on a professional philosophy that places equal weight on physical infrastructure and human excellence. Operating from its primary base in Lagos, Nigeria, since 2003, the specialist consultancy has extended its expertise to 40 of the 54 countries in Africa.

Over the past two decades, W Hospitality Group has been instrumental in the development and upgrading of over 70 existing hotels and resorts in Nigeria, alongside numerous projects currently planned or under construction. Central to this work has been the strategic introduction of international and regional African hotel chains to the country. Whilst independent hotels remain vital, the arrival of established brand networks has brought rigorous quality standards and comprehensive staff training schemes. This has generated a positive trickle-down effect throughout the broader sector, as hospitality professionals trained within international brand systems transition to elevate operational standards in domestic establishments.

The Evolution of Nigeria's Hotel Landscape

Mr Ward, reflecting on structural shifts within the sector over the past decade, highlights the dramatic expansion of branded hotel operations in Nigeria. When W Hospitality Group established its Lagos office in 2003, the commercial hub possessed merely three branded hotels, two of which have since lost their branding, alongside just two branded properties in Abuja. Today, the Nigerian hospitality market counts approximately 50 internationally-branded hotels, and there are some 60 hotels in local groups, many with home-grown brands.

Despite this impressive progress, Mr Ward stresses that physical growth, or bricks and mortar, must always be accompanied by enhanced quality standards and service delivery. A visually striking hotel that lacks beautiful service remains a fundamental failure. Moreover, market intelligence compiled by W Hospitality Group indicates that substantial growth potential remains to be captured.

In the 18th edition of W Hospitality Group's annual hotel pipeline report, published in April 2026, a record 53 hotel chains contributed authoritative data on future African hotel developments. The analysis reveals that Nigeria's hotel pipeline currently stands at approximately 8,500 rooms across 57 properties. To put this figure into context, Nigeria's total pipeline represents less than 20 per cent of Egypt's hotel pipeline. This stark comparison underlines an urgent requirement for additional quality hotel rooms across Nigeria, alongside the essential upgrading of existing properties seeking to maintain commercial competitiveness.

Unlocking Potential Through Strategic Governance

Mr Ward calls for closer collaboration between the public and private sectors to unlock Nigeria's full tourism potential. "While private investors drive hotel development, government authorities bear fundamental responsibility for delivering essential infrastructure, including reliable road networks, modernised airports, stable electricity, clean water supply, and guaranteed public safety," Mr. Wards explains.

Furthermore, Mr Ward cautions government against treating the hospitality and tourism industry as a short-term cash cow through the imposition of multiple taxes, licences, and administrative dues. Such heavy financial burdens endanger commercial viability, threatening to force business closures and forfeit vital socio-economic benefits, including job creation, urban renewal, skills development, gender equality in employment, and the broader geographical spread of economic prosperity.

Inspiring the Next Generation of Hospitality Leaders

Looking ahead, W Hospitality Group remains steadfast in its commitment to providing advisory services to investors, developers, and lenders across the region for as long as clients require their expertise. Mr Ward emphasises that true leadership in hospitality demands continuous learning and the unreserved sharing of practical knowledge with clients and colleagues.

For emerging hospitality entrepreneurs committed to service excellence, Mr Ward offers an encouraging perspective. Although managing hospitality operations requires immense hard work, the sector yields profound personal and financial rewards. Crucially, while rapid advancements in artificial intelligence continue to transform various economic sectors, AI cannot replace the authentic human experience that defines hospitality. With tourism expanding across Africa and Nigeria, the industry promises to remain a vibrant engine for job creation and career development.

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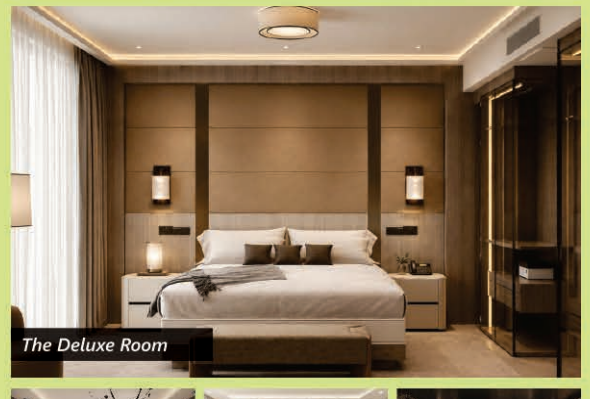
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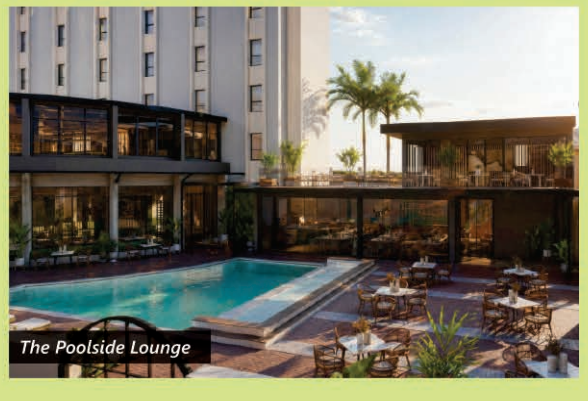
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WORLD TOURISM DAY 2026: CELEBRATING CHAMPIONS OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA'S TOURISM SECTOR

TBIL TRAVELS: BRIDGING THE WORLD THROUGH TRANSPARENCY, EMPATHY AND INNOVATION

A Journey Beyond the Journey

As we celebrate World Tourism Day, Tanbram Benchmark International Limited, popularly known as TBIL Travels, marks 11 years in the travel industry. The milestone offers an opportunity to reflect on the systems, people and technology shaping how Nigerians access opportunities beyond their borders.

Travel is often presented through its most visible moments — boarding a flight, arriving in a new country, or beginning a new chapter abroad. Behind every journey, however, is a complex process involving planning, documentation, visa applications and significant financial commitments. For those travelling to study, work, relocate or build businesses, the process carries considerable financial and emotional weight.

A Vision Born Out of Empathy

TBIL was established in response to the financial distress caused by unethical practices in the travel industry. Its leadership observed that many ordinary Nigerians were forced to liquidate savings, sell family land, cars or homes to fund relocation, with some losing lifetime assets to fraudulent operators without securing visas.

This highlighted a wider need for access, transparency and trust. TBIL built its operations around structured processes and accessible pathways to legitimate travel, guided by the principle that travelling abroad should not require people to surrender their financial security to uncertainty. Its broader objective is to make international travel accessible to everyday Nigerians, not just the wealthy.

Building Transparency into the Process

Trust is central to major travel decisions. TBIL addresses this through a segmented operational structure where different aspects of the client journey are handled by specialised teams. Profile assessment, document review, application processing, official submissions and financial transactions are managed through separate functions, creating multiple checkpoints for review.

Clients are given the opportunity to inspect their documents before submission. Where a profile is unsuitable for a particular pathway, TBIL communicates that assessment and discusses alternatives rather than encouraging an unsuitable application. This makes transparency both an operational principle and the foundation of the client relationship.

The company also operates as a certified limited liability entity and maintains CAC incorporation and EFCC regulatory documentation.

Support That Extends Beyond the Airport

Travel does not end when a visa is approved. For someone entering a new country, questions around immigration procedures, accommodation, local systems and employment can be significant.

TBIL therefore extends its services into pre-departure preparation and, for some destinations, post-arrival support. Clients receive briefings to prepare them for immigration procedures, including guidance on interactions at international ports of entry. For destinations such as Canada, its overseas representatives provide additional support around local orientation, accommodation and employment integration. Access to a destination is only one part of the journey; knowing how to navigate it matters too.

From Travel Services to a Broader Enterprise

While travel remains central, TBIL has expanded into connected areas, including domestic and international flight ticketing, property services, student application processing, digital marketing and e-commerce.

The company says this diversification supports a workforce of over 100 people, including about 40 customer service personnel, IT specialists, ticketing professionals and other operational staff. Through property-related activity, business travel and its wider service ecosystem, it participates in economic activity that extends beyond the immediate travel transaction.

Keeping Tourism Within Nigeria in View

International travel is only one part of the tourism story. Nigeria has a diverse collection of destinations and cultural experiences that contribute to its tourism economy.TBIL has sought to promote domestic travel by highlighting destinations such as Obudu in Cross River State, Ikogosi Warm Springs in Ekiti State — where natural hot and cold springs meet without mixing — and Erin-Ijesha Waterfalls in Osun State. Through its ticketing operations, it facilitates domestic travel for individuals, families and groups within Nigeria. The same systems that help people travel beyond Nigeria can also help them discover more of their own country.

Partnerships That Connect the Travel Ecosystem


YOMI TOYIN AKANBI
Director, TBIL TRAVELS

No travel company operates in isolation. Airlines, hotels, accommodation providers, educational institutions and technology providers form the network through which travellers access services.

Over its years in operation, TBIL has developed relationships across this ecosystem. These support access to flight options, accommodation and education pathways, while enabling organisations to contribute to a shared customer journey. The company also highlights partnerships that support airfare comparisons and admission processing for Nigerian students seeking education abroad.

Technology and the Next Chapter of Travel

Technology has fundamentally changed how people plan and experience travel. Flight searches, communication, payments and updates can now happen through mobile devices rather than requiring a physical office visit.

TBIL is incorporating technology through digital platforms intended to allow clients to manage aspects of their applications remotely while retaining access to assigned representatives. Its e-commerce infrastructure also extends reach to customers living abroad, including people in Canada who want to order products for delivery to different destinations.

For TBIL, technology represents the next stage of an evolution that began with traditional services and is increasingly moving towards digitally supported travel and commerce, combining technology with human guidance.

The Human Meaning of Travel

At its core, tourism is about people moving between places, but behind that movement are aspirations. A student travelling abroad represents educational ambition. A business traveller represents an opportunity to expand a company. A family travelling may be creating memories, while someone relocating may be beginning an entirely new chapter.

This is why reliability matters. When a travel arrangement fails, consequences extend beyond a missed booking to lost money, delayed plans and emotional strain. Accurate information, clear processes and responsive support therefore directly impact people's experiences.

Looking Ahead

Building on its Nigerian foundation, TBIL is developing plans to expand operations across Africa, Asia and other international markets. Its technology roadmap, broader service portfolio and emphasis on structured client support form part of its vision for the next phase of growth.

In celebration of World Tourism Day, TBIL has also introduced promotional packages for long-standing followers who aspire to travel but face financial constraints. These include 50% service-charge discounts for destinations including Canada, Schengen countries, Albania, New Zealand and Asian destinations such as Oman.

Reflecting on 11 Years Through the Lens of World Tourism Day

For TBIL Travels, 11 years represent more than a measure of time. They provide a platform for continuing to develop transparent processes, human-centred support and technology-driven solutions that help Nigerians pursue legitimate opportunities through travel.

Dilemma Of APC Governorship Ticket In Ogun

By **Seun Faleye**

THERE is an old truth that every student of politics eventually learns: a party that cannot manage its own household will struggle to convince the public it can manage a state. That is the uncomfortable lesson staring the All Progressives Congress in the face in Ogun State right now, as the battle between Senator Solomon Adeola, popularly called Yayi, and Hon. Abayomi Semako Hunye refuses to die down, even after the party's leadership insists the matter is settled.

On the surface, the story looks simple. Yayi, a senator with deep pockets and long-standing federal connections, emerged from the APC primary as the man to face the PDP's LadiAdebutu in 2027. The party has told INEC as much, submitting his name alongside his running mate, KudiratBalogun. Case closed, one would think. But politics, especially in Ogun State, is rarely that tidy.

Hunye has refused to accept that the matter is over. His grievance is not that he lost a straightforward contest fair and square. His argument, and it is one that deserves to be taken seriously rather than dismissed as sour grapes, is that the process itself was compromised before it even began. He says he was allowed to purchase a nomination form worth fifty million naira, cleared for screening, and made to believe he was a genuine contestant, only to later discover that some party leaders had already agreed among themselves that Yayi would be the sole candidate. If that account holds up, then the primary was not a contest at all. It was theatre, with Hunye cast as an extra paying real money for a role that was never meant to be genuine.

This is where the case for Hunye becomes difficult to brush aside. A political party cannot collect fifty million naira from a man, put him through the motions of screening, and then turn around and treat his continued interest in the race as an act of rebellion. If leaders truly excluded him from strategy meetings simply because he refused to step down, that is not party discipline. That is the silencing of a legitimate voice for the comfort of the powerful. Hunye's decision to go to court, rather than to the streets, also strengthens his position in the eyes of ordinary Nigerians who are tired of politicians who threaten violence when they do not get their way. He has said, repeatedly, that his fight is about due process, not about parading himself as an alternative candidate, and that distinction matters.

Yayi's camp, for its part, will argue that primaries are messy by nature, that not every aspirant who buys a form is guaranteed a fair shake, and that the party's internal machinery, however imperfect, ultimately produced a winner recognised by the leadership and submitted to INEC. There is some weight to this. Parties are not courts of law, and consensus-building, however uncomfortable for those left out, is a recognised part of Nigerian political culture. Yayi did not design the process; he simply benefited from it.

Here, however, the national leadership of the APC itself becomes an inconvenient witness against the Ogun chapter's handling of the matter. The party's own stated position on consensus arrangements is unambiguous: a consensus candidate can only be validly adopted where every single cleared aspirant gives voluntary, written consent. Not a majority. Not the loudest voices in the room. Every one of them, in writing, freely given. This position, anchored on the framework in Section 87 of the Electoral Act, exists precisely to prevent the kind of quiet, backroom arrangement that Hunye alleges was imposed on him. Where even one aspirant withholds that consent, the party's own rules do not permit leaders to paper over the disagreement and move on as though unanimity existed. The rulebook says the field must instead open up for a direct primary, contested freely by all qualified aspirants.

This is precisely why the silence being demanded of Hunye by certain party leaders in Ogun sits so awkwardly with the party's own doctrine. The APC does not, on its own terms, support a graveyard hush imposed on a dissenting aspirant simply because it is administratively convenient.

A party that preaches unanimous, written consent at the national level cannot, in the same breath, expect one of its own governorship hopefuls in Ogun to swallow his objections and disappear quietly, particularly when he insists he never signed off on any such consensus. If Hunye is telling the truth that no such written consent was ever given, then Ogun APC leaders were not exercising legitimate consensus-building; they were substituting their own preference for a process the party's constitution does not actually permit them to shortcut.

That gap between what the national party says consensus requires and what appears to have happened on the ground in Ogun is exactly the kind of technicality that Nigerian election tribunals have shown themselves willing to seize upon. If the courts eventually agree with Hunye that the process was engineered before the primary was even conducted, and that no valid written consent underpinned Yayi's emergence, then Yayi's victory becomes a poisoned chalice. A candidate whose emergence is later voided by a tribunal or a court does not just lose a ticket; he loses months of campaign momentum, donor confidence, and public goodwill, often at the worst possible time, close to the general election. Nigeria's political history is littered with candidates who celebrated too early, only to watch their mandates unravel in court because the party that produced them cut corners to avoid a real contest.

This is why the removal of Hunye's banners in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta, ordinary as it might look to outsiders, is not a small matter. When a state government's own signage agency is used to erase messages simply reminding the public that a legal dispute is ongoing, it sends a signal that the ruling structure fears an informed electorate more than it fears the courtroom. That fear is itself a confession. A party truly confident in the fairness of its primary, and truly confident it followed its own consensus rules to the letter, would have nothing to hide, and nothing to sweep off the walls of Ogun State.

•Points raised in this article mainly belong to the author.


Seun Faleye

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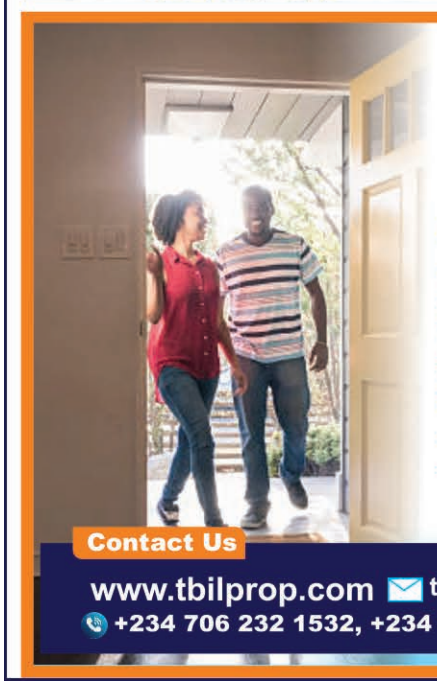
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Archbishop Francis Wale Oke

On the Occasion of His 70th Birthday Celebration



A WORD OF APPRECIATION

To God be all the glory for seventy years of grace, favour, and faithful service in His vineyard.

We write to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who honoured Archbishop Francis Wale Oke, the National President of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) and the Presiding Bishop of the Sword of the Spirit Ministries Worldwide, on the joyous occasion of his 70th birthday.

We are profoundly grateful to His Excellency, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR; to Her Excellency, the First Lady of The Federal Republic of Nigeria, Senator Oluremi Tinubu CON and to Senator George Akume CON, Secretary to the Government of the Federation, for their gracious goodwill messages.

We equally thank former President Olusegun Obasanjo GCFR, who graced the occasion in full attendance, and for his warm and personal letter of congratulations.

We are also deeply grateful to His Excellency, Engr. 'Seyi Makinde FNSE, the Governor of Oyo State; His Excellency, Dr. Lucky Orimisan Aiyedatiwa, the Governor of Ondo State; His Excellency, Rt. Hon. (Elder) Sheriff F.O. Oborevwori, the Governor of Delta State; His Excellency, Peter Mbah, the Governor of Enugu State; His Excellency, Pastor Umo Bassey Eno, the Governor of Akwa Ibom State; His Excellency, Mr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang Esq., the Governor of Plateau State; and His Excellency, Senator Douye Diri, the Governor of Bayelsa State, for their gracious congratulatory messages and presence.

Our profound appreciation goes to His Imperial Majesty, Oba (Senator) Rashidi Adewolu Ladoja, Arusa I, Olubadan of Ibadanland, for his tribute and for the presence of his representative; to the Alaafin of Oyo, Iku Baba Yeye, Oba Abimbola Akeem Owoade I, represented by Ayaba (Olori) Abiwunmi Olajumoke Owoade; and to the Soun of Ogbomoso, Oba Ghandi Afolabi Oladunni Olaoye, Orumogege III, who honoured us with his personal and imperial presence.

We remain deeply thankful to Pastor E.A. Adeboye, General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God(R.C.C.G); Bishop David Oyedepo, President and Founder of Living Faith Church Worldwide (Winners' Chapel International); Archbishop Daniel C. Okoh, President of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN); Rev. Dr Supo Ayokunle, former CAN President; Most Rev. Margaret E. Benson-Idahosa, Archbishop of the Church of God Mission International; His Grace, Archbishop William Aladekugbe, Archbishop of the Anglican Province of Ibadan; Dr. D.K. Olukoya, the General Overseer of Mountain of Fire Ministries; Revd. Moses Aransiola, the General Overseer of Gethsemane Prayer Ministries Worldwide; Professor Folasade T. Ogunsola, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Lagos; Professor Kayode Adebowale, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ibadan and his incoming successor, Professor Peter Olapegba; the Vice Chancellor of the Precious Cornerstone University (PCU), Ibadan, Professor Timothy Adejumo and Professor Jesse Abiodun Otegbayo, the Chief Medical Director of the University College Hospital, Ibadan, for their goodwill messages, prayers, and the honour of their presence.

We also thank eminent religious leaders and political dignitaries who graced this occasion, including Dr. Zaccheus Adedeji, Chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service; Rev. Wale Adebiyi, Anglican Bishop of Oke-Ogun Diocese; Chief (Mrs.) Kemi Alao-Akala; Senator Sharafadeen Alli; Hon. Bimbo Adekanbi; Elder Wole Oyelese; and Chief (Mrs.) Florence Ajimobi, Nigerian Ambassador to Austria who was ably represented and many others.

We are deeply grateful to the representatives of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), General Superintendent, Dr. (Mrs.) Elizabeth Akinadewo, leading eminent leaders of CAN (Women Wing), Dame Comfort Chigbue, Esq; JP, CAN National Director of Legal & Public Affairs and we deeply appreciate Revd. Dr. Frederick B. Odutola, former Executive Director of the Bible Society of Nigeria (BSN).

We are especially grateful to the members of the National Advisory Council of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, who graced this occasion: Dr. Cosmas Ilechukwu; Pastor Dr. E.O. Abina; Archbishop J.I. Ojo; Rev. Dr. Sam Aboyeji; Bishop Mike Okonkwo, represented by Bishop Reuben Oke; Rev. Dr. Mercy Ezekiel; Bishop Paul Nwachukwu, represented by Bishop Paul Nwachukwu Jnr; Apostle Emmanuel Nuhu Kure; Bishop Simeon Okah, represented by Rev. Dr. Dorcas Okah; Archbishop John Praise; Dr. Paul Enenche; Rev. Victor Ogunkanmi; Rev. Dr. Austen Ukachi; Bishop David Bakare; Bishop Taiwo Adelakun; Rev. Mrs. Faith Ukaegbu; Pastor Poju Oyemade; and Revd. Dr. Uma Ukpai family represented by Pastor Emeka Ukpai.

To the other leadership and members of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria who graced the occasion, including members of the National Executive Council, the National Vice Presidents, State Chairmen, Zonal and State delegates, the PFN Women's Wing, the PFN Glory to Glory wing and PFN Youth Wing, we say a heartfelt thank you for standing with your National President on this special day.

We are grateful, too, to the many Archbishops, Bishops, Pastors, and Church Leaders across Nigeria and outside Nigeria who honoured us with their goodwill messages and/or their presence, including Rt. Rev. Prof. Dapo F. Asaju, Bishop Felix Adejumo and Bishop (Mrs.) Funke Adejumo, His Eminence Dr. Sunday Ola Makinde, Apostle Joshua Selman, Pastor Jerry Eze, Apostle Emmanuel Iren, Rt. Hon. Debo Ogundoyin, Bishop Charles Okafor, Dr. Creflo A Dollar, Bishop Julius Abiola, and the many other ministers, deacons, and elders too numerous to name individually but held no less dearly in our hearts.

To the Gospel Ministers and Psalmists who blessed the occasion with worship and praise, including Tope Alabi, Nathaniel Bassey, Dunsin Oyekan, Mercy Chinwo, Blessing Lopez, the 70 Trumpeters and others whom we hold very dearly in our hearts, we are grateful.

To the leadership and members of the Christ Life Church, the Sword of the Spirit Ministries family, the Regional and State Coordinators of Nigeria Turning Point, representatives of the Apostolic Church, Calvary Grace International College of Bishops, and international Guests and Ministries from the USA, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Senegal, Ghana, and beyond, we say thank you.

To the Alumni Associations of Wesley Teachers Training College, Ibadan; the Christian Union Alumni of The Polytechnic, Ibadan; the Lagos Varsity Christian Union Alumni Fellowship (LVCUF), we are grateful for your goodwill messages, presence and love.

To our family members, friends, colleagues, protégés, mentees, and every well-wisher, near and far, who sent gifts, prayers, and goodwill messages, published and unpublished, we say thank you. Your love and support across these seventy years mean more than words can capture.

Above all, we give the Almighty God all the glory for His faithfulness, and for a life that continues to testify, by grace alone.

Archbishop and Dr. (Mrs.) Francis Wale Oke
and the entire Sword of the Spirit Ministries

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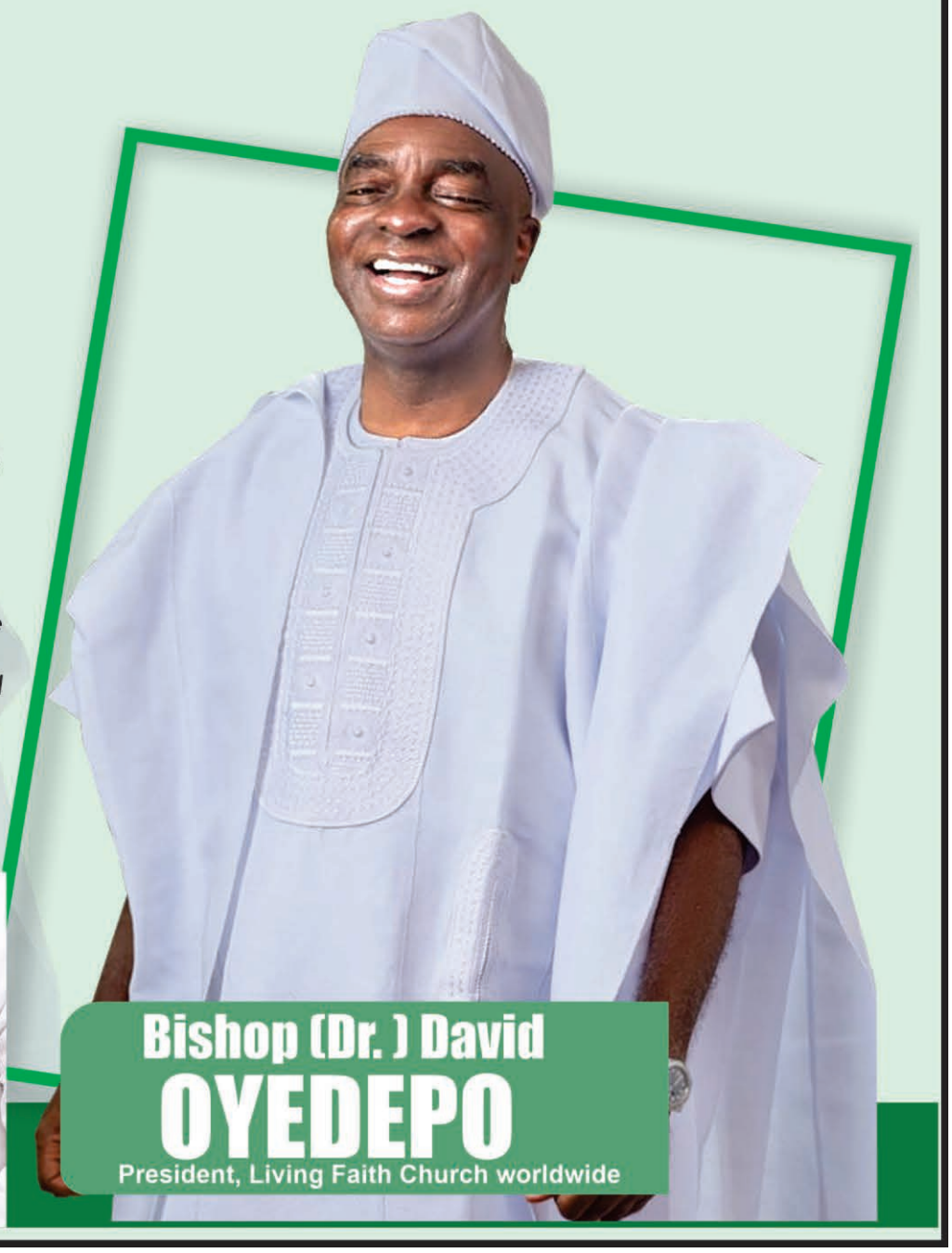
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Special

Musawa's Creative Economy Ministry: Strong

From **Ajuluchukwu Brown**, Abuja



WHEN Hannatu Musa Musawa assumed charge of Nigeria's arts, culture and creative economy portfolio, the promise was unusually ambitious. The creative economy was no longer to be treated as an ornamental appendage of government, periodically celebrated at festivals and cultural exhibitions. It was to become an engine of economic diversification, employment, foreign exchange and national soft power.

The ambition was subsequently enlarged to include tourism, after the Federal Government restructured the ministry and brought the tourism portfolio under the Ministry of Art, Culture, Tourism and the Creative Economy (FMACTCE). Musawa formally assumed leadership of the restructured ministry on October 23, 2024.

FMACTCE was conceived as not just a Ministry, but as a catalyst for innovation, growth and the empowerment of Nigeria's vibrant cultural and creative sector. The Ministry was expected to serve as a beacon of hope and progress in the realisation of the Renewed Hope Agenda of the administration. The ministry has promised to scale Nigeria's creative economy from its baseline to contribute $100 billion yearly to the national GDP by 2030.

Musawa's flagship roadmap promises the creation of 2 million sustainable jobs for Nigerian youths within the creative and tourism sectors by 2027–2030.

Partnering with the Ministry of Finance Incorporated (MOFI), the ministry promises to monetise both tangible national heritage (museums, monuments) and intangible assets (festivals, indigenous textiles, culinary arts) to create non-oil revenue.

The "Destination 2030" Soft Power Initiative: A comprehensive master plan to expand Nigeria's cultural footprint globally, grow the local creative market by 400 per cent, and position the country as a primary global tourism hub.

While declaring open the 2025 Ministerial and Sectoral Retreat organised by the Ministry of Arts, Culture, Tourism, and Creative Economy, at the Nigerian Army Resource Centre, Abuja, the Minister outlined key challenges and strategic interventions to enhance the growth and development of Nigeria's creative economy and tourism sectors.

In her keynote address, Minister Musawa identified limited funding access, poor infrastructure, piracy issues, security concerns, and inadequate data on job creation estimates as major challenges hindering the full realisation of these sectors' capabilities.

"To address these challenges," she said, "the Ministry will focus on infrastructure development, policy enhancement, skills development, tourism infrastructure, and data-driven decision-making.

"This includes investing in film studios, digital infrastructure, and global distribution networks, strengthening copyright and intellectual property protections and enforcement, establishing fashion incubation centres and creative hubs, enhancing heritage sites and museums, and leveraging primary and secondary data to guide job creation targets and policy interventions."

The Minister emphasised the vast growth potential of Nigeria's creative economy and tourism sectors, driven by increasing digital penetration and rising global demand for Nigerian content. She also highlighted the importance of leveraging the country's rich cultural heritage and creative talents to establish itself as Africa's creative and tourism powerhouse.

The Minister concluded that the strategic repositioning of Nigeria's arts, culture, tourism, and creative economy is imperative for the nation's future prosperity.

She urged stakeholders to be guided by data, inspired by Nigeria's rich heritage, and motivated by the immense potential of these sectors for job creation, economic diversification, and global recognition.

Nearly two years into that expanded arrangement, however, an uncomfortable question is beginning to confront the ministry: how much of the impressive architecture announced under Musawa has translated into tangible economic value for the people and businesses it was designed to serve?

The question is not whether the minister has been active. She plainly has. There have been policy documents, financing schemes, international engagements, public-private partnerships, committees, cultural projects and a long procession of memoranda of understanding.

The ministry has cultivated the language of investment and economic transformation with considerable consistency. But governance is ultimately judged not by the number of agreements signed, press conferences held or committees inaugurated. It is judged by what changes.

That distinction is becoming increasingly important in assessing Musawa's stewardship. The minister's own recent remarks provide an unexpected entry point into the debate.

According to President of the National Association of Nigerian Theatre Arts Practitioners, Adeniran Makinde, the minister started on a strong note. "Rather than large visible infrastructure projects, the ministry's most cited progress has come through partnerships and policy architecture," he said.

Recent developments include collaborations with international development and financing institutions aimed at unlocking capital for creatives, improving data systems, and expanding access to global markets.

"There has also been emphasis on financing structures and investment vehicles intended to support film, music, fashion, and tourism enterprises—sectors often constrained by lack of credit and formal investment channels."

However, critics note that many of these initiatives remain in early-stage implementation, with limited measurable outputs in terms of infrastructure rollout or nationwide creative employment statistics.

Supporters argue that Musawa inherited a structurally weak sector and is attempting foundational reform—building systems before visible outcomes.

Critics, however, suggest that Nigeria's creative economy is too dynamic to be governed primarily through policy frameworks without faster, visible interventions such as creative hubs, tourism site upgrades, and industry-wide financing access.

Makinde said the greatest strength of Musawa is clarity of ambition: Nigeria wants to monetise creativity, export culture, and diversify beyond oil. Its greatest weakness is the slow translation of that ambition into everyday economic transformation visible to artists, tourists, and investors. "The ministry's strongest conceptual weakness lies in what could be described as the "execution bridge"—the intermediate layer between policy design and grassroots implementation."

Musawa's ministry stands at a formative stage where expectations are high, but delivery timelines remain stretched by structural realities. In that sense, the ministry's true challenge is not imagination—it is execution speed.

Whether it succeeds may depend less on policy declarations and more on whether it can adopt a more grounded, project-driven governance style—one that turns creative economy theory into tangible national infrastructure.

The MoU Question

The most visible feature of the Musawa years has been the sheer breadth of partnerships. In May 2024, the ministry signed an MoU with the Nigerian Economic Summit Group to pursue policy reforms and strategic interventions intended to strengthen Nigeria's creative economy, improve revenue generation and create jobs.

A partnership with the British Council followed, with emphasis on strengthening capacity and creating opportunities for Nigeria's creative professionals. Other engagements have involved international organisations, financial institutions, private-sector companies, sub-national governments and foreign governments.

In April 2025, the ministry announced a three-year partnership with Chocolate City Group to develop small-scale live arenas across the country, identify and nurture talent, create global distribution channels and strengthen intellectual property frameworks.

There have also been agreements around Abuja Creative City, the Renewed Hope Cultural Project, tourism development and cultural infrastructure. In Ekiti, for instance, Musawa signed a Renewed Hope Cultural Project MoU with the state government around the development of tourism and cultural assets, including the Ikogosi Warm and Cold Springs Resort.

In July 2026, the Federal Government



The Creative Economy Development Fund (CEDF) is arguably the most important intervention associated with Musawa because it addresses the problem that has repeatedly been identified as the creative industry's principal structural constraint: access to capital.

Feature

Guardian Nigeria GuardianNigeria 08136370421 Guardiannigeria

In Framework, Weak In Delivery

and Rivers State signed another MoU covering tourism, arts, culture and the creative economy.

Governor Siminalayi Fubara, on Channels Television significantly, said the state intended to move beyond signing the agreement and demonstrate visible implementation within four months. That remark contains, perhaps inadvertently, the fundamental problem with the current debate. The signing is not the achievement. The implementation is. Yet the public record has made it easier to count the former than to measure the latter.

Speaking on efforts to get funding into the creative sector, at the *Ember to Remember* event, she acknowledged that the process of disbursement was still being worked through, including efforts to get funds directly into communities and the wider economy.

"We're still in the process of disbursing them because, obviously, we're working with a foreign bank, Afreximbank, which is a foreign commitment. We still haven't received, or rather, been able to complete that process. But I'm working very hard to ensure that we can still disburse them, literally from this morning, as part of what I was trying to conclude. At least, there will be some disbursement coming and going directly to the community or into the wider economy. So that's what I've been working on for a while," she explained.

Her explanation, points to the difficulty of moving from financing commitments to actual deployment. For an industry that has been repeatedly told that the government has finally solved its chronic financing problem, that admission is significant. The central issue, therefore, is not whether Musawa has ideas. It is whether the machinery she has assembled is delivering.

The Creative Economy Development Fund (CEDF) is arguably the most important intervention associated with Musawa because it addresses the problem that has repeatedly been identified as the creative industry's principal structural constraint: access to capital.

The Federal Executive Council approved the fund, and the government announced a $200 million financing commitment from Afreximbank. Musawa described the facility as a mechanism for providing affordable financing to creative businesses and entrepreneurs. The ambition was compelling. The fund was designed to support sectors ranging from film, music and fashion to visual arts, publishing, gaming and cultural tourism, while exploring the use of intellectual property as an asset that could be monetised or used to unlock financing. The official CEDF platform describes the fund as intended to provide capital, expand access to finance, support job creation and enable creative entrepreneurs to leverage intellectual property.

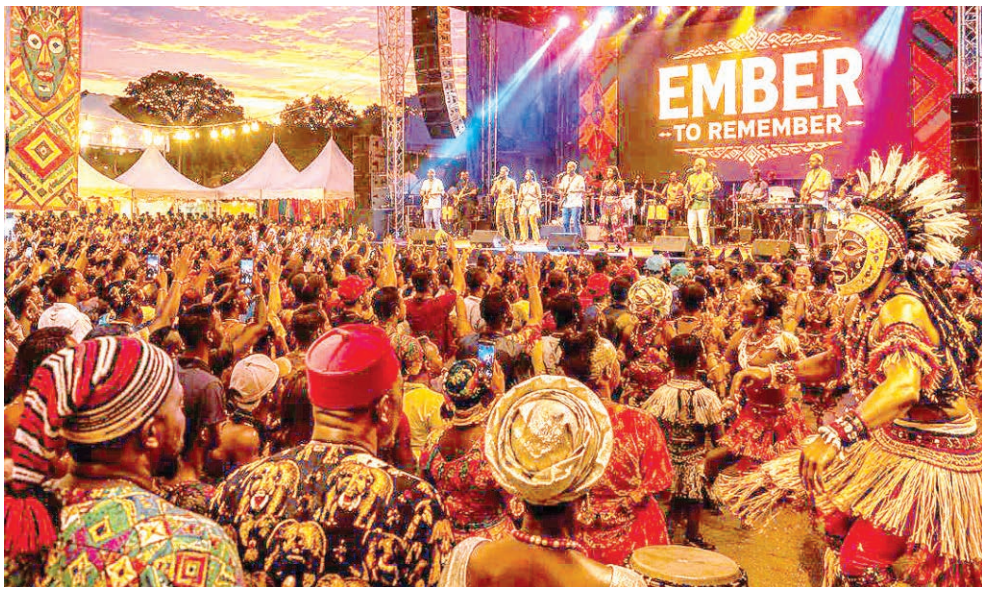
The Federal Government's launch of the FEC-approved Creative Economy Development Fund, with the announced disbursement dates of January 1, 2026 for Phase I and 1 April 2026 for Phase II, was a promising initiative. However, as those dates have passed, it is essential for practitioners to receive comprehensive public information regarding the fund's capitalisation, successful beneficiaries, and the amounts approved and disbursed.

The minister has also consistently framed the creative economy as "the new oil," projecting long-term goals such as significant job creation and multi-billion-dollar contributions to GDP.

That is precisely the concern articulated by Rowland Yohanna Goyit, the Secretary of society of Nigeria Artists (SNA), a visual artist, curator and art educator, who said the issue should not be reduced to an allegation about missing funds but to the absence of sufficient public information about implementation.

Goyit expressed concern over the growing dissatisfaction among Nigerian visual artists and other creative professionals, highlighting the importance of understanding these feelings.

He pointed out that the conversation should focus not on unverified allegations of missing



funds, but rather on the crucial need for transparent implementation. The Ministry and fund managers have a responsibility to communicate details about the evaluation process, including how many applications were reviewed, which projects were selected, the types of financing approved, and the reasons for any delays in the published timetable.

Goyit noted the specific concerns of visual artists. While visual arts and photography were acknowledged as eligible sectors, it is imperative to provide an accessible breakdown of how different segments such as painters, sculptors, photographers, curators, galleries, art educators, conservation initiatives, and community-based cultural projects have benefited. Simply naming visual arts in policy announcements does not equate to meaningful involvement in the implementation process.

He called on the Federal Ministry of Art, Culture, Tourism and the Creative Economy, the Ministry of Finance Incorporated, and the CEDF managers to produce a clear implementation report.

This report should include details on the fund's actual capitalisation, committed and disbursed amounts, a beneficiary list, distribution across creative subsectors and states, and a revised timetable for outstanding disbursements.

Goyit clarified that his remarks are meant to foster dialogue rather than to criticise the Ministry or dismiss the CEDF.

"It is a legitimate demand for transparency, equity and accountability. The creative sector cannot be repeatedly celebrated as a pillar of national development while practitioners remain uncertain about interventions publicly created in their name. Government announcements generate expectations; credible implementation must generate measurable results," he concluded.

Nearly three years into Musawa's tenure, a question increasingly being asked within the creative community is whether the institutional and policy changes have translated into a meaningful difference in the lives and businesses of practitioners.

That question has become particularly pronounced around the Creative Economy Development Fund, which was presented as one of the administration's flagship responses to the chronic financing challenges confronting creative businesses.

For Artistic Director of Arojah Royal Theatre and director of media and publicity of the National Association of Nigerian Theatre Arts Practitioners Abuja, Jerry Adesewo, the answer remains troubling.

Adesewo, who describes his assessment as a personal opinion devoid of political undertones, said the ministry's greatest weakness is the distance between policy announcements and the experience of practitioners.

"If you had asked me whether I wanted to comment on the three-year journey of the minister, my response would have been a capital no," he said. "Not because I do not know what to say, nor because I am afraid of saying what I should say, but because sometimes it is good to give people the benefit of the doubt."

But after observing the ministry's activities over the period, Adesewo said he could no longer avoid an assessment.

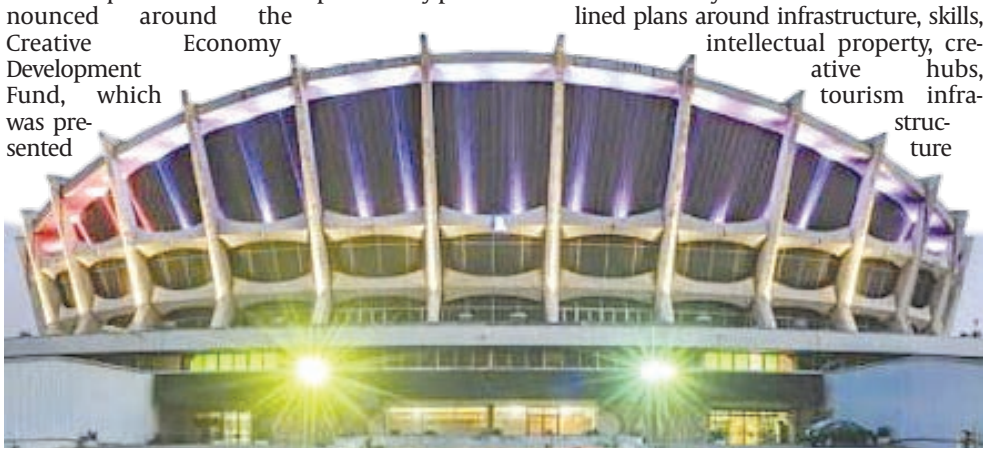
"Her tenure has been very ambitious in terms of policy direction, but considerably weak in terms of delivery," he said, arguing that the gap became particularly obvious when the minister's performance was measured against the expectations created by her promises around financing and the creative economy.

According to him, one of Musawa's undeniable achievements has been changing the language through which government discusses culture.

"She has succeeded in reframing the ministry around the creative economy, rather than treating culture principally as heritage and ceremonial activity," he said.

That conceptual shift, he acknowledged, was welcomed by practitioners who had long argued that Nigeria's creative industries should be integrated into the country's economic planning.

The minister has herself consistently framed the sector in those terms. At a ministerial and sectoral retreat, she identified limited access to funding, inadequate infrastructure, piracy, security concerns and insufficient data as some of the major constraints to the development of the creative economy and tourism. She also outlined plans around infrastructure, skills, intellectual property, creative hubs, tourism infrastructure and data-driven policy.



But it is precisely on financing that some practitioners say the administration's promises have not yet translated into sufficient results.

Adesewo described the Creative Economy Development Fund as the "anchor point" of his assessment. "A lot of excitement was generated around the CEDF," he said. "Many of us thought, this is it. The long-awaited financing for the creative sector has finally arrived. We were expectant. Everyone was watching and waiting for the programme to become operational."

His question now is no longer whether the fund exists as a policy announcement.

"The real question is: how much money has actually reached how many creatives? Through what instruments did the money reach them? On what terms? Was it through grants, loans or equity? What measurable impact has the funding produced, whether tangible or intangible?"

For him, those are accountability questions that the ministry must answer.

Chief Executive Officer of the Abuja Metropolitan Music Society, Sam C. Ezugwu, is even more scathing in his assessment.

Speaking from his experience in the creative sector, Ezugwu said he had yet to see the impact of the ministry's financing initiatives among practitioners around him.

"It has not been felt in the creative industry, and a lot of filmmakers can relate to what I am saying," he said.

According to him, the financing problem remains particularly acute for filmmakers who want to tell Nigerian stories but lack the capital to do so.

"Filmmakers are always looking for funds to create films," he said. "Even though there are those that collect funds and misuse them, there are still many genuine filmmakers that want to tell stories and foster the creative industry."

Ezugwu said he had heard about the Creative Economy Development Fund but had not encountered convincing evidence of its impact.

"I heard about that thing last year, but it is not really functional," he said. "I cannot count anybody that has said, 'I have collected it and it is working'."

His criticism goes beyond the absence of visible funding. He raised questions about the transparency of the systems through which government interventions are implemented.

"There is a transparency issue," he said. "Whatever the minister is saying, whatever system they have set, the people executing these systems are battling with transparency. They are not transparent enough."

The result, he argued, is a disconnect between policy makers and the people the policies are supposed to serve.

"There is a strong disconnection between the people on top and the people that are actually supposed to consume," he said.

For Ezugwu, the result is a creative sector that continues to operate largely without meaningful government support.

"I do not see government involvement in the creative industry in Nigeria," he said, adding that, in his assessment, the ministry's performance deserved "zero" on the question of delivery.

His argument was echoed by Gabriel Jah, a creative, multimedia engineer and filmmaker, who described reports of funding disbursement as difficult to reconcile with the experience of many practitioners.

"Firstly, this is laughable," Jah said. "The creative industry is by far one of the biggest industries that puts the nation on the map, yet such reports of a disbursement did not make it to the mainstream media across the entire country."

For Jah, geography has also shaped the experience of practitioners. "As a creative in the East, alongside fellow Eastern creatives that I just asked, I did not feel the wave of a disbursement, let alone the presence of a creative and performing minister," he said.

His frustration was sharpened by the absence, in his view, of visible evidence of the ministry's interventions.

Capacity Building For 120 Female Tilers, Block-layers In Lagos, Ogun

By **Sulaimon Salau**

HBM Nigeria Plc, a provider of innovative building solutions has commenced its 2026 Female Tilers and Block-laying training initiative for 120 women across Lagos and Ogun states as part of efforts to expand their practical construction skills and participation in the building and construction sector.

According to the company, the six-week training is being implemented across three locations, with 40 women each in Ayobo and Epe in Lagos State and another 40 participants in Abeokuta, Ogun State.

Speaking on the initiative, the Director, Communications, Public Affairs and Sustainable Development, HBM Nigeria Plc, Viola Graham-Douglas, explained that the programme reflects the company's commitment to creating practical pathways for women to build sustainable livelihoods while addressing the gender gap in skilled construction trades.

Graham-Douglas added that the programme provides participants with exposure to entrepreneurship, financial literacy, business registration and digital skills.

Proventa Commits To Strengthen Founder-led, Family-owned Businesses' Structures

By **Opeyemi Babalola**

PROVENTA Global Business Services Limited has been launched to help founder-led, family-owned and growth-stage businesses strengthen the structures, systems and decision-making capabilities required to grow sustainably.

It is founded and led by Bashir Arowojobe, with more than a decade professional experience and over six years spent working with businesses to transform their operations, strengthen their organisations and move beyond their initial stages of growth. In a statement, Arowojobe said the firm sought to help companies transition from entrepreneurial success to organisational strength needed to thrive in the corporate world.

"Many businesses reach a point where what worked in the early years is no longer enough for the next stage. The challenge is not always a lack of ambition or opportunity. Sometimes, the business has simply outgrown the structure that got it there."

He added that Proventa provides three core services; business diagnostics, corporate restructuring and management advisory.

Beyond The Applause: What US Removal Of Condition Of Entry Means For Nigeria's Maritime Future

By **Sulaimon Salau**

AFTER 12 years under a stringent United States security regime, Nigeria's maritime industry has secured a significant vote of confidence with the United States Coast Guard (USCG) lifting the Condition of Entry imposed on vessels sailing from Nigerian ports to the US. While shipping companies have welcomed the decision as evidence of improved maritime security and a potential catalyst for stronger trade, the development also places greater responsibility on Nigerian authorities to sustain the gains that led to the change.

Reacting to the development, one of the world's largest shipping companies, Maersk noted that the removal of the Condition of Entry on Nigeria by the United States Coast Guard would further strengthen Nigeria's position in global shipping trade.

The Terminal Planning Lead -WAF, Srijesh Subramanian said: "This is a welcome move which will enable better trade both for the importers as well as the exporters because we have quite a lot of exports going on, lots of Nigerians in the US. Shipping companies will be a little more bold in their expansion plans for the future.

"With the US removal of the Condition of Entry (COE), it is saying that Nigeria looks more like a safer environment than previously perceived."

According to him, the lifting of the restriction reflects an improved confidence in the Nigerian maritime security urging relevant authorities to sustain these gains.

On his part, the Nigeria Director of Ocean Network Express (ONE) in Nigeria, Mr. Stefan Pedersen also congratulated Nigeria for the feat even though his company does not have direct services to the United States.

"Congratulations to Nigeria on the lifting of the Condition of Entry. It shows the work that NIMASA has been doing all these years has actually paid off, so that is good. At the moment ONE does not have any direct sailings to and from the US so we are not really impacted by this. I'm certain that it would make direct trade with the US through the ports easier. When restrictions go away, it usually improves trade.So, for our colleagues in the industry that have direct sailings to the US, it is going to make it easier for them," the Director said.

Another shipping line, Pacific International Lines (PIL) also welcomed the development saying the lifting of the Condition of Entry will positively impact the image of Nigeria as a serious maritime country.

According to its Managing Director, Mr. UgoOpiah, "It's a very good one in terms of the image. Of course, the US is categorised as one of the big brother of the world, and most times if you do qualify for things that concerns the US, then you are seen as a high-integrity player.

"So for Nigeria, with this being lifted after the number of years that it had been on us, it does give a good sign that we have upped our game in terms of anything to do with security in the maritime industry."



Senior Vice President, Airports Council International (ACI) World, Antoine Rostworowski (left); Managing Director/CE, Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Mrs. Olubunmi Onabanjo-Kuku; and Secretary General, ACI Africa, Ali Tounsi presenting an award to the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, SAN, at the opening ceremony of the 35th ACI Africa yearly General Assembly and Exhibition, in Abuja.

'Strong Delivery Capacity Is Vital To Unlock AfCFTA Benefits For Businesses'

By **Sulaimon Salau**

AFRICA must strengthen its capacity to deliver the payment systems, efficient borders and infrastructure that businesses need to benefit from the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Wamkele Mene, Secretary-General of the AfCFTA Secretariat, told project professionals at Project Management Institute's Global Summit Series in Cape Town.

In a fireside conversation with George Asamani, PMI's Managing Director for Sub-Saharan Africa, Mene outlined the work needed to turn continental trade commitments into easier access to markets. Priorities include aligning national policies, modernising customs and enabling cross-border payments in local currencies.

Speaking under the summit theme Africa Delivers M.O.R.E. Together, he urged professionals across infrastructure, construction, agriculture, services and customs to consider how their expertise could help connect African economies.

He illustrated the cost of fragmented markets through a transaction between businesses in Ghana and Kenya. Despite trading within Africa, the businesses may need to purchase a third currency, typically the US dollar, to complete payment. He estimated the associated currency conversion costs across the continent at approximately US$5 billion annually.

Mene pointed to the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS), developed by Afreximbank in collaboration with the AfCFTA Secretariat, as a practical response. The system enables cross-border payments in local currencies, reducing reliance on third currencies.

ALX Seeks Stronger Systems Turning Africa's Youth Talent ToEconomic Opportunity

By **Sulaimon Salau**

ALX, a pan-African talent accelerator has called for greater alignment between skills providers, employers, governments and development institutions to ensure Africa's growing youth talent translates into jobs, entrepreneurship and broader economic opportunity.

Regional Director, West & Central Africa at ALX, Ruby Igwe, at a CNBC Africa Power Lunch West Africa, argued that as young Africans continue to build digital skills, launch businesses and participate in new forms of work, the conversation must move beyond whether young people are ready to whether the systems around them can create opportunity at sufficient scale.

"Young Africans are already doing the work to develop skills, build businesses and participate in the gig economy. The question is no longer only whether they are ready, but whether the systems around them are ready to build on what is working and scale their impact," Igwe said.

She pointed to ALX's experience as evidence of the scale of demand for skills development, with the organisation having trained more than 350,000 young people across Africa since 2021.

With 10 to 12 million young Africans entering the labour market each year, while only about three million formal jobs are created annually, Africa faces a scale of opportunity that no single institution can address alone.

"As Africa moves deeper into industrialisation and digital transformation, our focus must be on expanding access so more young Africans can participate. The opportunity is not just to adapt, but to lead the transformation.

"Young people have already shown they're willing to do the work. Our job now is to make sure the systems around them, from policy to funding to hiring, are moving at the same speed they are."

According to her, closing the gap requires coordinated action across four fronts: skills providers expanding access to practical, industry-aligned training; governments strengthening infrastructure and enabling policy; development institutions helping to finance proven models at scale; and employers clearly defining the skills they need while creating meaningful entry-level pathways for emerging talent.

FITC TechNnovation FinTech Conference 6.0 Explores Future Of Intelligent Financial Ecosystems

By **Sulaimon Salau**

THE Financial Institutions Training Centre (FITC) has hosted the sixth edition of its flagship TechNnovation FinTech Conference, bringing together regulators, financial institutions, fintech leaders, technology innovators, policymakers, academia, and industry experts to examine the future of intelligent financial ecosystems. The conference was themed: "Building Intelligent Financial Ecosystems: Harnessing AI, Blockchain, and Autonomous Systems to Boost Productivity and Trust."

In her keynote remarks, FITC MD/CEO, Dr. Chizor Malize, emphasized that the financial services industry has moved beyond basic digital transformation into an era where technology increasingly supports decision-making, automates processes, anticipates risks, and enables entirely new models of service delivery. She noted that while technology is already transforming financial transactions and customer experiences, the more important question is the kind of financial ecosystem stakeholders choose to build with these technologies.

IBTC Data Centre Academy Expands Workforce Programme To Kenya

By **Opeyemi Babalola**

THE International Business Training College (IBTC), through its Data Centre Academy, has expanded its data centre workforce development programme to Kenya, seeking to equip engineering and technology graduates with skills for employment in the country's growing data centre industry.

The programme, supported by Schneider Electric University, the Africa Data Centres Association (ADCA) and other industry partners, was formalised during ITW &Datacloud Africa in Nairobi.

The Kenya rollout, building on successful programmes already established in South Africa and Nigeria, will combine technical training, professional certification and practical industry exposure to address critical skills shortages across Africa's data centre ecosystem.

As part of the programme, participants will undertake the Data Centre Certified Associate (DCCA I) training using curriculum provided through Schneider Electric University.

The curriculum covers key data centre infrastructure disciplines, including power, cooling, energy management, security and controls.

Business Agro

From Wastage To Wealth: How Nigeria Can Turn Agricultural Surplus Into Value

By **Gbenga Akinfenwa**

FOR decades, Nigeria has continued to produce more of some agricultural products beyond its domestic demands. This supposed blessing turned out otherwise as a result of mixed factors, including poor storage, limited processing capacity, and underdeveloped infrastructure.

In 2023, a report published by Foundation for Investigative Journalism (FIJ), Nigeria highlighted how agricultural abundance in Africa's most populous country is birthing surplus, only for much of it to later become waste. The report delves into how resourceful trees in Osun State, Southwest Nigeria, produce excessive mangoes beyond local consumption.

The cost? How much of those resources will spoil before they can generate lasting value? That failure is not just a loss of food. It exposes a missed opportunity that spans industrious creativity, job creation, and stronger foreign exchange.

Through political will and serious investments from private investors, this article posits some icebreakers that could unlock economic growth in the country

Nigeria's Wastage Burdens

APART from being the top contributor of cassava and yams all over the world, Nigeria is a major producer of fruits such as mangoes, oranges, pineapples, and more, indicating that the country's agricultural strength is apparent.

Data places Nigeria in the top-nine global ranking as the highest producer of mangoes, with a staggering total of 850,000 metric tons per year. In 2021, the former Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment, Nasir Sani-Gwarzo, encouraged Osun farmers to restrategise their production capacity in a bid to meet global demands. In addition, the former administration of Osun signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) to take advantage of the state's agricultural blessing.

Despite the testimonies, several reports have chronicle Nigeria's large-scale post-harvest losses amid rising food insecurity. Also, estimates by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), including local studies, place post-harvest losses for perishable farm produce between 20 and 40 per cent across the country.

The reason for the above data is not farfetched. Inadequate cold chains, weak aggregation systems, and limited processing facilities are causative factors. Beyond the figure lies a direct story. Every ton lost is an unrealised income for farmers, processors, and the wider economy.

Beyond the startling losses, experts warned that harsh bottlenecks, coupled with logistics infrastructural setbacks, remained critical hurdles, hitting at the nerves of investment and policy actions in Nigeria.

The Pathfinder

TO address this historical wastage, immediate actions must be directed towards stable beverage manufacturing investments. Nigeria possesses the potential to produce liquid products. Intentional plans are what the country needs in order to cash out on surplus fruits, milk, and starches. From fruit juices to dairy-based drinks, bottled water, and malt beverages, serious investment in the beverage value chain offers one of the most convincing paths to reduce post-harvest losses while driving inclusive economic growth.

Efficient storage before transportation to the necessary destinations proves more beneficial than raw produce. This is an indicator that sustainable processing facilities have strong potential to convert perishable output into stable and higher-margin goods, resulting in longer shelf life and export potential.

Ripe mangoes that take a snail's pace before reaching urban markets can be turned into puree or concentrates. This will sharply boost commercial life, enabling steady supply to factories and retailers.

Analysts, including researchers, argued that value addition raises agriculture's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by shifting revenue from low-margin raw sales to higher-margin manufactured goods, pointing to the fact that the macroeconomic benefits are tangible.

Beverage factories create jobs at multiple skill levels. Farm workers, drivers and logistics staff, factory line workers, quality-control technicians, packaging workers and sales teams each of them is empowered for steady supply. Beverage investments also unlocked another opportunity for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), creating a new workforce for bottle manufacturers, labelling firms, and distribution platforms.

For regions facing high youth unemployment, these are direct pathways to sustainable jobs. A productive juice processing plant can empower hundreds of people directly and support thousands indirectly through farming and logistics. The shift will also strengthen export capacity, drawing foreign exchange earnings. This is because concentrates and aseptic-packaged juices tend to travel more cheaply and reliably than fresh fruit.

Under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)), improved standards could widen pan-African distribution, as export-grade branding is positioned to capture premiums abroad. This is a significant opportunity for producers to reach regional markets, including the Nigerian diaspora in Europe, North America, and other parts of the world.

What Is Next?

TO achieve the above objectives, decisive financial support to strengthen raw processing capacity is critical. Many entrepreneurs lack access to capital to purchase the necessary facilities. For smallholder farmers, access to that equipment is a distant hope. This is because high interest rates and short repayment periods continue to frustrate equipment purchasing power for the individuals who seek it.

With erratic power supply plaguing Nigeria, another move to bridge the gap is solar-powered refrigerated storage facilities, coupled with improved rural road links to reduce spoilage. Friendly public policy to attract investors is never an option, either. Tax relief for greenfield beverage plants, light duties on specialised equipment for a limited window, and allocation of land for agro-processing clusters with utilities are important in eliminating entry barriers.

To attract external consumers, the country must convince the outside world through its standards and quality control, as sanitary and phytosanitary requirements are non-negotiable for domestic safety and export validation. This is why significant investment in laboratory testing, certification programmes, and training for quality assurance poses a high possibility of reducing product rejection while enhancing local brand reputation.

Before attempting to satisfy external needs, Nigeria must meet its internal consumption. This is a case where social marketing, such as distribution partnerships, is necessary. We can place products in schools, hospitals, and government feeding programmes, creating reliable early buyers and scaling production.

Typical examples have already put the country in the driver's seat. Nigerian firms have turned surplus cassava into starch and sweeteners for local and industrial use. They have proven that primary commodities can underpin downstream industries.

Juice processors that partner with smallholder outgrowers provide seedlings, agronomy support, and guaranteed offtake. This has stabilised farmers' incomes while securing factory supply. For example, the Benue State Government pledges to leverage agriculture in cutting Nigeria's N68b import bill on fruit concentrates. In dairy, cooperative milk collection systems paired with pasteurisation plants have reduced spoilage and boosted local milk markets in several states.

In Kano State, a government body handed over 98 milk collection centres to management committees across the 30 local council areas of the state in 2026. This is aimed at improving dairy production and strengthening the livestock value chain. Similar facilities have been delivered to the state earlier, targeted to address Nigeria's historical yearly $1.3b dairy import deficit.

One of the direct results is Go-Fresh Mango Flavoured Drink, produced in Kano and being supplied across many states of Northern Nigeria like Sokoto. As the above scenarios revealed, public–private partnership is a practical way to mobilise the large upfront capital needed for cold chains and processing parks.

Nigeria's agricultural potential has long been suffocated by failure to convert surpluses into sustained income streams. With serious investments in rethinking the country's agricultural outlooks, experts advised that the beverage industry presents a meaningful economic opportunity.

Mashood is a fellow at Ominira Initiative's Free Trade Fellowship



Farmers at work PHOTO CREDIT: VANGUARD

Africa's Wheat Revolution Gets Regional Push As Workshop Ends In Addis Ababa

By **Gbenga Akinfenwa**

FOR three days, the Wheat Compact of Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT), led by ICARDA and backed by the African Development Bank, held a high-stakes regional workshop to scale improved wheat technologies and fix the seed systems.

The workshop brought together the people driving one of the continent's most consequential agricultural transformations: the race to scale improved wheat technologies and fix the seed systems that decide whether farmers can actually get their hands on them.

It pulled together an unusually broad coalition: policymakers, plant breeders, seed companies, regulators, farmer organisations, development partners, and digital technology providers — all in the same room, working the same problem from different angles.

The stakes were higher as wheat has become a cornerstone of food and nutrition security across Africa, yet the continent's fields still can't keep pace with its appetite. Millions of tonnes are imported every year to fill the gap.

Seven countries at the frontline of Africa's wheat push — Ethiopia, Tanzania, Nigeria, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Mali — will laid their cards on the table, sharing hard-won experience in breeding, seed production, marketing, digital tools, and the policy frameworks that make or break scale-up efforts.

The agenda reads like a full diagnostic of the wheat value chain: where production and consumption trends are heading, how research and variety release pipelines are performing, the state of the seed sector — including the digital innovations and regional harmonisation efforts working to smooth seed trade across borders — and a frank accounting of what TAAT's first and second phases have actually delivered for farmers on the ground, successes and setbacks alike.

It isn't for lack of good science. Breeders have delivered a new generation of wheat varieties bred to survive the extremes of a changing climate — heat-tolerant, disease-resistant, and high-yielding. The problem lies downstream: weak seed systems, patchy access to certified seed, tangled regulations, and a seed trade that too often stops at the border. Brilliant varieties are only as powerful as farmers' ability to plant them — and that's exactly the bottleneck this workshop has been called to break.

It wasn't just talking shop, as delegates traded the conference hall for Ethiopian wheat fields, meeting farmers, breeders, and private-sector players firsthand — a chance for genuine south-south learning from a country widely seen as a bellwether for what an African wheat revolution can look like when the pieces come together.

By the close of the workshop, it turned out to be not just a conversation. The outputs include a documented status report on wheat research and development across the participating countries, a record of TAAT's achievements, best practices, and success stories, a concrete roadmap for scaling technologies and strengthening seed systems — digital tools included — plus deeper partnerships between public and private seed players, and published proceedings to carry the findings forward.

The TAAT Wheat Compact Leader, Dr Wuletaw Tadesse, on behalf of the organisers, said the workshop "will be a catalyst for Africa's wheat transformation — unlocking better access to quality seed, faster technology adoption, stronger digital seed systems and regional markets, and the enabling conditions for productivity, food security, private investment, and lasting wheat self-sufficiency."

The bigger prize is continental: faster access to quality seed, wider adoption of technology, smarter digital seed systems, stronger regional seed markets, and a more attractive climate for private investment. Put together, it's a bid to push Africa meaningfully closer to wheat self-sufficiency — one seed, one field, one policy fix at a time.

World Pharmacists Day: UBTH Pharmacy Department Commends CMD's Developmental Strides

THE Pharmacy Department of the University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH), on Friday, commemorated the 2026 World Pharmacists Day with a call for greater recognition of the role of pharmacists in quality healthcare delivery.

Theevent,heldwiththetheme, "Empowering Pharmacists for Healthier Futures," featured a courtesy visit by the department to the Chief Medical Director(CMD)of the hospital, Prof. IdiaIze-Iyamu.

The delegation, led by the Head of Department, Dr. Edith Yovwin, highlighted the contributions of pharmacists to patient care, medication safety and the delivery of quality healthcare services.

The UBTH DCMAC Research and Ethics, Prof. Adebola Ehizele, who received the delegation on behalf of the CMD, thanked the department for the engagement.

Ize-Iyamu commended pharmacists for their contributions to quality healthcare services globally and at UBTH, while acknowledging their role in strengthening patient care.

The visit also provided an opportunity to highlight the contribution of pharmacists to health education, research and innovation, as well as the promotion of medication safety.

CIOTA Announces 8th National Conference On Multimodal Transport

By **Gbenga Salau**

THE Chartered Institute of Transport Administration of Nigeria (CIOTA) has announced its eighth National Transport Conference, with a call for stronger integration of Nigeria's road, rail, maritime, aviation, inland waterways and pipeline transport systems.

The National President and Chairman of the Governing Council of CIOTA, Prince Segun Ochuko Obayendo, disclosed this on Friday at a press briefing in Lagos.

Obayendo said the conference, themed Integrated Multimodal Transport System for Sustainable Development in Nigeria, would bring together policymakers, transport professionals, investors, academics, development partners and operators across the various transport sectors.

He said Nigeria could not achieve sustainable development through isolated transport systems, stressing that roads, railways, seaports, airports and inland waterways needed to operate as a connected national network to reduce logistics costs, improve safety, boost trade competitiveness, create jobs and support economic growth.

Supreme Court Restores Direct Primaries, Tightens Party Membership Rules Ahead Of 2027 Polls

From **Ameh Ochojila**, Abuja

•Judgment Does Not Automatically Cancel Candidates, Lawyer Says

THE Supreme Court has restored key provisions of the Electoral Act 2026 governing political party membership registers and the nomination of candidates, a decision that could place greater statutory obligations on political parties ahead of the 2027 general elections.

The seven-member panel, led by Justice AdamuJauro, on Thursday allowed the appeal filed by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), set aside the July 16 judgment of the Court of Appeal and restored the judgment of the Federal High Court, Abuja, which had dismissed the constitutional challenge brought by the Zenith Labour Party (ZLP).

The apex court held that Sections 77(5), 77(6), 77(7) and 84(2) of the Electoral Act 2026 were not inconsistent with the 1999 Constitution. It also awarded N2 million costs against the ZLP.

The decision reverses the Court of Appeal judgment which had voided the disputed provisions after finding them inconsistent with constitutional provisions relating to political parties.

Under Section 77(5), only members whose names are contained in a political party's membership register submitted to INEC at least 21 days before a primary, congress or convention are eligible to participate in the exercise.

Section 77(6) prevents a party from using a membership register other than the one submitted to INEC for its primaries, congresses and conventions.

Section 77(7) provides that a political party that fails to submit its membership register within the prescribed period is not eligible to field a candidate for an election.

Section 84(2), meanwhile, prescribes direct primaries or consensus as the methods for political parties to nominate candidates for elective offices.

The combined effect is that parties preparing for the 2027 elections will have to pay close attention to the membership register submitted to INEC, the timing of its submission and compliance with the statutory procedure for selecting candidates.

But legal practitioners have cautioned against interpreting the judgment as an automatic disqualification of candidates whose nominations may subsequently be questioned.

Reacting to the judgment, legal practitioner, Dr Y.G. Manjo said the Supreme Court had settled the constitutional validity of the statutory provisions but had not determined the validity or invalidity of individual candidates.

According to him, the validity of Section 77 is different from whether a particular candidate complied with the section.

He said any challenge to an individual nomination would still have to be determined on its own facts, including the membership register submitted by the party, when it was submitted, the date of the primary and whether the applicable register was used.

Manjo also cautioned against assuming that the judgment automatically invalidated recent PDP senatorial nominations or substitutions in Kwara State.



President and CEO of Avalon Advanced Materials, Scott Monteith (left); CEO World Energy Council Nigeria, Bala Wunti; founder and Executive Chairman of political-risk consultancy Veracity Worldwide, Steven Fox; Principal at Drive Path Advisors and former Bloomberg Television anchor, Alix Steel at the 2026 Concordia Annual Summit, held alongside the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Appoint Abia Indigene A Minister To Make APC Job Easier, Nto Appeals To Tinubu

By **Onyedika Agbedo**

A CHIEFTAIN of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Abia State and former Commissioner for Finance and Economic Planning, Prof. Phillips Nto, has appealed to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to appoint an indigene of the state as minister to replace Nkeiruka Onyejeocha, who resigned from the Federal Executive Council more than six months ago.

Nto made the appeal when he received APC stakeholders from Ututu, arguing that the continued vacancy in Abia's ministerial slot had raised questions about the state's representation in the Federal Executive Council.

He said appointing a replacement would also strengthen the APC in the state and makes it easier for members to campaign for Tinubu's re-election.

Nto noted that states such as Oyo and Bauchi, whose ministers had resigned from the cabinet, had their replacements appointed almost immediately, while Abia's slot remained vacant.

"I really don't know what is responsible for the delay, but I believe that Mr. President should move swiftly to address the issue and give Abia people a sense of belonging," he said.

According to him, APC members in the state had been forced to answer questions from opposition parties over why the president had not appointed an Abia indigene to the vacant ministerial position.

"Mr. President will make our job easier if he appoints an Abia person as a minister so that we could also be part of the administration," Nto said.

The former commissioner, who was also a senatorial aspirant on the APC platform, appealed to Tinubu to appoint anyone of his choice to the position if disagreements among stakeholders were responsible for the delay.

Nigeria's Major Challenge Is Lack Of Unity, Love Among Its People – Hamzat

By **David Emokpae**

THE Deputy Governor of Lagos State and APC governorship candidate, DrKadiriObafemiHamzat, has stated that the major reason Nigeria is not attaining its aspirations as a nation is because its people are not united.

He spoke at the Special Jumat service and prayers held in commemoration of Nigeria's 66th Independence Day celebration, held at Lagos Secretariat Community Central mosque, on Friday.

Hamzat spoke on why Nigeria is where it is today, saying, "we are not united, we don't like each other, and as such, we don't have coincidence of wants." He also said that one of Nigeria's problems is that it is expanding without taking responsibility.

"Our challenge is lack of unity as a people. We often see ourselves differently, and that creates division rather than shared purpose. But if we are united, come together and work as one, we already have the talent, the ability, and the resources to move this country forward. Unity is therefore very important, and I believe it is one of our major challenges," said Hamzat.

Speaking on how the government and citizens can work together to build a better nation, he said it is not just government's responsibility, but a shared responsibility between religious institutions, traditional institutions, the private sector, and citizens.

"We have seen it happen before, like during COVID-19, when everyone came together. The private sector contributed, and people supported one another. We need to sustain that spirit beyond emergencies and make it part of our everyday national life. That is what Lagos State has been advocating and what we hope will spread across the country," he said. The Deputy Governor admonished Nigerians to unite.

Ogun Tasks Workers On Financial Prudence, Professionalism

By **Gbenga Akinfenwa**

OGUN State government has called on civil servants in the state to uphold financial prudence, accountability and professionalism in the discharge of their responsibilities.

The Commissioner for Transportation, Olugbenga Dairo, who gave the advice at a retirement and send-forth ceremony in honour of the Director of Finance and Accounts in the ministry, Mr. SolagbadeSakirudeen, who retired from active service and the Director of Administration and Supplies, Mrs. OluwakemiSomoye - Osokoya, who was transferred from the ministry, stressed the need for dedication and professionalism in the discharge of their responsibilities

Represented by the Permanent Secretary in the ministry, Mrs. Aderonke Tokunbo-Peters, Dairo described the two officers as meticulous and thoroughbred civil servants whose contributions had made the administration and financial management of the ministry more efficient and seamless.

He said their commitment to duty, professionalism and dedication had contributed significantly to the achievement of the ministry's objectives under the Prince DapoAbiodun's led Administration.

Akwa Ibom Targets Mechanised Farming For Food Sufficiency

AKWA Ibom State government has said that it is supporting increased food production through mechanised farming by initiating a tree crop revolution programme and providing N2b as grants to farmers under Arise Agenda of Pastor UmoEno's administration in the last three years .

Speaking during the briefing to mark the 39th anniversary of the state, the Commissioner for Agriculture, Dr Offiong Offor, said the present administration in the state has made landmark achievements in agriculture, including sponsorship of cocoa challenge programme, where cocoa farmers are being supported with capacity building and training.

Offor explained that Pastor UmoEno had commissioned farm equipment leasing company, where farmers obtained farm machines at subsidised rate for ground preparations and planting.

"Governor UmoEno definitely has commissioned the equipment leasing company, and that company has tractors and farm implements that support farmers in land preparation, heavily subsidised by 50 per cent.

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AYOOLA: Formerly known as Ayoola, Isaac Oluwamayomikun A, now addressed as Ayoola, Isaac Oluwamayomikun Ayoyemi. Former documents remain valid. Signed: Mojisola Ayoola (Mother).

BASSEY: I, formerly known and addressed as Miss Esther Adjoa Quist, now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Esther Adjoa Bassey. All former documents remain valid. General public and authorities concerned please take note.

BLESSING: I, formerly known as Miss Jared, Blessing Lanks now wish to be known as Mrs. Okpighe, Blessing Lanks. All former documents remain valid. Public notice.

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CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Ogunbanjo Boluwatife Ebun Now wish to be addressed as Ogunbanjo Boluwatife Ebunoluwa all former documents remain valid general public take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME: I,formerly known as Aaliyah Philemon Tawasimi Now wish to be addressed as Aaliyah Atazamu Ephraim all former documents remain valid general public take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME: I,formerly known as Edidiong-Abasi Emmanuel Inyangudoh Now wish to be addressed as Edidiongabasi Emmanuel Inyangudoh all former documents remain valid general public take note .

CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Ismail afeez adekunle/afeez adekunle ismaeel Now wish to be addressed as Ismaeel afeez adekunle all former documents remain valid (NIMC) and general public take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Emuni Danasabe now wish to be addressed as Emonyi Magaji Gimba all former documents remain valid general public take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME: I, formerly known as Turner Gbenga now wish to be addressed as Turner Olugbenga Solomon. Former documents remain valid. General public take note.

CORRECTION OF NAME: My name was wrongly written as Nurudeen Hameed instead of Afolabi Nurudeen Hameed Akinloye. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

DONOR: I, Formerly known as DONOR FIDELIA now wish to be addressed as OSUKPORU JOY FIDELIA. All former documents remain valid. General public, take note.

DANIEL: I, formerly known as ADEPOJU Blessing Nwakaego now wish to be addressed as DANIEL, Blessing Nwakaego all former documents remain valid general public take note.

EJIROGHENE: I, formerly known as Miss Okor, Ejiroghene Ann now wish to be known as Mrs. Igbigbi, Ejiroghene Ann. All former documents remain valid. Public notice.

EKHORAGBON: I, formerly known as Ekhoragbon Bright Eghosa now wish to be addressed as Anthony Bright. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

EKWO: I, formerly known as Johnson Ekwo Ekwo A. now wish to be addressed as Ekwo Johnson Alechenu. All former documents remain valid. General public take note. .

ELEGAH: I ,formerly known as Atuah Ikhionotse Evelyn now wish to be addressed as Elegah Ikhionotse Evelyn all former documents remain valid general public take note .

EMOLE: I, formerly known as Rebecca Biekpoma Emole now wish to be addressed as Rebecca Emole All former documents remain valid general public take note.

EZEMEGWALU: I, formerly known as Ezemegwalu Clara Adaku now wish to be addressed as Ezemegwalu Adaku Clara. All former documents remain valid .Bank and General public take note.

EZEUGO: I, formerly Ezeugo Adaeze Chidinma as it's on my BVN. Now wish to be addressed as Ezeugo Sharon as it's on my NIN/ International passport. All former documents remain valid. Public note.

EZIOGOR: I, formerly known as Eziogor Rosline Onome now wish to be addressed as Eziogor Roseline Oghenemene all former documents remain valid Ecobank (BVN) ,general public take note.

FRANCIS: I, formerly known as Amoo Ayomide Oluwaseun now wish to be addressed as Francis Ayomide Oluwaseun. All former documents remain valid general public take note.

IMADUEJIEMU: I, formerly known as Imaduejiemu Florence now wish to be addressed as Imadojemu Florence. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

IYOBHEBHE: I , formerly known as Miss Iyobhebhe Maris now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Atiemori Maris. All former documents remains valid. General public take note.

IZUAGIE: I, formerly known as Ifeanyi Augusta Browne now wish to be addressed as Ifeanyi Augusta Izuagie. All former documents remain valid general public take note.

JOHN: I, formerly known as John Awodojemeh now wish to be known as Tunde Awodojemeh David. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

KAREEM: I, formerly known as Taofeek Islamiat Oriyomi now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Kareem Islamiat Oriyomi. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

KEHINDE: I, formerly known as Miss. Kehinde Mercy Yewande now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Bolarinwa Mercy Yewande. All former documents remain valid . General public take note.

NGOZI: I,formerly known as Sunday Ngozi Favour Now wish to be addressed as Ichoku Ngozi Favour all former documents remain valid general public take note.

OBODO: I, formerly known as Obodo Rachael Oghenekevwe now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Okakoso Rachael Oghenekevwe. All former documents remain valid. Financial Institutions, NIMC ,Public note.

OGUNDE: I, formerly Mr Kolawole Olumayokun Ogunde now to be known as Mr Kolawole Olumayokun. All former documents remain valid. General Public take note.

OGUNDE: I, formerly Mrs Olusola Olufunke Ogunde now to be known as Mrs Olusola Olufunke Olumayokun. all former documents remain valid. general Public take note.

OGUNDE: I, formerly Mr Oluwaseyi Moyosoreoluwa Ogunde now to be known as Mr Oluwaseyi Moyosoreoluwa Olumayokun. all former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OGUNSOLA: I, formerly known, as Ogunsola Rasheed Kayode now wish to be addressed as Ogunsola-Folorunsho Rasheed Kayode 'All former documents remain valid. Public note

OIGIANGBE: I, formerly known as Oigiangbe Best Obose now wish to be addressed as Oigiangbe Best. All former documents remains valid . General public take note.

OJI: I formerly known as Oji Weyimi Lulu now wish to be known as Israel Weyimi Lulu. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OKECHUKWU: I, formerly known as Okechukwu Christopher now wish to be addressed as Eke Okechukwu Christopher. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OKODUGHA: I, formerly Miss Okodugha Magdalene, now wish to be addressed as Mrs Ogbe Magdalene. Former documents remain valid. General public, and authorities take note.

OKOH: I, formerly known as Bassey Joseph Okoh now wish to be addressed as Joseph Edem Bassey. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OKEKE: Formerly known as Chukwuebuka Sean Okeke , now wishes to be addressed as Sean Chukwuebuka Okeke . All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OKOROAFOR: I, formerly known as Okoroafor Adaobi Tessy now wish to be addressed as Chimaeze Adaobi Tessy. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OKOYOMON: I, formerly known as Okoyomon Favour now wish to be addressed as, Okon Favour. All former documents remains valid . General public take note.

OLUYEMI: I, formerly known as Ajani Raliat Ashake now wish to be addressed as Oluyemi Raliat Ashake all former documents remain valid general public take note.

OMEONU: I, formerly known as Omeonu Patricia now wish to be addressed as Jeremiah Patricia Chinonyerem. All former documents remain valid..General public, take note.

OMOFUMA: I, formerly known as Omofuma Florence now wish to be addressed as Mrs. Okhioigbe Florence. All former documents remains valid . General public take note.

OSHIOKE: I, formerly known as Benedicta Momoh Oshioke now wish to be addressed as Benedicta Charity Momoh . All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OTOIBHILI: I formerly known as Otoibhili Monday now wish to be addressed as Otoibhili Monday Akeus, All former documents remains valid general public take note.

OTU: I,formerly known as Faith Utere now wish to be addressed as Faith Ukeme Otu all former documents remain valid . General public take note.

OYAWALE: I, formerly known as Oluyemisi Anu Oyawale and Oyawale Oluyemisi now addressed as ANU OLUYEMISI AWOYEMI. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

RE-ARRANGEMENT OF NAME: Formerly Adewoye, Akinjide Ayodeji now to be known as Akinjide, Adebayo Ayodeji. D.O.B: 15/02/1967 as I have it on my NIN. Former documents remain valid. Public take note.

SEUN: I, formerly known as Folaranmi Tolulope Seun now wish to be addressed as Olubunmi-Ajayi Tolulope Seun .All former documents remain valid general public take note.

SAMSON: I, formerly known as Samson Alice Ajenihun now wish to be addressed as Akintunde Alice Ajenihun.All former documents remain valid.General public take note.

TAIWO: I, formerly known as Miss. Taiwo Sukurat Temitope now wish to be known as Mrs. Jimoh Sukurat Temitope. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

UYAKONWU: I, formerly known as Agatha Onyemaechi Uyakonwu, Agatha 'Echi Uyakonwu, Agatha 'Echi Nmazua, Agatha Nmazua and Agatha David-Nmazua, hereby declare that I have changed my name to Osenwe Agatha David. Henceforth, I shall be known and addressed as Osenwe Agatha David. The General Public, NIMC, banks, financial institutions and other relevant authorities are hereby requested to take note and update their records accordingly.

UBI: I, formerly known as Ubi Ubi Joy now wish to be addressed as Ubi Ubi-Obiebi Joy. All former documents remain valid . General public take note.

UGHANZE: I, formerly known as Ughanze Stella and Nwalieji Adaobi Stella now wish to be addressed as Madu Adaobi Stella. All former documents remain valid. Banks, public take note.

UMEH: I, formerly Umeh, Kosisochukwu Ifunanya now Amanambu Kosisochukwu Ifunanya. All former documents remain valid. Public note.

News Extra

Bandits Rendered Me, 100 Others Homeless – Omolehin

By **Moyosore Salami**

FOUNDER of Word Assembly Ministries, Ilorin, Evangelist Isaac Omolehin, has said he and more than 100 vulnerable residents of his camp in Kwara State have remained homeless since bandit threats forced a midnight evacuation of the facility in May 2026.

Omolehin said the camp was deserted after police arrived at about midnight on May 30 into May 31 and ordered everyone to evacuate following information that kidnappers were on their way to attack the facility. He said the police warned them to flee immediately, while the camp remained deserted after the evacuation.

Although he was away when the evacuation took place, Omolehin said the bandits eventually arrived at the camp but met no one.

He said he had since gone into hiding and could no longer return to his home or move freely in public, adding that he had been forced to move from one location to another with his wife and children.

"I have a house I can't enter. I have a car I can't ride. I have to hide myself from the public. If I sleep here today, I'll sleep somewhere else tomorrow. I'm homeless with my wife and children," he said.

Ondo Commissioner To Flag Off CHS Golden Jubilee Anniversary

By **SuliyatTella**

ONDO State Commissioner for Education Prof. Igbekele Ajibefun will on Monday flag off activities marking the Golden Jubilee of Comprehensive High School, Ilutitun Osoro, Ondo State. The commissioner will also commission two multi-million naira projects in the school established in 1976 by the Morubodo Community.

The two projects, a befitting and modern gate with rest room and reception facilities for visitors and a well-equipped block of residential building purposely built to accommodate National Youths Service members posted to the school, were built by the school's Old Students' Association.

The National President of CHS Old Students' Association, High Chief Adewale Segun Netufo in a statement said: "The facilities are part of mega projects conceived and being executed by CHSOSA to restore the old glory of the school as well as ensuring that it has up-to-date facilities germane to a requisite environment conducive for teaching and learning in compliant with the School's Motto: "Only The Best is Good For CHS"

Apart from Ajibefun, other dignitaries expected to grace the week-long anniversary were

Sports

Advocates Of Natural Grass Are Doing Nigerian Football A Disservice, Says Egbe

By **Gowon Akpodonor**

THE Chief Executive Officer of Monimechelle Sports Facility Construction Ltd, Ebi Egbe, says anyone advocating for 100 percent natural grass in Nigeria stadium is doing the nation's football a disservice. "Not because natural grass is bad. Natural grass is beautiful, it is excellent, when properly constructed and professionally maintained, natural grass can produce world class football. But there is the uncomfortable question nobody wants to answer," Egbe said in a message to *The Guardian* on Friday.

He asked: "Who will maintain it. What is the maintenance budget? Where are the qualified groundsmen? Where are the pitch maintenance machines? Where is the irrigation programme? Where is the drainage management? Where is the recovery period between matches? Who is testing the pitch? And most importantly, what happens six months after the commissioning ceremony?"

According to him, Nigerian football has developed a dangerous habit. "We build a beautiful natural grass pitch, unveil it, politicians take photographs, officials walk across it and the media celebrates it. Then the maintenance culture disappears. And months later, everybody begins asking what happened to the pitch? I have spent decades around football pitches, and I can say that a football pitch is not a painting. You cannot commission it once and admire it forever."



Egbe

Egbe continues: "A pitch is a living sporting infrastructure. It needs money. It needs science. It needs equipment. It needs qualified people. It needs discipline. And it needs continuous maintenance.

"A pitch can look magnificent in photographs and still fails the real tests of football surface hardness, traction, ball behaviour, uniformity, shock absorption, stability, drainage and overall playability. So why are we still arguing about whether a pitch is 100 percent natural or synthetic as if the percentage alone determines quality? That is the wrong conversation," Egbe stated.

According to him, Monimichelle NETPRO/PRT systems are high performance hybrid synthetic football turf system engineered to deliver the playing characteristics associated with a properly constructed elite natural grass pitch while providing the durability, consistency and all weather reliability of an advanced synthetic system.

"Unlike conventional artificial turf, Monimichelle NETPRO/PRT systems are designed around the principle that the football pitch is a performance surface not just a green carpet. The system focuses on key football requirements including player to surface interaction, traction, stability, shock absorption and reduced injury risk. Others are ball behavior which is consistent ball roll, rebound and pace. In term of durability, it has ability to withstand intensive usage, weather challenges and community to professional demands. And in the area of drainage performance, it is easy maintaining playability during heavy rainfall when properly engineered with the correct sub base and drainage system," Egbe added.

He further explained that conventional Monimichelle NETPRO/PRT Turf are designed mainly for durability and frequent use to reproduce elite football playing characteristics. "Monimichelle's engineered surface approach and natural infill technology are different from natural grass engineered to replicate the response of quality natural grass, where maintenance is difficult. Why hybrid synthetic technology?

"FIFA recognises that football surfaces can include natural grass, hybrid systems and synthetic football turf, with each option having different performance and maintenance considerations. Synthetic football turf systems that meet FIFA standards undergo laboratory and field testing covering areas such as player interaction, ball interaction, durability and safety.

"The Monimichelle PRT system at Remo Stars Stadium achieved FIFA Quality certification after testing of the installed pitch, including performance characteristics such as ball roll, rebound, durability and player-surface interaction. Monimichelle NETPRO / PRT hybrid synthetic turf system is the future of African elite football pitches because it represents a shift from simply building football fields to engineering football performance environments. Football needs a playable pitch not merely a beautiful story and content pictures about it.

"When you watch the Super Eagles play at home, you will be complaing about their slow pace and poor ball control. The problem is not the players but the pitch. The grass at Uyo stadium in which they plan now is 15 years old."

Business

Echono-led TETFund Facilitates Industrial Harmony In Higher Institutions

INDUSTRIAl actions in Nigeria's public tertiary institutions have profound and multifaceted effects on the educational system, students, faculty and the overall socio-economic landscape. These disruptions often stem from disputes over issues such as inadequate funding, poor working conditions and disagreements on policy implementation. The consequences of these industrial actions are far-reaching and impact the various aspects of the educational sector.

One of the primary repercussions of strikes by academic and non-academic staff is the disruption of academic calendars, as they lead to the postponement or cancellation of classes, examinations and other academic activities. This instability affects students' academic progress, resulting in extended graduation timelines and delays in the entry of qualified graduates into the workforce. The educational quality may also suffer as interruptions hinder the smooth flow of curriculum delivery and impede the completion of syllabi.

Furthermore, industrial actions contribute to the deterioration of the relationship between students and faculty. Students may become frustrated and disillusioned due to the uncertainty surrounding their education. The trust and respect for educators erode, leading to a decline in the overall learning experience. This strained relationship negatively impacts the development of critical thinking skills, which are essential for producing well-rounded and competent graduates.

Financial implications are another significant aspect. Students and their families invest considerable resources in education, including tuition fees, accommodation and other related expenses. When strikes occur, the value of this investment diminishes as educational services are disrupted.

Additionally, while the development causes loss of reputation and credibility, as potential students and donors may be deterred by the instability and uncertainty caused by the strike, the reputation of Nigerian tertiary institutions suffer, leading to a decline in enrollment and potential financial challenges for the institutions themselves.

Also, the brain drain phenomenon exacerbates the consequences of industrial actions in higher institutions. Talented and experienced educators may seek employment opportunities abroad due to the instability in the Nigerian education system. This loss of skilled professionals contributes to a decline in the overall quality of education, as institutions struggle to maintain a competent and motivated academic staff.

Socially, the impact is felt across communities and the nation as a whole. The education sector plays a pivotal role in national development, and disruptions caused by industrial actions impede progress. The lack of skilled graduates entering the workforce hampers economic growth, innovation, and the development of a knowledgeable citizenry capable of addressing societal challenges.

In the same vein, the negative effects extend to research and innovation. Continuous disruptions impede research projects, collaborations, and the ability of institutions to contribute meaningfully to advancements in various fields. This, in turn, affects the global competitiveness of Nigerian tertiary institutions and undermines their potential to be recognized as hubs of knowledge and innovation.

Industry experts believed that addressing the root causes of these disputes, such as inadequate funding and poor working conditions, is crucial to fostering a stable and productive educational environment. According to them, only through sustained efforts to resolve these issues can Nigerian tertiary institutions fulfill their role in shaping the future of the nation and contributing to global knowledge and innovation.

Since assumption of office, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration has taken significant strides towards ensuring industrial harmony in public tertiary institutions in line with its Renewed Hope Agenda. At the heart of this is the Executive Secretary, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), Arch Sunny Echono.

In his determination to reposition public tertiary institutions and ensure industrial harmony in the Ivory Towers, the Executive Secretary occasionally meet with members and leadership of various unions of TETFund beneficiary institutions. For significant interactions.

For the Fund, the meeting serves for proactive engagement against the backdrop of the prevailing challenges in public schools with a view to sustaining the steady growth and development of the tertiary education sub-sector.

Echono was of the firm belief that a key success factor remains a consistent engagement and brainstorming on how best to improve the sub-sector.

Aside providing enabling environment for participants to understand some of the challenges and difficulties in the delivery of quality education in the nation's institutions, the meeting equally serves as a platform to discuss towards mitigating incidences of industrial disputes in the tertiary education sector as well as look at ways to prevent and avoid their occurrences.

Furthermore, it affords the opportunity to build and solidify cooperation and collaboration between the Fund, its beneficiary institutions and the unions on matters that affect the growth and development of tertiary education in the country. It is a common knowledge that the primary mandate of the Fund is to rehabilitate, restore and consolidate tertiary education in the country using funding alongside project management, and Arc. Echono has been committed to this goal since assumption of office.



Echono

Addressing participants in one of such for a, Echono said: "Education occupies an important place in the scheme of things not only in Nigeria but globally. Specifically, nations have relied on the tertiary education sub-sector for the development of the critical manpower needed in all sectors, for development and industrialization.

"The world is currently faced with several consequential challenges that include among others climate change and population explosion.

TheGuardianSports

www.guardian.ng

AFCON 2027 Race

Super Eagles Survive Madagascar's Scare In Uyo

By Gowon Akpodonor

SUPER Eagles began their 2027 AFCON qualifiers on Friday with a slim 2-1 victory over visiting Madagascar at the Godswill Akpabio Stadium in Uyo. Nigeria came from a goal down to secure the victory.

George Ilenikhena and Moses Usor goals cancelled out Madagascar first half strike to ignite a win for Nigeria.

Ehsan Kari put Madagascar ahead in the 16th minute with a free header which followed a quick corner kick setup. The goal erected a damning silence at the stadium.

Madagascar had series of chances to double their lead in the game after their 16th minute goal.

Midfielder, Alex Iwobi set up debutant, Ilenikhena with a defense splitting pass who finished off the move with a left footed strike that gave Nigeria the equalizer on the stroke of halftime.

On the return from the break, Madagascar winger, El Hadary Raheriniaina threw away the best chance of the game from a one on one situation against Nigeria's goalkeper, Stanley Nwabali.

The introduction of Usor, Moses Simon, Taiwo Awoniyi and Tolu Arokodare in the second half provided the much needed energy for the Nigeria while they search for the winner on home soil.

Tricky winger, Usor raced through from the halfway line as he dribbled his way to send a low effort which gave the Super Eagles the lead in the 65th minute. It was also his maiden goal in the national team.



The Super Eagles celebrate victory

The win gives the Super Eagles three point on the log as they face Guinea Bissau in their second game in Morocco on Tuesday, September 29.

Adeleke: 'To Repair Warri Stadium Pitch After Any Social Event Will Cost N12million'

By Gowon Akpodonor

TO preserve the newly installed pitch of Warri City Stadium, the Managing Director of Peculiar Ultimate Concerns Ltd, Lanre Adeleke, has advised government and people of Delta State not to use the playing turf for any social event outside football.

"One thing is for the government to spend huge amount of money to construct this beautiful pitch, but another thing is for those incharge of the stadium to maintain it. It will require the sum of N12million to bring the pitch of Warri City Stadium back to standard if it is used for any social event outside football," Adeleke told *The Guardian* during an inspection tour of the stadium.

For years, past Governors in Delta State have been looking for a solution to the pitch of Warri City Stadium, which is usually flooded once it rains. The flood issue denied the City of Warri the opportunity of hosting the 2009 FIFA U17 World Cup.

To arrest the situation, Governor Sheriff Oborevwori decided to hand the renovation of the stadium to Peculiar Ultimate Concerns Ltd headed by Lanre Adeleke, who engaged pitch experts, including those that fixed playing pitches in Cote d'Ivoire. Apart from opening four drainage channels to take water out of the stadium, Adeleke and his team of engineers laid four differed layers for the playing pitch to sit on.

Now, the pitch of Warri Stadium is ready to host the Super Eagles, going by the declaration of two ex-internationals, Segun Odegbami and Mutiu Adepoju during the tour.

However, Adeleke emphasised the critical need for a sustainable maintenance culture to preserve the playing turf, saying that establishing a proper, long-term maintenance system is essential to keep the stadium's playing surfaces and infrastructure in top shape.

He told *The Guardian* that the natural paspalum grass turf installed at Warri City Stadium matches the standard of playing surfaces anywhere else in the world.

"This pitch is ready for play. The renovation is a robust four-level drainage system engineered to combat regional flooding and waterlogging during heavy rainfall."

But those saddled with the responsibility of keeping the stadium must not allow the pitch to host any social event outside football. It is not even all manners of football that should be brought here. For any social event, including church programmes, political rallies and musical concerts to take place here, there are certain things involved. First, there is a special equipment that must be rolled over the pitch to prevent the grass from any form of damage. It cost N12million to do so.



Former Green Eagles captain, Segun Odegbami (right) greets one of the expatriate Engineers that delivered the Warri City Stadium pitch during a tour of the facilities

All Set For 2026 Herizon Cup

THE 2026 edition of Herizon Cup will hold between November 6 and 7 at the Bariga Stadium CMS, Lagos, the tournament organisers, Herizon Sports Initiative (HSI), has said.

The tournament, according to the body, is positioned within HSI's broader commitment to develop female football in Nigeria, create access and pathways for girls, and strengthen grassroots football development.

According to the body, the Herizon Cup serves as far more than an annual tournament.

The event is designed to identify, develop, and showcase young female football talent, and also combine competitive sports with structured mentorship and youth empowerment. This year's tournament, according to the Founder of Herizon Sports Initiative, Ibidiyoin Aina, will bring together eight female football academies and over 200 players.

Over 1,500 spectators, sports administrators, corporate leaders, and scouts are expected to attend the two action-day event.

"As an NGO dedicated to female football development, HSI has established a recognised platform dedicated to expand career opportunities, skills development, and visibility for young women in sports," Aina said.

"Since the event was launched in 2024, HSI has successfully doubled participation in its flagship Herizon Cup from four teams in 2024 to eight teams in 2025, directly engaging over 260 young female footballers and reaching more than 600 key stakeholders, including parents, coaches, sports professionals, and community leaders.

"HSI's track record of impactful initiatives includes organizing the inaugural Ibidoyin Aina Cup in May 2024 and its second edition in December 2025, as well as delivering a targeted leadership and mentorship program for 100 girls across 20 football academies in March 2026 in collaboration with the Lagos State Football Association (LSFA)."

Demonstrating its ongoing contribution to female football development, HSI also pioneered the Lagos Queens Cup in July 2026, Nigeria's premier international women's football scouting tournament hosted in partnership with LSFA, AFEC, Nakamura, 36 Lion Investment, and the Ayisat Yusuf Foundation, which brought in international scouts from Finland and Sweden to open global pathways for emerging Nigerian talent.

"The Herizon Cup is more than just a football tournament. It is a structured platform within our broader commitment to develop female football in Nigeria and create long-term pathways for young girls," Aina added.

"It is driven by our mission of Access, Development, and Visibility, and guided by our vision to Empower, Lead, Inspire, and Transform. Our focus for this third edition is on deepening our impact, strengthening grassroots structures, and expanding opportunities for girls both on and off the pitch."



Winners of the 2026 edition of Herizon Cup

Yayi Backs 2026 Abeokuta 10Km Race

By Gowon Akpodonor

SENATOR Solomon Olamilekan Adeola, poularly known as YAYI, has thrown his weight behind the 2026 Abeokuta 10KM Race, confirming his intention to attend the fifth edition of the road-running event scheduled for October 3.

Adeola, who represents Ogun West Senatorial District in the National Assembly and is the All Progressives Congress (APC) governorship candidate in Ogun State, gave the assurance during a courtesy visit by the Managing Director of Nilayo Sports Management Limited (NSML), Mrs Yetunde Olopade.

The visit was part of the formal invitation to the senator to attend the race, which is being held in his honour in recognition of his contributions to youth and sports development in Ogun State.

Adeola commended Olopade for taking over the leadership of Nilayo Sports Management Limited and expressed his delight at the progress recorded by the organisation under her stewardship.

"Let me start by thanking you for taking up the mantle of leadership of the company. I was truly delighted when I learnt that you are the one in charge," Adeola said.

The senator also appreciated the decision to honour him through the Abeokuta 10KM Race, pledging to make every effort to be present despite his official engagements.

"As for the race, I want to sincerely thank you for organising it in my honour. You have honoured me, and I appreciate the gesture with every sense of responsibility."

Nigeria Impresses ANOCA Ahead African School Games

NIGERIA'S preparations to host the 2nd African School Games, Abuja 2027, received a major boost at the Extraordinary Session of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) General Assembly, held at the Hilton Hotel, Nagoya, Japan.

The Assembly brought together ANOCA leadership, representatives of African National Olympic Committees, invited guests and key stakeholders from across the Olympic Movement, including the leadership of the Caribbean Association of National Olympic Committees (CANOC) and the Oceania National Olympic Committees (ONOC).

Nigeria was given the platform to provide an update on Abuja 2027 following the award of the hosting rights to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The presentation was delivered by the Chairman of the Local Organising Committee (LOC), Mr. Lekan Abari, following an introduction by the President of the Nigeria Olympic Committee, Habu Gumel.

Presenting Abuja 2027, Mr. Abari situated the project within the mandate given by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to secure the hosting rights and ensure the successful delivery of the Games.

Saturday 's UEFA Nations League

Group 1
Slovenia Vs Scotland 14:00
San Marino Vs Finland 17:00
North Macedonia Vs Switzerland 19:45
Albania Vs Belarus 19:45

Group 3
Faroe Islands Vs Kazakhstan 17:00
Czech Republic Vs Croatia 19:45
England Vs Spain 19:45
Slovakia Vs Moldova 19:45

Group 4
Bulgaria Vs Luxembourg 17:00
Iceland Vs Estonia 17:00

Saturday's CAF Africa Cup of Nations Qualifiers

Group D
Kenya Vs Eritrea 14:00
South Africa Vs Guinea 14:00

Saturday's Nigerian Premier League

Sporting Lagos Vs Barau 16:00

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Conscience, Nurtured by Truth
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September 26 – 27, 2026



Super Eagles Survive Madagascar's Scare In Uyo
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INSIDE STUFF WITH MARTINS OLOJA



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#2027: Tinubu, Wike And Danger Of Assumptions

'The Absentee President And The Loud Minister'

THERE are two images that define Nigeria as the world gathered at the 80th United Nations General Assembly in New York in September 2026.

Image One: President Emmanuel Macron of France - the host of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in Paris - leaves Paris, flies to New York, takes the podium, and speaks for France. **Image Two:** President Bola Ahmed Tinubu stays back in France on vacation, again. For the third year since 2024, Nigeria's President is not at UNGA-2026. He has not been at the world's biggest diplomatic table after his first year in 2023.

He sends his **Vice President, Kashim Shettima**, for the third time. The Vice President stood in for the President on Thursday September 24, 2026 in New York. This is not a small matter. It is a dangerous assumption. The assumption that it doesn't matter. The UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, has just reiterated that Africa must have a permanent seat at the UN Security Council. Nigeria - the most populous black nation on earth, the largest economy in Africa, the leader of ECOWAS, a country that led the fight against apartheid and peacekeeping in Liberia and Sierra Leone - is demanding that seat.

But how do you demand a seat at the big table when you are absent from the table for three years in a row?

Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine, under bombardment, was in New York to address the world. The President of Iran, Masoud Pezeshkian under sanctions, was there. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu facing wars at home and in Iran was there. Prime Ministers of small island states threatened by climate change disasters were there. Nigeria is missing.

And that road to New York 2026 will not forget this curious absence. Diplomats have long memories. Permanent membership is not given to absentee landlords.

This absence is a metaphor for the whole dangerous assumptions governing Nigeria today: That you can govern without being present. That you can win elections without talking to the people properly. That you can win an election and lose the country. And in Abuja, that assumption has a loud, reckless megaphone: The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike. If President Tinubu's danger is absence, Wike's danger is presence - too much, too reckless, too anti-democratic. And the President tolerates him.

This article is a subtle warning: Tinubu and Wike must swallow their pride and vanity and talk directly to the people. They must apologise where necessary. They must deliver messages of hope, not dangerous assumptions that they can win elections without security and welfare of the people – the primary purpose of government under Section 14(2)(b) of our Constitution. Otherwise, they may win an election in 2027 and lose the country that did not vote for them.

'The UNGA absence: A Symptom of a bigger disease'

THE UN General Assembly is not tourism. It is where you state your diplomatic priorities. In 2025, Nigeria wanted to re-negotiate debt, attract climate finance, and push for Security Council reform. The President was in Europe. In 2026, with food inflation at over 37%, energy tariffs crippling small businesses, and insecurity in Benue, Plateau, Borno, and Zamfara, we needed to be at UNGA to make a case for investment, humanitarian support, and global solidarity. Again, the President was away in Europe. What message does this send? It tells foreign investors: Nigeria is not serious. It tells Nigerians: The President does not feel your pain at this perilous time.

It tells the UN: Nigeria does not care about multilateralism.

This is dangerous assumption number one: That optics don't matter. That leadership is not physical and moral presence.

You cannot be in France when French President is in New York fighting for France. You diminish Nigeria. Yes, the Vice President was there again. The Vice President is competent. But sending the VP three times in three years devalues the presidency itself. The world knows that the President is the one who makes final deals in the corridors of UNGA - not the VP. Nigeria must be present to be taken seriously. Absence is not strategy. It is abdication.

'WIKE - The Minister who thinks he is the President's "Man Friday'

IF Tinubu's flaw is silence, Wike's flaw is noise. Wike, FCT Minister is an appointee of the President. He acts like a co-President, a Prime Minister, a party chairman of all parties. In the last 60 days alone, Wike has committed three reckless anti-democratic statements that any President serious about democracy would have rebuked:

'Reckless statement one: The confession of 2023 sabotage'. The other day, Wike incredibly exposed how he and his G-5 governors sabotaged Atiku Abubakar of the PDP in 2023 to pave way for Tinubu. Whether you like Atiku or not, this is an incredible self-indictment. You are a PDP chieftain who worked against your own party's presidential candidate and you are boasting about it on national television? What is the moral lesson for young politicians? That treachery is a virtue? That anti-party activity is now state policy? And so far, President Tinubu has said nothing. Silence means endorsement.

Reckless statement two: 'Should have given me Osun to win at all cost'

EARLIER, Wike told the nation that if the President had wanted to win Osun State, he should have given him the job to win "at all cost."

At all cost? What does that mean? In a democracy, "at all cost" is not a phrase. In a democracy, you win by persuasion, by performance, by manifestos. "At all cost" belongs to military garrisons, not to ballot boxes.

Osun state people heard that. They are proud people. You are telling them you would have captured them at all cost? That is an insult to their democratic intelligence. That is a reproach to Nigerians who employed Wike's principal.

Reckless statement three: 'Blocking Fubara's second term'

THE same Wike boasted he influenced a party he doesn't belong to - the APC - to prevent Governor Siminalayi Fubara of Rivers State from having a second term. Think about it: A man who says he is PDP is deciding who gets ticket in APC in Rivers state. Where is party ideology? Where is internal democracy? This is godfatherism taken to a new, brazen level.

Reckless statement four: 'Calling 30+ APC Governors lazy'. Wike has been calling all APC governors - more than thirty of them - lazy.

These are elected governors of the ruling party. You are an appointee calling elected men lazy? On what record? What have you built in FCT that is more than what all the 30 + governors have achieved? This is dangerous. You are alienating



Tinubu



Wike

the very governors whose structures Tinubu needs to win 2027. Wike wants the ruling APC to take orders from him as leader of a 'rainbow coalition' just to woo opposition to support Tinubu? A man who has no structure outside Rivers and Abuja wants to be commander of APC governors? This is vanity. This is pride. This is anti-democratic. And again, that presidential tolerance has created a culture of impunity.

'Security and welfare': Today, what is the security and welfare situation?

Food inflation is a national emergency: A bag of rice that was N35, 000 in May 2023 is now N110, 000. Beans is beyond the reach of civil servants. A crate of eggs is N7, 500. The President's own policy of fuel subsidy removal without cushioning has driven food transport cost 400% up. People are hungry. Not because they are lazy. Because policy has made them hungry.

'Energy poverty' Band A tariff is now N225 per kWh. Diesel is N2000 per litre. Small welders, barbers, cold-room owners have shut down. How do you create jobs when energy kills business?

Insecurity: Benue is still bleeding. Plateau is still hurting. Zamfara has become a danger zone. Niger state is burning. Kwara state is still smarting. The North West is ungoverned in places. Farmers cannot go to farms in the food basket. North East has become a bad ulcer that defies medications applied to it. The entire South too has become uneasy. This is the state of the nation. But what are Tinubu and Wike talking about? 2027 permutations. Who will sabotage who. Who will win Osun at all cost. Who will stop Fubara.

This is dangerous assumption number two:

THAT Nigerians will vote for you even when they are hungry, in darkness, and insecure, just because you have a coalition of governors and ex-governors? History says otherwise. Goodluck Jonathan had governors in 2015 and lost. Incumbency without performance is an illusion.

'Winning election and losing the country – The real danger'. Winning the election and losing the country happened in Kenya in 2007. It happened in Liberia. It means you use state capture to win votes, but the people you are supposed to govern no longer believe in you. So you rule over a territory, not a nation. Tinubu and Wike are on that road if they continue like this.

The legitimacy deficit: If you win because Wike delivered Rivers at all cost, and because 30 governors were forced to align, but 80 million Nigerians who are hungry did not vote for you, you will have legal power but no moral authority. And without moral authority, you cannot implement painful reforms without consequences.

The youth factor: 70% of Nigeria is under 35. They don't care about G-5. They care about data, food, light, jobs. They are not in APC or PDP. They are on TikTok, Instagram, X. They will not be wooed by Wike's boisterous press conferences. They need hope. You are giving them threats.

The Wike liability: Wike once portrayed as "an untouchable genius" here, is becoming a liability, not an asset. Every time he insults governors, he creates enemies for Tinubu. Every time he brags about sabotage, he tells Nigerians that Tinubu's 2023 victory was not based on ideas but on sabotage. Is that the story you want to go to 2027 with? A President must know when to call his minister to order. Tinubu's refusal to do so emboldens impunity.

'What they must do now – Swallow pride and vanity, apologise, talk to the people'. This is not too late. Nigeria forgives. But leaders must be humble.

President Tinubu must return and be seen: End the endless foreign vacations. Be in Nigeria. Visit Benue IDP camps. Visit markets. The optics of a President who feels the pain matters. He should have been at UNGA. He must be at the next AU, ECOWAS, and UN. Absence must end.

Call Wike to order publicly: Wike must be told that Ministers don't threaten states with "win at all cost." Ministers don't decide who gets second term in Rivers. Ministers don't call 30 + elected governors lazy.

Replace dangerous assumptions with messages of hope: Stop talking about 2027 as if it is a war to be won at all cost. Start talking about 2025-2026 as years to deliver food, electricity, security. Tell Nigerians: How will food inflation come down from 40% to 15% in 12 months? How will you make electricity affordable again for artisans? How will you stop kidnapping in schools? That is what Section 14(2)(b) demands. The danger of their assumptions is this: They assume power is permanent if you capture structures. But power is ephemeral if you lose people. You can win Rivers at all cost and lose Nigeria. You can sabotage Atiku and lose the trust of honest politicians. You can call governors lazy and find no governor to stand with you when the real storm comes. History is full of men who won elections and lost countries. We do not want Tinubu to join that list. He has the chance to be a great reformer. But reform requires humility, presence, and empathy - not absence in France and noisy impunity in Abuja.

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