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FROM THE ARCHIVE

Only women,children and pets are loved the men are only loved if they provides

Support Damagum Or Leave The Party – PDP

Trump's presidency was highly misunderstood, drawn the world closer in six days



Rivers Assembly crisis: Court adjourns case till February 17

Trump's presidency was highly misunderstood, drawn the world closer in six days



The return of Donald Trump to the US presidency has sparked a mix of reactions globally, with many wondering what this means for democracy and leadership. To understand the implications, let's dive into some key takeaways from Trump's victory. From the outset, Trump's presidency has been so far defined by the mainstream media as what looks like chaos, controversy, and a relentless pace of news.

But in just five days, Trump's presidency has generated enough headlines and news cycles to fill a typical president's entire first term. This breakneck pace has left many in the media and the public struggling to keep up, with opinion writers' conclusions likely reflecting the sense of exhaustion and overwhelm that's become all too familiar in the Trump era. Trump's just five days in office is indeed feeling like a full term and this carries some significant weight.

The world is beginning to see a reflection of the unprecedented nature of Trump's presidency and the ways in which it's defied conventional norms and expectations. As the news continues to unfold at a dizzying pace, one thing is clear: with Trump in the White House, every day feels like a lifetime." Yes, America is a beacon to the world and election of its president has remarkable consequences all over. The world is beginning to see the strong man in charge of this self-styled beacon who campaigned boldly with a mantra, "Americanism, not globalism" will lead the way. And he reiterated that five days ago in his inaugural address: part of his words in the second paragraph of the inaugural address:

"…From this day forward, our country will flourish and be respected again all over the world. We will be the envy of every nation, and we will not allow ourselves to be taken advantage of any longer. During every single day of the Trump administration, I will, very simply, put America first…"

Hurricane Trump has been rehired at a time the value of US global influence is under question, regional powers are going their own way, autocratic regimes are making their own alliances, and the devastating wars in Gaza, Ukraine and elsewhere are raising uncomfortable questions about the value of Washington's role. But like it or not, America matters by dint of its economic and military strength, and its major role in many alliances. The mercurial leader isn't a friend to so many politicians and leaders around the world. But even as we ponder over a brand new world order under Trump in the next four years, we need to reflect on some salient lessons from the politics and strategies of this man who survived two assassination attempts during last year's election campaigns. Yes it is a time for reflections on the global consequences of this very remarkable election that returned Trump to power. Let's face the facts:

Trump's return to power has been influenced by various factors, but it's challenging to pinpoint the exact impact of his emphasis on the Founding Fathers' values. We can explore and learn how his messaging and policies resonated with his supporters and contributed to his return. We now have a great deal to learn from Trump's campaign strategy, inaugural address and subsequent executive orders, which highlighted his focus on "America First" policies, energy dominance, and economic growth. These themes aligned with his interpretation of the Founding Fathers' values, emphasising self-reliance, limited government intervention, and American exceptionalism. Where are the politicians in Africa's most populous nation who will focus on Nigeria first at this time?

When last did our politicians and leaders here have the grace to remember our Founding Fathers from the North to the South? By tapping into this narrative, Trump appealed to his base, who saw him as a champion of traditional American values. His rhetoric on energy independence, for instance, resonated with voters in states like Texas, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, where the energy industry plays a significant role.

One of the key areas where Trump's emphasis on the Founding Fathers' values influenced his return to power was in his approach to energy policy. On day one, Trump signed executive orders aimed at boosting oil and gas production, rolling back environmental regulations, and promoting American energy exports. These moves were seen as a return to the country's founding principles of self-reliance and economic growth. After more than 25 years of unbroken democracy, what are the legacies of our leaders including the current ones who have imposed the most unbearable energy prices on the citizens and businesses?

Moreover, Trump's focus on energy dominance and economic growth helped him win over voters in key battleground states. His policies aimed at increasing domestic energy production and reducing reliance on foreign oil resonated with voters who saw energy independence as a matter of national security and economic stability. Where are the Nigerian leaders and politicians who will see energy independence and subsidy as a matter of national security and economic stability?

Yes, we are good at blasting Trump's style everywhere we talk and write. However, it's essential to note that Trump's return to power was also influenced by various other factors, including his populist appeal, the Republican Party's mobilisation efforts powered by recourse to the values that put God first as reflected in their currency: 'In God we trust', a value the globalists and indeed liberal democrats have been trying to remove from their currency.

Trump's recourse to "In God We Trust" and the Christian foundation of American conservative values played a significant role in his return to power. Trump's strategy involved portraying himself as a champion of Christian values and a defender of America's religious heritage. During the campaign, he promised to "bring back God" into the public square and restore the country to its former glory, which he claimed had been eroded since he left office. Let no one tell me that God had no place in your business ethics and political development.

What is more, let our leaders reflect this weekend on this: while it's difficult to quantify the exact impact of Trump's emphasis on the Founding Fathers' values on his return to power, it's clear that his messaging and policies resonated with his supporters and contributed to his victory. By tapping into the narrative of American exceptionalism and self-reliance, Trump was able to appeal to voters who saw him as a champion of traditional American values. When will those who intend to take over from Tinubu appeal to voters as champions of traditional Nigerian values of hard work, resilience, boldness, brilliance, etc that built the bridges and business districts in Lagos, Cocoa House, first television station and even stadium in Africa in Ibadan, Northern Nigeria Development Company in Kaduna, world-class enterprise spirit in the East, solid universities in Ibadan, Ile Ife, Zaria, Lagos, Nsukka, Benin, Jos, Maiduguri before the current crop of selfish dealers who call themselves leaders?

Other key takeaways for leaders:

Adaptability is crucial: Trump's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and pivot when necessary has been a key factor in his success.

Emotional connection matters too: Trump's campaign successfully tapped into the emotions and concerns of his base, demonstrating the importance of emotional connection in politics.

Institutional resilience is vital: The US democratic system has faced significant challenges even during Trump's first presidency. The resilience of institutions and the rule of law have been essential in navigating the their challenges. The United States can be proud of their strong institutions and knowledge development, civil competence power to debate issues of serious concerns. Fears about Trump's tyranny are unfounded in the face of strong institutions we don't have in Africa. That is a great lesson: nations need strong institutions of governance to make democracy safe for economic development. Ultimately, the return of Donald Trump to the US presidency offers valuable lessons for leaders and democracies around the world. As we move forward, it's essential to prioritize adaptability, emotional connection, and institutional resilience.

Trump and never-say-die spirit in politics

Trump's presidency has been a testament to the power of resilience and a never-say-die spirit in politics. Despite facing intense opposition and criticism, Trump has continued to push forward with his agenda, often using unconventional tactics to achieve his goals. He just achieved that with a big win.

While Trump's presidency has been polarising and even controversial, there are still lessons that can be learned from his resilience and politics for development. Here are a few key takeaways:

Trust yourself: One of the most important aspects of Trump's resilience is his ability to trust himself and his own instincts. This self-confidence has allowed him to stay focused and motivated, even in the face of intense opposition.

Find your tribe: Trump's connection with his base has been a key factor in his resilience. By finding and mobilising a dedicated group of supporters, Trump has been able to maintain a sense of momentum and energy.

Be willing to challenge norms: Trump's willingness to challenge traditional norms and institutions has been a key aspect of his resilience. By doing so, he has been able to create a sense of uncertainty and disruption, which has often worked to his advantage.

Stay focused and adaptable: Trump's ability to stay focused and adaptable has been key to his success in politics. By being able to pivot and adjust to new circumstances, Trump has been able to stay ahead of his opponents and maintain a sense of momentum.

These are some attributes our politicians and emerging leaders should imbibe instead of piling up money to rig elections and then ask opponents to go to courts where they are sure of victory by only a few judicial 'voters'.

So, leaders who would like to put Nigeria first should mobilise all machinery of governance to ensure that energy costs to people and businesses are brought down to affordable level.

Those who would like to put Nigerianism above politics and self-interest would not encourage constant borrowing for consumption and expensive and insufferable personal emoluments including inexplicable retirement benefits for political and military officers. Those who would like to put Nigeria first would want to fund higher education robustly as quality in education is the only weapon of country and global competitiveness. Leaders who would like to put Nigeria first would restructure the civil service to prevent the public enemy number one called corruption instead of celebrating a few officers caught after successful looting of the treasury. And so, for us in the most populous black nation on earth, when shall we be blessed with leaders who will borrow from the brilliance of President Trump whose only five days in office appear to be convincing enough that leaders need to put public interest above life-long ambition nurtured only by personal interest? When will our leaders begin to put Nigeria first? When shall we the people too develop civic competence to demand this responsibility from our leaders?

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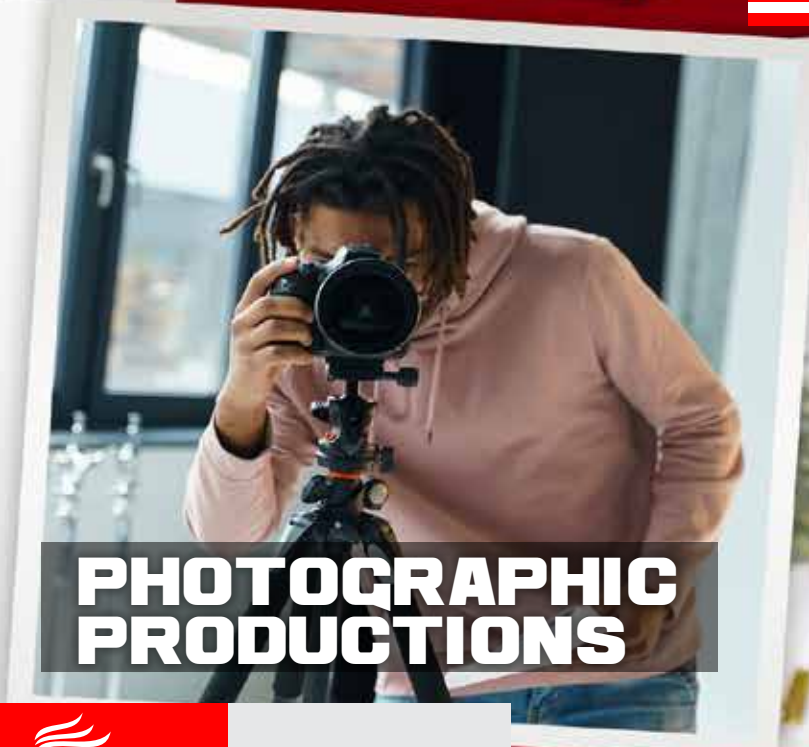
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Rivers Assembly crisis: Court adjourns case till February 17



A Federal High Court sitting in Port Harcourt has adjourned, till February 17, 2025, for the adoption of all court processes in a suit filed by the Pro-Fubara Rivers State House of Assembly members, against the 27 Pro-Wike lawmakers.

The Pro-Fubara lawmakers are challenging the status and legitimacy of 27 other members of the state Assembly following their defection from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to the All Progressives Congress (APC).

During the hearing yesterday, counsel to Martin Amaewhule and 14 others, Ferdinand Orbih, informed the court that some filed processes were missing from the case file. He requested an adjournment to trace the documents, a request that was not opposed by the other parties.

Meanwhile, the Attorney General of Rivers State and Commissioner for Justice, Dagogo Israel-Iboroma, asked the judge to direct all parties to verify and regularise their processes at least four days before the next hearing date to prevent further delays, which was accepted by the presiding judge.

Justice Emmanuel Obile, after listening to submissions from the counsels, granted the request and adjourned the matter to February 17, 2025, for the adoption of all processes filed in the suit.

HOWEVER, the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Pastor Enoch AdejareAdeboye, paid a courtesy visit to the Rivers State Governor, SiminalayiFubara, at the Government House, Port Harcourt, yesterday.

During the visit, Adeboye prayed for the governor, his family, the state government, and peace, unity, and progress. The revered cleric also presented gifts to the governor as a symbol of goodwill and spiritual blessing.

Fubara was joined by the Secretary to the State Government, Dr. Tammy Danagogo, during the visit and Adeboye was accompanied by senior pastors, church leaders, and other members of his entourage.

The visit is seen as a significant gesture of spiritual support for the governor and the people of Rivers State.

Adeboye's prayers for peace, unity, and progress are particularly relevant given the state's history of challenges and its ongoing efforts to promote development and prosperity.

Enugu registers 80,240 farmers in 18 months

The Enugu State Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Industrialization says it has registered no fewer than 80,240 farmers within the last 18 months in its ongoing farmers registration.

The Commissioner for the Ministry, Dr Patrick Ubru, told newsmen in Enugu on Friday that the 80,240 farmers are duly verified with vital details such as verifiable residential and farm addresses.

He said that "the ongoing diligent registration" was the first mandate given to the ministry by Governor Peter Mbah.

The commissioner noted that Governor Mbah wanted to ensure that genuine farmers were identified and given necessary inputs and technical support to make agriculture a "big business in the state".

According to Ubru, the ministry collected their National Identity Numbers (NINs); cellphone numbers; the farming cooperative society they belong to (if they belong); and the capacity of the farming they are current involved in.

"We also classified the agricultural practice they engaged in such as: plantations of various economic crops/plants; crop farming such as tubers, cereals, vegetables and spices; exotic plant/horticulture; animal husbandry, poultry and fishery among others.

"We also registered agro-industrialists such as middlemen and women in value-chain addition; produce middle market men and women as well as produce off-takers as well.

"The ministry also sends its staff to do secret verification to locate the claimed farm or agriculture practice sites most times," he said.

Ubru noted that the Governor Mbah administration had effectively stopped the issue of "political farmers" with the ongoing registration.

He said that previously, political farmers, with no farms or idea of farming, held sway in the state without any actual farming activities.

The commissioner said that the political farmers' activities drove away the real farmers, and the support supposed to be given to them directly was diverted.

He said, "At a time before the emergence of Gov. Mbah, most genuine farmers lost interest in farming, as no government input and technical support was given to them.

"Today, we have real farmers and our agriculture-loving governor has increased funding in agriculture activities and food production.

"Gov. Mbah is doing this through robust farmers' participation in state-fashioned agricultural and agro-industrialisation programmes as well as in Federal and international institutions agricultural programmes and projects."

Abia: Otti reaffirms commitment to private, public sector partnership

Abia State Governor, Dr. Alex Otti, has reaffirmed his government's commitment to creating the enabling environment for businesses to thrive. The governor also promised to continue supporting private/public sector partnerships that would create jobs for Abia citizens.

Speaking while commissioning the new Jovita Mall in Aba, last weekend, Otti urged the private sector operators to invest in the state, saying that the government had put in place measures that would aid businesses to grow.

The governor, who was represented by the Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Kenneth Kalu, said: "This is the time for all to invest in Abia State. It is no longer a time when you will express doubt about a government in power.

"So, bring back those businesses from Abuja, from Lagos and from anywhere, Abia is open for business."Otti said that his government has shown that it is very intentional and determined to change the narratives of governance in Abia State.

"If you look around, you can see infrastructure development across all parts of the state; you can feel the government's investment in security, determination to secure the lives and property of those who live or do business in Abia," Otti stated.

He said that the government has shown by its actions that it is determined to change the narratives of governance in Abia State, while assuring investors that he would create roads and do other infrastructure that would help make business people comfortable.

The governor, who commended the Jovita Group for taken a step that government expects from all other investors within and outside Abia State, thanked the group for understanding and keying into the vision of creating a new Abia.

Earlier, the Special Adviser to the Governor on Trade and Investment, Nwaka Inem, said that Otti's administration in the last 19 months has taken bold steps to revitalize Aba as the epicentre of trade, commerce and industry.

Also speaking at the event, a foremost traditional ruler, Eze Isaac Ikonne, lauded the infrastructural development by Governor Otti in Aba and described it as unprecedented. He prayed for God to bless Governor Otti and enjoined all to support him.

Speaking on behalf of JOVITA Group, Mrs. Jovita Oguta, said that the mall would contribute to the economic development of Abia State through job creation.

Sokoto commissioner unveils roadmap to drive economic growth

Sokoto State Commissioner for Budget and Economic Planning, Dr. Abubakar Mohammed Zayyana, has unveiled the roadmap to drive the state's economic growth. Speaking at a ceremony, Zayyana said it was developed with input from all ministries, departments and agencies of the Sokoto State government with a view to harnessing their planned activities for the proper economic drive of the state.

According to him, the 2025 roadmap would help to sustain the focus of Governor Ahmad Aliyu towards the development of the state.

"I told the management of the ministry that I am coming with a roadmap, which is at the sketchy stage, and needed their inputs for it to work effectively and to hold them accountable," he said.

Zayyana stated that all the departments complied and provided details of their activities for 2025 fiscal year, their purposes, timelines, and cost implications where necessary. He also said that the roadmap contained details of the risks that may likely hinder achieving the target goals as well as the proposed way out.

The commissioner noted that directors and their subordinates are expected to work assiduously for the success of the roadmap of their respective departments, saying that 100 percent result is expected from them.

Zayyana also explained that the plan would be integrated into software to alert department heads of upcoming tasks and equally enable him to assess their performance and identify areas of improvement.

According to him, the software will send alerts to department directors via their email, ensuring they stay on track and avoid delays. He emphasised that the ministry's leadership is committed to supporting innovative ideas from staff members that contribute to the state's economic development.

The commissioner also announced plans to organize management fortnightly meetings to assess progress, address challenges, and identify areas for improvement.

Commenting, the Permanent Secretary of the ministry, Hajiya Maryam Ahmad Barade, eulogized the innovations of the Commissioner, expressing optimism that with his vast knowledge, experience and commitment the ministry would gradually move to greater height.

The Permanent Secretary harped on the need for all staff of the ministry to be more proactive in justifying their assigned duties for the development of the state.

NNPC Foundation offers 1,000 free cataract surgeries in Ogun

The NNPC Foundation says it has offered 1,000 free cataract extraction surgeries to residents of Ogun.

A News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) correspondent, who monitored the exercise, reports that while the screening of patients began in December 2024, the surgeries were performed in January.

A Consultant Ophthalmologist at Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Abeokuta, Dr Peter Abikoye, said on Friday that the surgeries, which also included children, were carried out in four designated centres.

Abikoye, listed the centres to include: FMC, Idi-Aba, Abeokuta; Lukosi Health Centre, Mosimi; FMC, Joga-Orile and FMC. Ajebo, described the exercise as "successful, all-encompassing and all-engaging".

He told NAN that three of the beneficiaries were children, who had successful cataract extraction surgeries performed on them.

The consultant said that the foundation met its target of extracting 1,000 cataracts within a three-week period.

He further stated that 110 surgeries were carried out at Mosimi centre; 51 in Joga-Orile, with the remaining done in FMC, Abeokuta.

Abikoye, however, decried low turn-out at Joga-Orile centre, saying that while 90 cases were recruited, only 51 of the patients showed up for surgery.

"In Ajebo, we had to mobilise patients to travel to the FMC in Abeokuta for their surgeries.

"Unfortunately, the local facility lacked the necessary resources to accommodate our team at that time, and postponing the surgeries wasn't an option," he said.

According to him, enrolling children in such programmes is unusually rare, as pediatric eye care requires highly-specialised expertise.

"Ordinarily, the children would have been referred but the foundation insisted on their care, hence their recruitment," he said.

The consultant stated that a consultant peadiatric pphthalmologist had to be recruited from University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital for the surgery.

"Primarily, in this kind of exercise, we don't normally enroll children because eye care for children is a sub-specialist care.

"Eye care itself is a specialist care but for children, it's a highly-specialised care.

"We give glory to God for the success of the surgeries, and as you can see for yourself, one of the children who came for after-care today has regained her sight," he said.


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Aregbesola Political Godson Is Dead, Details Emerge

Raud Aregbesola, the former governor of Osun state and immediate past minister of interior, has mourned the demised of his political godson, Echekwu Anselem Udoka, known as Orobo Aregbe.

The former governor, popularly referred to as Aregbe, narrated that his personal physician informed him of Orobo Aregbe's admission to his hospital on Monday, January 20. He recalled that the deceased was in a bad state when he was brought to the hospital and was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) with the best medical team on the ground.

According to the former minister in an Instagram post on Thursday, January 23, the late political godson was brought to the hospital unconsciously, but he was assured that the best possible attention would be given to him. He added that he was shaken but was hopeful of a favourable outcome.

Aregbe narrated that when he was later informed of the challenges the team of first-class medical practitioners encountered in their move to revive Orobo Aregbe, he rejected their conclusion or imagined the worst scenario. He recalled he requested a talk with another doctor, whom he pleaded with to do everything in his capacity to revive him, saying Udoka was one of the best human beings he had ever met.

His statement reads in part:

"Anselem was a GEM. As a human being, he was just fantastic; as a politician, OROBO AREGBE was extraordinary in his trust, loyalty, commitment and dedication. He was electrifying in mobilization, tireless in electoral work, ebullient in his disposition, guileless in his works and joyful at all times.

"He was the epitome of loyalty, dedication and commitment to the progressive cause, his friends and me personally. His sterling life will continue to inspire many to worthy causes and the best human virtues."

Aregbesola then extolled Orobo Aregbe's influence in the Igbo progressive political climate in Lagos . Without denying God's grace, he said, "Echekwu Anselem Udoka (Orobo Aregbe) is almost irreplaceable."

The former governor then described the demise of Orobo Aregbe as painful, saying he was a partner and confidant. He said no word would be enough to express his grief about the death of his political godson and the transition of an invaluable partner.



Support Damagum Or Leave The Party – PDP



Elected deputies of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) National Working Committee (NWC) have asked those seeking to remove the party's Acting National Chairman, Amb. Umar Damagum , from office to either live with the fact that he would remain in office until December 2025 or leave the party.

Deputy National Youth Leader, Timothy Osadolor, said this at a briefing in Abuja on Wednesday.

Osadolor, who led four other deputies to the media briefing, noted it was high time party leaders set aside pride and admit that they all played a part in bringing the party to its present sorry state.

He said, "From 2013 till date, personal ambitions have driven us to heights of pure mischief and arrogant use of power.

"This has led to agreements not being kept and the ambiguities in our constitution being exploited by those in position, even through the courts.

"We are all complicit by being perpetrators, supporters or silent. No one is coming to save us, we must stand up and become heroes, we brought ourselves here.

"This is no longer the time for blame game, all have sinned. From the BOT chairman who endorsed an opposition governor to candidates that negotiated and supported other party candidate in promises to get their return support, to NWC members and leaders that lost their polling units.

"We must all come down from our high horses, forget pride for now and join hands with the party as led by Amb. Illya Damagum to reposition this party back to winning ways.

"Court distractions and media demarketing of the PDP must stop forthwith. You do not need to like the officers, but the party is more important.

"If you want to resign and go, be a proper opposition, do not be here and going from TV to radio houses abusing the party.

"The case of the acting national chairman is settled till December 2025, and on that of the national secretary, wait on the courts. Let's learn to love and support PDP first and always."

Osadolor maintained that the PDP was not only dealing with the tyranny of the All Progressives Congress-led federal government against the party and Nigerians but also with the disillusionment of members across the country and beyond.

He listed some of the reasons for this situation to include distrust, insincerity, lack of firm enforcement of agreements, self-serving interests, and unnecessary eye service laced with smooth tongues.

Osadolor further chided unnamed party leaders whom he accused of lurking behind the scenes to cause misunderstanding within the party.

"This behavior is apparently self-serving on their part, as it is not in the interest of the PDP in any way.

"It is ethically and morally wrong for members of the party to move around creating confusion, instead of exploring our internal mechanism for peace," he added.

Those who attended the briefing included Deputy National Youth Leader, Timothy Osadolor, Deputy National Publicity Secretary, Ibrahim Abdullahi, Deputy National Financial Secretary, Ndubisi Eneh, and National Deputy Organising Secretary, Pascal Adigwe.

Tax bills: Governors forum is wrong over 50% vat sharing formula – Group

As the National Assembly considers the proposed Tax Reform Bills, the Citizens Network for Peace and Development in Nigeria (CNPD) has rejected the Nigeria Governors' Forum's (NGF) proposed Value Added Tax (VAT) sharing formula, which allocates 50 per cent based on equity, 30 per cent based on derivation, and 20 per cent based on population.

National Coordinator of CNPD, Mr. Okorie Ikechukwu Raphael, at a press conference held in Abuja on Friday, argued that the NGF formula does not take into account productivity and economic growth, which are critical factors in determining a state's contribution to the national economy.

Raphael contended that by ignoring productivity, the formula may inadvertently penalise states that are making concerted efforts to diversify their economies and promote economic growth.

He urged the National Assembly to reconsider the proposal and adopt a more nuanced approach that rewards productivity and economic growth. CNPD maintained that there is no gainsaying the fact that the proposed tax reform bills has the potential to ensure that revenues derived from taxes are channeled into critical sectors such as education, healthcare, and rural development, thereby reducing poverty and inequality.

"The proposed law focuses on inclusive taxation. Consequently, this reform is aimed at stimulating Small and Medium-scale Enterprises (SMEs), encouraging grassroots entrepreneurship, and fostering economic diversification, as well as sustainable growth for the future generations.



"Specifically, we commend the Tax Reform Bills' provisions that exempt individuals and households earning less than N1 million per year and companies earning less than N50 million per year from taxation. This bold initiative demonstrates the government's commitment to alleviating poverty and promoting economic inclusivity.

"By shielding low-income earners and small businesses from the tax burden, the bill will undoubtedly stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and improve living standards. Given its pro-poor orientation, we strongly advocate for an accelerated passage of the Tax Reform Bills to ensure its timely implementation and realisation of its benefits for the most vulnerable segments of our society," Raphael said.

Applauding President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and his economic team for conceiving the bill, the group stressed that if passed into law and implemented with the right focus and fairness, the bill has the potential to be a cornerstone for poverty alleviation and just economic redistribution in Nigeria.

The group thereby called on the National Assembly to uphold this pro-poor agenda, urging all stakeholders to prioritise the interests of the common man over parochial interests.

Raphael added: "The Tax Reform Bills reiterates the opinion by many that trust in the system is crucial. For this reason, revenues generated through this reform must be transparently managed and accounted for in order to ensure they serve their intended purpose.

"Thus, the bill represents national interest and must not be reduced to divisive politics or regional disagreements. We must guide our unity in our diversity and strengthen the fact that what affects one Nigerian, affects every other person.

"In the same vein, we recommend strongly that as law abiding citizens, it is only right to allow the course of lawmaking to prevail. As such, the Public Hearing stage of this process is positioned to collate various inputs and enhance the people's input into decision-making that affects them. Therefore, those calling for reviews must have a rethink and allow the lawmaking process to commence instead of appearing to scuttle a legitimate democratic process."



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I Would Rather Carry My Poverty With Dignity, Than Be In A Master-Servant Relationship – Shettima Declares At Davos Conference

Vice President Kashim Shettima has stated that Nigeria's vision is not dependent on begging for alms, but rather fostering equal partnerships that would empower economic growth.

Shettima stated this at the Financial Times Global Risk Roundtable during the 2025 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

He asserted that Nigeria will lead Africa's economic transformation through strategic investments in education, youth empowerment, and innovative agricultural approaches.

He said, "The word for crisis in Chinese is 'Wei Ji.' Wei stands for danger, while Ji stands for opportunity. Yes, we have challenges, but those challenges are pregnant with opportunities to re-engineer our society and build back better.

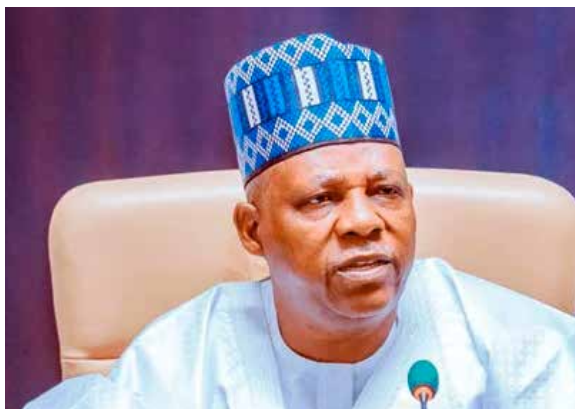
"The crisis has given us a unique opportunity to invest in people, especially in areas that will enable us to leapfrog our economies into global competitiveness.

"I don't believe in aid; I believe in partnership. I'd rather carry my poverty with dignity and deal with people, nations, and companies on a pedestal of equality, not in a master-servant relationship. I didn't come with a begging bowl.

"My continent is the richest in the world, and the trajectory of global growth is facing Africa. Nigeria will make or mar that transition. The youths of Africa are the drivers of change."

Acknowledging global crises, including conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East, and Sudan, the Vice President noted their impact on supply chains, humanitarian challenges, and peace.

He called for multilateral collaboration, stressing that the interconnected nature of global challenges requires collective solutions.



When A Masquerade Is Stripped Naked In The Marketplace, It Becomes A Taboo And Shame -Sara Igbe

A prominent Niger Delta activist, Anabs Sara-Igbe, has delivered a stark warning to Nyesom Wike, advising him to pursue peace and reconciliation before facing public humiliation.

"All the boasting about he will not reconcile with the governor, I think he should surrender," Sara-Igbe declared during a Symfoni TV interview. He emphasized the futility of continued confrontation, stating, "He should surrender and make peace with the governor because there is nothing, it cannot go anywhere."

The activist painted a picture of Wike's diminishing political standing, noting, "Already it is collapsing. All the walls around him are collapsing, and very soon he will be stripped naked."

Drawing on cultural metaphors, Sara-Igbe warned of the consequences of public exposure: "When a masquerade is stripped naked in the marketplace, it becomes a taboo. It becomes a shame."

Expressing a seemingly compassionate motivation, he concluded, "I don't want him to be stripped naked in the marketplace, and the best way to save himself is to take advantage of the PANDEF resolution, so that will give him a little bit of cover."

The comments offer a vivid warning about the potential consequences of political intransigence, couched in metaphorical language that emphasizes the importance of reconciliation and saving face.

"One Of The Biggest Trees In The Forest Of Nigeria Has Fallen" – Wike Reacts To Death Of General Useni



The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike has described the late General Jeremiah Useni as a man who will be missed by the entire Nigeria for his service to the nation.

Wike, in a statement on Friday through his Senior Special Assistant on Public Communications and Social Media, Lere Olayinka , commended the dedicated acts of Useni to public service during his lifetime.

As earlier reported by Naijaonpoint , Lt. Gen Useni died on Thursday, 23rd January 2025.

Reacting, Wike described the death of one of his predecessors as the "fall of one of the biggest trees in the forest of Nigeria."

He recalled the role played by Useni as the Minister of the FCT between 1993 and 1998 in developing the nation's capital city as well as other public offices held by the late elder statesman.

The Minister commiserated with the family of the deceased and the people of Plateau state, describing the late Useni as a great man, a fine military officer and a peacemaker.

Wike said"From joining the Army at the age of 14, to becoming the Military Governor of the defunct Bendel State, Minister of Transport, Quarter-Master General of the Nigeria Army, FCT Minister and Senator for the Plateau South of Plateau State, Lt. General Jeremiah Timbut Useni, can be said to be among those Nigerians who saw it all and lived a life of service to the country.

"He was a jolly good fellow, fondly called 'Jerry Boy,' who took service to the people as his number one priority.

"Nigerians, especially the Tarok people of Plateau State, will never forget the late General for epitomising great virtues.

"He will be sorely missed by the entire people of Plateau State, Nigerian Armed Forces and Nigerians in general.

"On behalf of myself and residents of the FCT, I mourn the departure of General Jeremiah Timbut Oseni, a great man, a Patriot, a fine military officer, a Politician, a Peacemaker and a man of faith in the Almighty God.

"May his soul rest in peace."

K1 Shows Off 6 of His Kids at Late Mum's Fidau Prayers, Netizens React: "This Man Is Blessed"

Veteran fuji singer King Wasiu Ayinde Mashal, aka K1 de Ultimate, has shared the pictures of his children who graced the Fidau prayers of his late mum Halimat Abike Anifowoshe (nee Akeredolu).

Fidau prayers are usually made for a deceased Muslim seven days after their passing. K1 lost his mother, who was 105 years old, on Saturday, January 18, 2025.

The musician shared a photo of his five daughters and one son wearing white outfits and green 'geles'. The Fuji star also wore a white outfit as he joined his kids in the picture.

Some fans observed that his last daughter looked like his late mum while others consoled him over the passing of the deceased. Some of K1's children's names are Iluyomade, Halima Elele, Melissa Akanke, Sawatul Arafat, Anjolaoluwa Abike, and Damilola Basirat.

The Fuji music star could not contain his emotions as



the remains of his mother were buried on Saturday, January 18, 2025. He broke down in tears and was consoled by his family, friends, and his wives who took turns to wipe his tears.

See K1's children below:

@teepssy commented:

"The small baby girl looks so much like Grandma."

@olayinka_agbeke said:

"Honestly, the last born looks exactly like Mama Alhaja Akeredolu."

@bobo_of_lagos_01 reacted:

"Mama no die. Baba carry mama for leg."

@aramide_1105 stated:

"May Allah SWT grant her Aljanat Firdous, widen her grave and keep her from the torment of the grave, Amin."

@zeezay10 noted:

"Man is blessed with every good things life has got to offer. More of good things Ayinde Arabambi."

@ahronky said:

"This baby of the house look like grandma, Alfatia don born mama when she was still alive."

@iamikoyi_esho commented:

"Mellisa looks so much like mama."

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EFCC Arrests 37 Suspected Internet Fraudsters in Awka

Operatives of the Enugu Zonal Directorate of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC have arrested 37 (Thirty-seven) suspected internet fraudsters.

The all-male suspects were arrested in a sting operation at Commissioners' Quarters, Dr. J. O. Ukwutinife Close, Ifite, Awka, Anambra State, following credible intelligence linking them to fraudulent internet activities.

Items recovered from them include six exotic cars, laptops and mobile phones.

They will be charged to court as soon as investigations are concluded.

Alleged N33.8bn Fraud: How I received more than N22bn from Federal Ministry of Power- BDC Operator

The trial of former Minister of Power, Saleh Mamman continued on Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at the Federal High Court, Abuja, presided over by Justice James Omotosho with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC presenting its 8th witness, PW8.

The witness, PW8 Abdullahi Suleman, a bureau de change operator, narrated how more than N22 billion was allegedly siphoned from the Federal Ministry of Power while Mamman was Minister. He said the naira equivalent of the money was exchanged for United States dollars through his business accounts.

Mamman is being prosecuted by the EFCC on a 12-count charge bordering on conspiracy to commit money laundering to the tune of N33,804,830,503.73 (Thirty-three Billion, Eight Hundred and Four Million, Eight Hundred and Thirty Thousand, Five Hundred and Three Naira, Seventy-three Kobo).

At Wednesday's proceedings, Suleiman, while being led in evidence by prosecution counsel, Rotimi Oyedepo, SAN narrated that about 12 of his business accounts received money from the Federal Ministry of Power without carrying out any service, contact or project. His companies; Prymint Investment Limited, Strong Field International Projects Limited, Mintedge Nigeria Limited, First Class Construction and Project, Silverline Ocean Ventures, Golden Bond Nigeria Limited, Sipikin Global Enterprise, Spinhiills Biz International limited, Fullest Utility Concepts Limited, Platinum Touch Enterprises, Breathable Investment Limited and a company owned by his brother named Gurupche Business Enterprises were used for the transactions.

"I know Alhaji Maina Goje, we are in the same business, sometimes in 2019, Maina Goje met me that he has transaction that I should give him some of my account numbers, the first account I gave him was Fullest, he will send money and I will give him dollars, he started asking for more accounts, he will tell me what to do with the transactions, I will get the dollar and give him and sometimes I will do a transfer to other accounts. We have been working together since then till 2024. From my rough calculations, the amount I have received through the transactions will be more than 22 billion naira. Also Maina used to send someone called Musbhu anytime he was not available, he would send him and give me instructions on what to do with him, we do call him Yaro Minister because he is from Saleh Mamman", he said.

Continuing, " I also know Mr Mustapha Muhammed, Goje told me that he is his oga, I didn't know him before until Maina Goje introduced him to me, then I learnt he works with Federal Ministry of Housing and instructed that anytime they can't reach him, I should give him the amount of dollars he requested"

When shown Exhibit X series, which contained bank statements generated from his companies showing evidence of money inflows into his bank accounts with Strong Field international Projects Limited, Mintedge Nigeria Limited, Prymint Investment Limited, the witness admitted that they were the accounts he gave Maina Goje.

Among some of the notable transactions shown to him on the accounts were; N285,983,285 received on 24th May 2021, N278, 248.611 on 26th May 2021, , N320m on 1st January, 2021, 184m on 18 June, 2021, N178,300,285 on 14th July 2021, , N75,420, 000 on 5th August 2021, N75,120,000 on 1st December 2021, N68,150,620 and N70,650 on 15th December 2021, N90,247,395 on 12th Jan 2022, N64, 747,627 on 16 February 2022, among others and he agreed receiving them.

South-East Students to EFCC: "We are Sorry for the Loss of your Officer"



The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), South-East Zone have condoled with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on the loss of one of its operatives, Aminu Sahabi Salisu, stressing that his death caused them grief and regret.

Salisu, an Assistant Superintendent of the EFCC, ASE11 was killed in cold blood while on a legitimate duty by a suspected internet fraudster, Joshua Chukwubueze Ikechukwu on January 17, 2025.

The students expressed their grief and solidarity with the Commission on Friday, January 24, 2025 when a delegation, led by Comrade Charles Obinna Ijeomah paid a condolence visit to the EFCC's Executive Chairman, Mr. Ola Olukoyede at the Commission's corporate headquarters, Abuja.

While pledging the collaboration, cooperation and support of the entire Southeast students to the Commission, Ijeomah stated that "As the coordinator of the National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS), Southeast, the onus falls on me and my colleagues here to ensure that we sanitize and give proper orientation to our students not to indulge in anything that has to do with internet crime and we have been succeeding.

"We are very sorry for the incident that happened lately in Awka. Maybe you may have seen our comments, our stand, we condemned it. An operative was shot in the process of carrying out his official duty. Whatever that is going on in Southeast is being controlled by students and I am their leader. I cannot watch and see things go wrong. That is why we condemned the killing of that operative.

He stated further that, "we are here to let the authority of EFCC understand that we commiserate with you and to tell you not to judge the Southeast with what happened. Such acts are not in our blood. It is not in our nature. We are hard-working people. We don't indulge in crime. Anybody that indulges in crime in the Southeast is not a true son of Igbo. We know how to make money but this idea of being in one room with a device to trick someone is not in our blood.

"We are sad for the loss of the operative. We say sorry to the Enugu Zonal Command and to the EFCC authority for what happened. We assure you that such a thing can never happen again. Our aim of coming here is to let EFCC know that Southeast students are with them and that we're going to partner with you more to educate our students in the Southeast region to avoid any kind of internet crime. We are here to bring you the news that we are 100 percent open to any form of interaction, collaboration and cooperation between the students of South-east and the EFCC. We are promising you total collaboration. By the time I get to Enugu after this meeting, we will be visiting the Zonal Command and pay a courtesy visit there too to let them know that they are not alone, that we are with them. We are the people controlling the youth in the streets of the South-east."

Speaking further, Ijeomah disclosed that the union had programmes and proposals that when implemented, will bring the EFCC closer to university campuses in the Southeast and help to further sensitize the students. "We are promising you that we are going to work with you. We want to let EFCC know that this also provides an opportunity for the Commission to come and give orientation to our students in the Southeast. We will welcome you with an open heart", he said.

The Commission Secretary, Mr. Muhammad Hammajoda who received the delegation on behalf of the Executive Chairman expressed appreciation to the students on the condolence visit, noting that "every one of us is a stakeholder in the fight against corruption directly or indirectly. We don't have any other country apart from Nigeria. You spent your personal money and time to be with us for you to understand what we are doing and to also be part of us. We appreciate you and we will continue to appreciate you. We will support you in trying to disseminate anti-corruption information."

While urging the students to take advantage of the federal government's Student's Loan Scheme, he promised that the Commission will identify with all the noble programmes of the students in the zone if invited. "We will be there for you in all the programmes that you outlined. Please give us an invitation. We will be there. We will be there to be part of you."

Hammajoda encouraged the students' leaders on their crusade against students' involvement in internet crime. "We are sinking day by day with corruption. So let's educate ourselves that this cyber crime will not take you anywhere. All of us are victims. Nobody has protection against it. Anyone can be attacked. We have a very sound youth population with a very high IQ (intelligence quotient) and ingenuity to do many things," he said.

While lending his voice against youths' involvement in internet crime, Chief of Staff to the Executive Chairman, Commander of the EFCC, CE Michael Nzekwe noted that "cybercrime has done too much damage to us as a country. If you check and find out how much it affected us, you'll be shocked. Internationally, the image of the country has been battered. When you travel outside the country they look at you in a certain way with your green passport. So, cybercrime is just one thing that all of us have to put our hands together and be deliberate and intentional to see that we eliminate. EFCC has done so much in ensuring that."

Besides leveraging on NELFUND, Nzekwe reminded the students of the Credit Scheme of the federal government as a handy window of opportunity for meeting their needs. "There's also the credit scheme that is available for students that this government has put in place. So take that as a message to your students that they can assess this fund and the issue of poverty will not even arise."

Rather than diminish, he noted that the trend of internet crime is rather skyrocketing in the Southeast. "You said that in the Southeast that you are hard working people and traders, but can I be honest with you? the level of yahoo yahoo in the Southeast and other cybercrimes has skyrocketed, and it has not just skyrocketed, it has gotten to the level which they call yahoo plus. They have become ritualists and kidnappers. Why would you have a gun in the house and open fire on someone on a legitimate duty? We are glad that you realized that this is wrong. You have also seen our own Press Release. We have said it very clearly and with a strong voice, that EFCC will not condone that or tolerate that from anybody, whoever the person is, never again."

UNODC Seeks Stronger Strategic Partnership with EFCC



The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC, has sought a more robust working relationship with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC.

This quest was made in Abuja on Thursday, January 23, 2025 when its Country Representative, Cheikh Ousmane Toure led a staff delegation on a courtesy visit to the EFCC's Executive Chairman, Mr. Ola Olukoyede at the Commission's corporate headquarters.

Toure, who said that he was eager for knowledge sharing among West African States explained that "this is the only way we can bring a little bit of more safety and security to our children. The menaces are many and complex and today we have AI. Imagine AI in the hand of a cybercrime criminal doing movements on bitcoins? What will be our line of defence in investigating such cases? It will be more complex than those cases that you cracked in the past. It will require new sets of legal understanding to criminalize those cases.

Speaking further, Toure stated that "the second element is on international cooperation with countries where there is a lot of investment from Nigerians and where you have difficulties to seize some of the ill-gotten assets. I don't want my tenure to be some sort of UN framework tenure. No. I am a technician. I'm the child of West Africa. I want an effective partnership. So, basically what I am here to engage on is that if we work with you, I want that to be a partnership. There is a lot of expertise in Nigeria. Those expertise can help us achieve our goals. So it is only fair to go for strategic partnership."

In his response, Olukoyede noted that achieving the goals Toure enumerated came down to UNODC working together in partnership with the EFCC and strengthening the partnership. "All that you have said boils down to the need for us to strengthen our relationship and to work together. As a matter of fact, we have a very good working relationship as a country and also as a Commission with UNODC. We have had decades of relationship with UNODC and it has been of mutual benefit and interest. Most of the things in our mandate have almost become global in nature. We are looking at money laundering, financing of terrorism, proliferation of small arms and all of that. There is a very strong relationship between our mandate and yours. Where you see some of these crimes happening, there is an element of money laundering and in all financial crimes generally", he said.

The EFCC's boss further stressed that, "we need to establish a very strong collaboration with other law enforcement, security agencies and also our partners on the international scene. We will continue to build on the existing relationship. There is a need for us to collaborate more particularly on the relationship that we have with the United Nations in the area of asset recovery. We also want to pledge our support for your tenure. All the areas where you need to get our cooperation and our synergy, we are going to make them available to you."



$6bn Mambilla Project Alleged Fraud: Court Grants EFCC`s Move to Amend Charges against Agunloye

Justice Jude Onwuegbuzie of the Federal High Court, FCT sitting in Apo, Abuja on Thursday, January 23, 2025 granted the prayers of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC to amend charges brought against a former Minister of Power, Olu Agunloye and make him take his plea.

Agunloye is standing trial by the EFCC on seven-count charges, bordering on official corruption and fraudulent award of Mambilla Power Project contract to the tune of $6billion (Six Billion United States Dollars).

Earlier on July 1 2024, Prosecution Counsel, Abba Mohammed, SAN, drew the attention of the court to the amended charge, urging the court to accept same and cause the defendant to take his plea, relying on the provision of Section 216 and 217 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, 2015.

However, defense counsel, Adeola Adedipe, SAN objected to the plea arguing that the leave of the court must be formally sought and obtained before the EFCC can amend its charge .

Responding, the court directed parties to furnish the court with authorities in support of the argument canvassed to which the EFCC made reference to the Court of Appeal's decision in Bovoa v FRN & Anor (2017)

During Thursday's ruling, the judge held that amendment was not intended to overreach the defendant and cause injustice to him and that a court may permit an alteration or amendment to a charge or framing of a new charge at any time before judgment is pronounced.

"In the court`s final decision, the arguments of the learned counsel to the defendant are hereby discountenanced and therefore hold that the application is liable to succeed accordingly, I so hold, subsequently the application is hereby granted as prayed on the face of the motion paper and the defendant is hereby ordered to take his plea on the altered or amended charge, this is the ruling of the court".

Justice Onwuegbuzie adjourned the matter to February 3, 2025 for the defendant to take his plea.



EFCC's Works Impressive - US Director



The United States Director of Narcotics and Law Enforcement in the Nigerian Embassy, Candace Spradley, has expressed delight with the efforts and successes of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, in its crusade against economic and financial crimes and other acts of corruption, describing them as impressive.

She made the observation in Abuja on Thursday, January 23, 2025 when she led a delegation of officials of Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) on a courtesy visit to the Executive Chairman, EFCC, Mr. Ola Olukoyede at the Commission's corporate headquarters, Abuja.

"I am so pleased to be with you here, today. We've come just to greet you. I'm quite new on my assignment. I've been in the country for about five months now. However, earlier on in my career with the Department of State, I learned about the EFCC and all of the very impressive work that you all have been doing to advance anti-corruption and financial crime efforts. So, I've known for a very long time about the work of your organization and it was part of the reason that I chose to come here because of the very strong and impressive cooperation from EFCC and similar government bodies in the U.S.

Continuing, Spradley stated that, "I should just start by saying congratulations to you for the impressive work that the organization has done under your tenure and certainly the name that it has made for the government of Nigeria in Washington. It is an outstanding and impressive work that has a very far reach",

She also sought stronger collaboration "on issues of cybercrime, asset forfeiture and recovery, and certainly on issues of anti-corruption and transparency which are top in mind for the US Embassy and a priority for our Ambassador here".

Olukoyede who expressed appreciation on behalf of the staff and management of the EFCC, noted that there was a convergence in the mandate of the Commission and that of INL and appealed for synergy between the two organizations.

"The mandates that are set before you and ours are quite similar. There is a relationship between dealing in narcotics and money laundering. One of our key mandates is to fight money laundering and money laundering has presumably become one of the biggest financial crimes with global dimension. That is why it has become very imperative for the international community to come together and form synergy to fight these crimes. So it is important for us to work together".

The EFCC's boss further stated that the Commission had robust synergy with the American Embassy and FBI. "We have a very strong partnership and we plan to build on that in the area of capacity building. The relationship has been of mutual benefits and we will continue to build on that," he said. Olukoyede also drew the attention of the delegation to the growing involvement of expatriates in internet fraud in Nigeria. He lamented the trend and vowed that the country would be made inhospitable for such anti-social expatriates.

"You are aware of the recent international crime that was busted in Nigeria that involved close to 200 foreigners. You now know who has been perpetrating cybercrime in our system using the identity of Nigerians. That goes to show you that these crimes we are fighting have international dimensions to them. Investigations have revealed that some of these guys were dislodged from some parts of South Asia and they are now looking for a safe haven within the African Continent from where they would be attacking targets across the world. Nigeria is not going to create that environment for them to survive. We will deploy intelligence-driven operations to get them out of our system", he said.

Court Jails Man for Land Racketeering, Arraigns another for Internet Fraud in Maiduguri

Justice Aisha Kumaliya of the Borno State High Court, Maiduguri on Thursday, January 23, 2025, convicted and sentenced one Kolo Ngwari to one year imprisonment for cheating.

Nwari was re-arraigned by the Maiduguri Zonal Directorate of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on a one count amended charge for the offence of cheating to the tune of N1,650,000.00 (One Million Six Hundred and Fifty Thousand Naira).

The count reads: "That you Kolo Ngwari, sometime in August, 2018 in Maiduguri, Borno State within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, at Pompomari bye pass layout, Maiduguri, Borno State dishonestly induced Alfred Buba Mbaya to deliver to you the sum of N1, 650,000.00 (One Million Six Hundred and Fifty Thousand Naira) under the guise that the said amount represents payment for a plot of land with grant No. BO/707, at Pompomari bye Pass, Maiduguri, Borno State and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 320 (a) and punishable under Section 322 of the Penal Code Cap 102 Laws of Borno State."

The defendant pleaded guilty to the charge prepared against him by the EFCC.

Counsel for the prosecution, Faruku Muhammad prayed the court to convict and sentence the defendant accordingly, while defence counsel M. A Sani urged the court to temper justice with mercy.

Justice Kumaliya thereafter convicted and sentenced Ngwari to one year imprisonment with an option of fine of N200,000.00 (Two Hundred Thousand Naira).

The convict's road to the Correctional Centre began when he collected the sum of N1,650,000 from Alfred Buba Mbaya for a plot of land. He neither delivered the land nor returned the money to the victim.

In another development, one Simon Musa was arraigned by the Maiduguri Zonal Directorate of the EFCC on a two count charge bordering on internet fraud to the tune of $ 800, 00.00 USD.

Count one of the charge read: "That you, Simon Musa sometime in 2023, whilst being a friend with Vincent Marcus (convict) in Maiduguri, within the jurisdiction of this honourable court induce members of the public using electronic message through your G-mail account Simonscott32@gmail.com and obtained the sum $ 800, 00.00 USD and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 1(1)(b) of the Advance Fee Fraud and other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006 and punishable under Section 1(3) of the same Act."

The defendant pleaded not guilty to the charges when they were read to him.

Counsel for the prosecution F. Muhammad prayed the court for a trial date and to remand the defendant in a Correctional Centre.

Justice Kumaliya thereafter adjourned the matter till February 6, 2025 for the hearing of bail application and commencement of trial. He remanded the defendant in a Correctional Centre.



Soludo's humanism: Strength of character, religious integrity



Professor Charles Chukwuma Soludo has been driving the ship of Anambra State with uncanny rational principles, critical thinking and scientific method that extols human dignity, reason, compassion, morality, ethics, democratic participation: no affirmation to any religious or Christian sect.

He grapples with enlivened pragmatic interceptions of all the above humanistic principles in his pilot governs schemes. The four mainstays or pillars of humanist science are a concern: the interdependence of morality and wellbeing, normative theory, and the prevalence and efficacy of ideals or standards.

Despite the macroeconomic challenges, he has remained imbued with strength of character —delivering on all the five fingers of the Solution Agenda: Security, Law & Order; Infrastructure and Economic Transformation; Human Capital and Social Agenda; Governance and Value System; and Environment, against moral odds ravaging the society."We believe in one United, strong and progressive Nigeria where equity, peace and justice reign "(Soludo, 2024), he said.

Soludo's humanism is both a sublime of moral rejuvenation and entrepreneurial revivalism among the youths. It is a humanism that extols the virtues of hard-work instead of get-rich-quick syndrome prevalent among the Igbo Millennial and Gen Z who stealthily operate neopaganism underground economy but fret with the religious institutions in open society who recognize and exalt them as saints.

Humanism as a blend of moral and strength of character required the church leaders to reclaim their role as a moral compass in the society. For the Governor whose strength of character is worth an academic thesis, moral decay is incongruous with hard-work, resilience and progress. Therefore, moral decadence and idolatry are unacceptable in a society where the clergy men of all hooks insouciantly hold sway with little or no impact on the moral fiber of the society and lives of the youths.

A critique of the church for its failure to strengthen the moral and secular characters of youths is the pivot of Governor Soludo's prism of hard work and equality in the society. For him, "get-rich-quick" mentality and ill gotten wealth must not be acceptable in the household of God. The trend of seeking wealth against the church tenets with the wealth spread on the alters of yielding religious denominations is not acceptable in postmodern African society.

"The ideology of acquiring wealth by any means necessary has become a cancer eating away the fabric of our society…This pursuit of wealth, often without regard for its source, has led to a moral crisis, with young people increasingly turning away from the church and its teachings, and heading to the bush to join cults and kidnappers for power and money."(Soludo, 2025).

The governor, short of Karl Marx lampooning the church as the opium of the soulless in the society, argues that religious institutions have failed to question the origins of the wealth donated by their congregations; they endorse unethical practices and turn a blind eye to the source of donations, and loses its moral authority and becomes part of the problem, even as the"capitulation of the Church to the allure of materialism is at the heart of the moral decay in society"(Soludo,2025).

With the touch light of equity and equality, he has not only made education compulsory but also structured the school system to be the same for both rich and the poor . With the prioritizing of competitive recruitment of the best teachers for Anambra schools he raised the bar of human dignity in Nigeria.

The inhuman categories of the poor, the under privileged and the down trodden must give way in a society undergirded by fairness, justice and equity. Education must, in principle, level the space and landscape of inequality and leverage humanistic principles for a better society. It is concomitant to building of capacity, strength of character and empowering the youths to shape their future without moral and religious bias. Within the spectrum of Soludo's audacious humanism, the religious institutions must bend backwards to reassert their God's calling and conscience and return the abandoned table of morality and ethics for security, meritocracy, social order and human progress.

Reformation of the health sector is a crucial step towards enthroning humanistic infrastructures, to ensure hospitals are properly equipped, for undiluted Primary health care, Medicare and eliminating the issues associated with open and unregulated drug markets in the state.. it is to leverage on humanistic principles to upgrade general health facilities with the necessary solar power, boreholes, medical equipment and the construction of a new nursing school in the state. The humanism is augmented with the offer of free antenatal and delivery services for pregnant women in the state.

Building the capacity and empowering the citizens for economic growth is part of the goal to promote humanity and a necessary fallout of an ordered society built on the folcrum of humanism. Building human capitals and skills is surely the road to equity, justice, fairies and sustainable future.

With the minimum wage settled for a living wage the government has galvanized the fiscal and Human resources to obviate the economic hardship currently plaguing the nation. Humanism as human progress is therefore, a means of fighting injustice and criminality."We must have a society that is fair, where everybody gets justice " (Soludo, 2024)

. Campaign for a return to nature's wealth through palm and coconut revolution, along with "Farm-to-Feed" programs, is a humanistic and natural approach to wealth creation. It is a survival instinct that places man at the centers of the earth, an enduring humanism that promotes excellence and banishes hunger and poverty. On the social plane, it is a vigorous pursuit of human happiness, even as roads infrastructures have made travels, trading , entertainment, recreation and business the pivot of human survival and happiness. "Our vision is to make Anambra a preferred place to live, learn, invest, work, relax and enjoy!"(Soludo, 2024)

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• Prof. Dukor is the President/Editor-in-Chief of ESSENCE LIBRARY(Cultural and Scientific Developments Centre(Department of Philosophy, UNIZIK.



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Police arrest two for raping minors in Adamawa



The Adamawa State Police Command on Friday arrested two persons for allegedly raping two minors at Sangere Futy, Girei Local Government Area (LGA).

Adamawa State Police spokesperson, SP Suleiman Yahaya Nguroje, in a statement, said those arrested include Bala Muhammed, 35 years, and Usman Abdullahi, 17 years, both residents of Dadin Kowa, Sangere Futy.

"The suspects had on January 12, 2025, raped 11 and 14-year-old girls respectively and went into hiding only to resist arrest," Nguroje said.

"That was until January 22 when the police command received complaints on the alleged crime perpetrated by the suspects."

Nguroje said the Adamawa State Commissioner of Police, CP Dankombo Morris, upon receiving the report deployed personnel of the command attached to Girei Divisional Police Headquarters, who succeeded in arresting the suspects.

The police spokesman said during interrogation, both suspects confessed to committing the crime.

He said the first suspect said it wasn't intentional but a mistake while the second blamed the devil for his act.

Morris assured that the suspects would be prosecuted upon completion of an investigation.

US arraigns Nigerian over $6m fraud

A district court in Florida, United States, has charged a Nigerian national Okezie Ogbata, for defrauding about 400 people to the tune of $6m.

Ogbata was found guilty of operating a transnational inheritance fraud scheme to dupe elderly US citizens.

The Department of Justice stated that 36-year-old Ogbata and his partners in the fraud scheme told their victims to send money for taxes and other forms of payment to avoid government officials.

"Ogbata and his accomplices sent letters falsely claiming that the sender was a representative of a bank in Spain and that the recipient was entitled to receive a multimillion-dollar inheritance left for the recipient by a family member who had died overseas years before," the Department of Justice said.

Ogbata pleaded guilty to the charges of defrauding over 400 people and has earned about $6m.

He would be sentenced on April 14, 2025, and faces over 20 years behind bars.

Head, of the Justice Department's Civil Division, General Brian Boynton, said, "This case is a testament to the critical role of international collaboration in tackling transnational crime."

Terrorist attacks false alarm, Kano govt counters police



Kano State Government has clarified that the peaceful atmosphere in the state is not under any impending security threat, urging residents to remain calm and embark on their lawful businesses without fear.

The government refuted the security signal issued by the police command directing residents to avoid a crowded environment and public gatherings due to impending security threats.

Spokesperson of Police Command, Abdullahi Haruna Kiyawa, earlier on Friday, in a statement, raised an alarm of planned terrorist attacks in some strategic locations within the Kano metropolis.

While cautioning residents to avoid crowded environments until further notice, Kiyawa said the command has rolled out tanks to foil the purported terror plots.

According to him, the police have deployed necessary security arrangements, including a team of explosive ordinance disposal, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear units of the force to mount strategic positions to neutralize the threat.

"In response, we hereby urge residents to exercise caution and avoid crowded places and environments until further notice as a preventive measure to enable security operations to identify and dislodge possible attackers," he said.

"The Unit can be contacted through 08169884988 or 07067157218 for report of suspicious persons or item(s). We encourage residents to report any emergency or suspicious activity to the nearest Police Station or contact the Kano State Police Command through the emergency numbers."

The Kano State Police Command declared its commitment to protecting lives and properties and maintaining law and order in the state while urging residents to remain vigilant.

In a counter-reaction, Commissioner for Information and Internal Affairs, Abdullahi Ibrahim Kiyawa, declared the security alert was an attempt to obstruct the annual religious activities held today at Sani Abacha stadium, Kano.

Waiya who briefed journalists Friday night emphasized that the state government has not issued any complaint regarding insecurity in Kano, and pointed to no report of any security threat that should warrant an extreme measure by the police.

"Kano has always been a beacon of peace and religious tolerance, and we will not accept any form of intimidation or undue interference in our internal affairs. We remain resolute in ensuring that the rights of our people to religious freedom and peaceful assembly are respected," Waiya said.

The security alert came less than 24 hours after the annual National Tijjaniyya Maulud held at Sani Abacha stadium, Kano, under the spiritual leader of the Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi II.

Before the security signal, the police deployed a team of mobile officers and men to barricade the venue of the event, restricting organisers and members of the Tijjaniyya set access.

Waiye reminded the facility belongs to the state government and does not require permission to use the stadium, just as he insisted the annual Maolud will be held as scheduled.

"We call on all our guests from various States and all Mohammadawa to remain peaceful and steadfast in their commitment to observing this annual religious gathering," Waiya said.

Group seeks improved welfare for persons living with disabilities

The Founder of Aredu Trust Foundation, Mr. Adebayo Muritala, has called on well-meaning Nigerians to come to the aid of Persons Living with Disabilities (PWDs) and the vulnerable in the country

Muritala, who spoke at the official opening of the Foundation's new office at the Lasigun Court, Aregbe Area in Osogbo, the Osun State capital, said it would be of their advantage, if individuals could join the government to assist them.

He said: "As a visually impaired person, I believe that some persons with disabilities are richly endowed differently with potential and talents, regardless of tribe, status and background for societal development." He urged the government to establish homes for persons with disabilities to improve their living conditions.

He encouraged the youths and persons with disabilities to showcase their abilities, focus on their passions, and break societal misconceptions. He said that he launched the women's cooperative in February 2024, to primarily focus on women with disabilities and young females.

He added: "I believe that in disability there is ability, and I do practise it and it works for me. I used the advantage to reach out to many people that are facing challenges, to let them know that is not the end of life.

"We have branches in Nigeria, Ghana and we are going to have branches all over the world. This is just the starting point.

"No matter what you have, either money or knowledge, you have to pass it to people, by supporting or training people so that our community can be great and we will have less crime."

Aredu Trust Foundation was founded by three visionaries – Muritala, Oguntolu Ifatoke aka Baba Sango of the USA and Abdulrasheed Sanni from Ghana to inspire change and empower communities across Africa.

Also speaking, Ifatoki, expressed passion for supporting the less-privileged people, saying: "When I met Adebayo with his great spirit, I also met the third founder in Ghana. We all gathered together and we saw the mission we have in common. They inspired me to raise fund for the projects in line with their course.

"Today, with their support, the project has taken off and Africans will benefit from the foundation."



Court remands son for allegedly killing father in Ondo

A magistrate's Court sitting in Akure, the Ondo State capital, has remanded a 32-year-old man at the Olokuta Correctional Centre for allegedly killing his 68-year-old father.

The suspect, Sunday Abilewa, who was arraigned before the court for murder, allegedly strangled his father, Abu Abilewa, to death over failure to buy him a motorcycle.

Abilewa allegedly committed the crime at his father's residence at Eberi Quarters, Isua Akoko, Akoko South East Local Council of the state on December 31, 2024.

According to the prosecutor, Inspector Abdulateef Suleiman, the offence contravened Section 316 and was punishable under Section 319 of the Criminal Code Cap 37, Vol. II, Laws of Ondo State, 2006.

He said: "The defendant allegedly approached the deceased to buy him a new motorcycle, but the deceased refused. It led to an argument, and in the process, the defendant grabbed the neck of his father, which resulted in his death.

The prosecutor, however, urged the court to remand the defendant in a custodial centre, pending the outcome of advice from the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

The Magistrate, Mrs. F.A. Akinboboye, who subsequently adjourned the case till February 25, 2025, for mention, ordered that the defendant should be remanded pending receipt of advice from the DPP's office.

Three global icons and Kemi Badenoch's fallacy of ethnic card



Unlike the Leader of the Opposition Conservative Party in the United Kingdom, Olukemi Olufunto Adegoke Badenoch (Kemi Badenoch for short), who claims to be British with Yoruba heritage but denies any affinity with Nigeria, the three Nigerian global icons – the President of the African Development Bank (AfDB), Dr. Akinwunmi Adesina; the Director -General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala; and the Deputy Director-General of the United Nations (UN), Amina Jane Mohammed, are proudly flying Nigeria's green, white, and green flag worldwide and demonstrating their cerebral capacities and resourcefulness in their different endeavours.

Adesina, Okonjo-Iweala, and Mohammed are universally acknowledged as esteemed intellectuals who have made—and continue to make—immense contributions to global economic development, food security, world peace, and the betterment of humanity. In any international forum, their insights are regarded with the highest respect.

It is pure fallacy for 'Madam Kemi' to say, on the one hand, "I'm of Yoruba race" and then go on to say, "I don't associate myself with Nigeria." For the benefit of wailing wailers and prophets of doom, Nigeria's greatest asset lies in its diversity. It's like a Catholic marriage where there is no room for divorce.

Madam Kemi and her associates in Nigeria should be told in clear terms that "we are greater together." This writer is a very proud Nigerian and offers no apologies for this conviction. It is a pity that someone who is from a privileged home and who once lived in highbrow Victoria Island, Lagos, will be saying nasty things about her home country, Nigeria.

There are obvious missing links in Kemi Badenoch's account of her experience while living in Nigeria. It is even shameful for the UK opposition leader to paint Nigeria in a bad light and portray Britain as a perfect place when she is aware that there is no perfect place in the world.

There is no doubt that Nigeria is grappling with security issues, but tell me, which country isn't? While the Nigerian police and other security agencies are doing their best to reduce violent crimes and other social evils to the barest minimum, the United Kingdom is no Eldorado. This piece will highlight some of the ugly incidents in the UK.

Let us be clear: God loves Nigeria and has blessed it with many achievers of repute, including three global icons presently. Adesina is of Yoruba lineage, Okonjo-Iweala is from Igboland (though from Delta State but married to an Igbo man), while Amina Mohammed is from the North. I call them three icons of unity as they stand for WaZ0Bia – the three major tribes in Nigeria: Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo. For the record, Adesina, Okonjo-Iweala, and Amina Mohammed's credentials are quite intimidating. They are people of excellence and all had their early education in Nigeria, just like Kemi.

Adesina, a former Nigerian Minister of Agriculture from 2011 to 2015, is a globally renowned development economist and agricultural development expert with 30 years of international experience. He was the first student to obtain first-class honours in agricultural economics at the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), Nigeria, in 1981. He holds a master's degree (1985) and a PhD in Agricultural Economics (1988) from Purdue University, USA. He won the prestigious Rockefeller Foundation Social Science Fellowship in 1988, which launched him into his international career.

Okonjo-Iweala graduated from Harvard University with an AB in Economics in 1976. She earned a master's degree in City Planning in 1978 and obtained her PhD in Regional Economics and Development in 1981 from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She received an international fellowship from the American Association of University Women (AAUW), which supported her doctoral studies.

At the World Bank, she had a 25-year career as a development economist, rising to become managing director for Operations from 2007 to 2011. Okonjo-Iweala was the first Nigerian woman to serve two terms as Finance Minister of Nigeria, initially under former President Olusegun Obasanjo from 2003 to 2006 and secondly under former President Goodluck Jonathan from 2011 to 2015. Subsequently, from June to August 2006, she served as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria.

The third of the trio, Amina Mohammed, attended Henley Management College in the UK in 1989. She is serving as the 5th Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations. Previously, she was the Nigerian Minister of Environment from 2015 to 2016 and played a role in the post-2015 Development Agenda process. She is also the chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.

For Badenoch, she studied Computer Systems Engineering at the University of Sussex, completing a Master of Engineering (MEng) degree in 2003. Kemi also studied Law at Birkbeck College, University of London, graduating with an LLB in 2009. As a British politician, she has served as Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Conservative Party since November 2024, the first Black person to hold those offices. Badenoch previously served in the Cabinet under Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak from 2022 to 2024. She has been a Member of Parliament (MP) for North West Essex, previously Saffron Walden, since 2017.

In terms of credentials, on a comparative note, Kemi can hardly touch the feet of Adesina, Okonjo-Iweala, and Amina Mohammed. These technocrats have global recognition and accomplishments, holding top continental and global positions; on the other hand, Kemi is arguably a local champion, her influence limited to UK politics and affairs at the moment. So why the flexing from Madam Opposition leader in the UK?

The last time I checked, I did not see the name of Kemi Badenoch in the list of prominent Nigerians in the Diaspora. To date, we are yet to receive a missing prominent Diasporan report from the chairman of the Nigerians in the Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM), Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa.

I support the patriotic admonition from Vice President Kashim Shettima, asking her to drop Kemi from her name. I think that the decision will be in her political best interest. After all, what is her ilk primarily known for? Is it not pursuing their self-interest before anything else? Madam Kemi Badenoch, you are free to remove Kemi from your name and take a British name.

That will definitely augur well for your political career since your ultimate goal is to become the British Prime Minister – for which you appear ready to do anything, including throwing the kitchen sink at Nigeria. This explains your infamous words on immigrants in the UK and your tough stance on sanitising British society. I have no grudge against you over this except to remind you that the British voters will decide who they want as prime minister.

On Madam Kemi's unsavoury words about the Nigeria Police Force and what she claimed experience with some errant police officers while in Nigeria, there are also ugly incidents in the UK where she said the crime rates were very low and police officers were perfect gentlemen.

Here are a few of the documented cases of UK police officers who were caught stealing: On November 30, 2015, two police officers, Stephen Phillips and Michael Stokes, were jailed for stealing £10,000 during a drug raid in South Wales, UK.

Christopher Spence, 44, was sentenced to prison on November 28, 2024, for shoplifting, where he stole nuts, cheese, and other treats from Lidl stores at Bideford on February 12 last year.

Kashif Mahmood, a Metropolitan police officer, was sentenced to prison on May 13, 2024, for stealing hundreds of thousands of pounds belonging to drug dealers. This list is by no means exhaustive.

So when a viral video showed Kemi Badenoch turning up her nose, saying that some officers of the Nigeria Police Force steal from people, and inferring that such doesn't happen in her UK, one can only pity her jaundiced narrative.

Stealing by anyone, including the few disgruntled officers and men from the Nigeria Police, is condemnable and unacceptable. But Madam Kemi surely knows, if she's grounded in state affairs as she claims, that UK police officers are no better, so why sound off in such a cheap manner?

Proudly Nigerian, a British-Nigerian boxer and two-time world heavyweight champion, Anthony Oluwafemi Olaseni Joshua, is not playing the ethnic card like Madam Kemi Badenoch; he insists that he is proudly Nigerian and shows his love and respect for his motherland.

Like the aforementioned, Anthony Joshua spent some of his early years in Nigeria as a boarding school student at Mayflower School in Ikenne, Ogun State, before he left the country for further studies. The boxer is the son of Yeta and Robert Joshua, with a lineage from Sagamu, Ogun State. His mother is Nigerian, and his father has Nigerian and Irish ancestry.

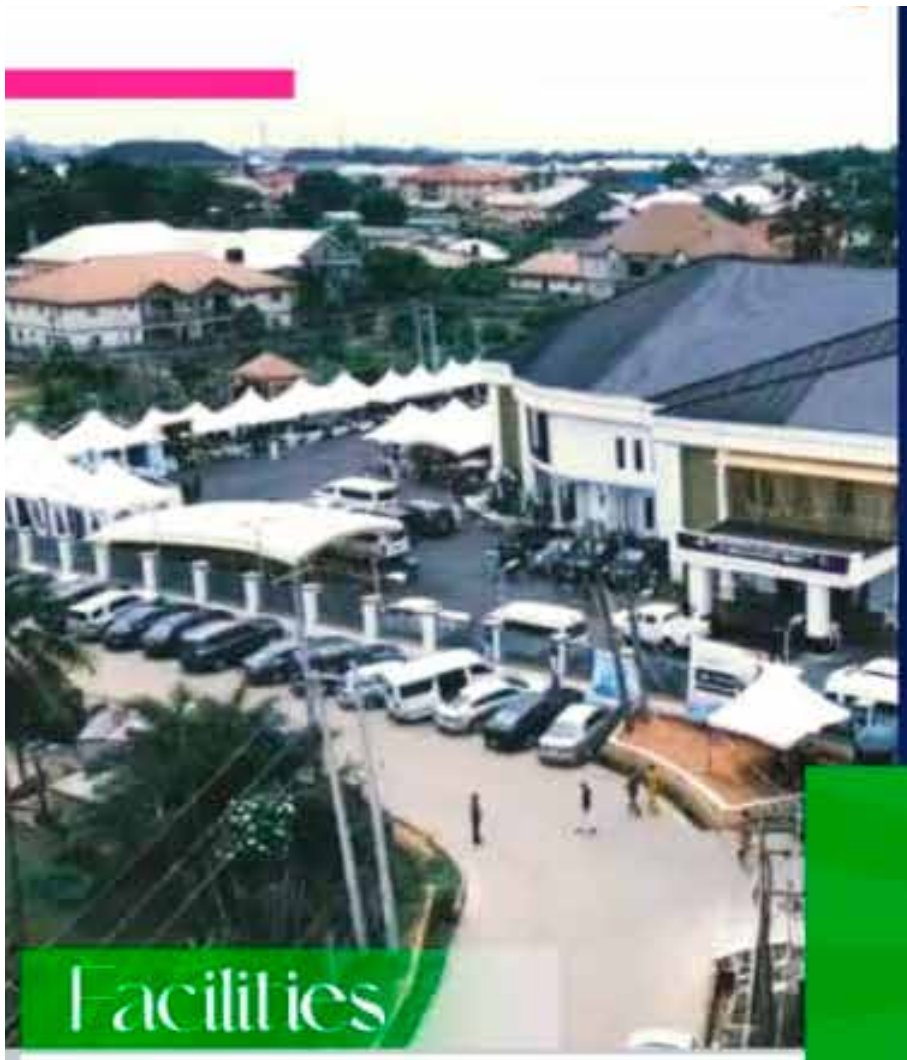
Joshua recently paid a courtesy visit to President Bola Tinubu in Lagos, and the president described him as a true champion and worthy ambassador of Nigeria. Like the president said, Joshua's achievements will continue to inspire millions daily. And Ogun State Governor Dapo Abiodun also announced plans to construct a new Anthony Joshua Indoor Boxing Ring as part of his administration's sports development initiative.

During Joshua's visit to his office in Abeokuta, Abiodun also announced plans to provide him with a new house in Sagamu, considering his expected frequent returns for his new role. This is how to be a country's ambassador.

It is not too late for Madam Kemi to have a rethink – to prevent some kind of identity crisis in her future political career. Former British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak did not denigrate his home country, India, and he attained the peak of his political career. Outgoing Vice President Kamala Harris has not spoken evil of her lineage from Jamaica, and she contested the United States presidency but lost the race to former U.S. President Donald Trump. As the saying goes, nobody knows tomorrow.

Madam Opposition Leader, if you think bashing Nigeria, your home country, gives you political mileage, please have a rethink: politics is unpredictable; when the chips are down, it is a matter of vested interests and not where the individuals come from.

Amokeodo, a senior journalist and Media Consultant, wrote from Abuja.



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Senator Proposes Bill to Ban Ejaculation Without Intent to Impregnate

Mississippi State Senator Bradford Blackmon has introduced a controversial bill that would make it illegal for men to ejaculate without the intention of impregnating a woman. Titled the "Contraception Begins at Erection Act," the proposed legislation aims to shift the focus of contraception laws, which Blackmon argues disproportionately target women.

According to WLBT News, the bill states that it would be "unlawful for a person to discharge genetic material without the intent to fertilize an embryo." If passed, violators would face escalating fines: $1,000 for a first offense, $5,000 for a second, and $10,000 for a third conviction.

Blackmon, a Democrat, said he introduced the bill to highlight the imbalance in reproductive legislation, particularly in Mississippi. "All across the country, especially here in Mississippi, the vast majority of bills relating to contraception and/or abortion focus on the woman's role when men are fifty percent of the equation," he told WLBT News.

The senator acknowledged that the bill might be seen as extreme but argued that it serves an important purpose. "This bill highlights that fact and brings the man's role into the conversation. People can get up in arms and call it absurd, but I can't say that bothers me," he said.

Over 50 Billion in Six Months: How Bala Mohammed Has Mismanaged Bauchi Resources — Bauchi Progressives Forum

Within a period of six months, the Bauchi State Government has received over 50 billion Naira from the Federal Accounts Allocations Committee (FAAC) of which the State Governor, Governor Bala Mohammed has done nothing beneficial with these funds to the state in terms of education, health and infrastructure.

This was the position of the Bauchi Progressives Forum in a statement issued Friday, by its President, Comrade Isa Sani Warji where it accused Governor Bala Mohammed of mismanagement of the States resources and rendering the State in deplorable conditions.

"The figures speak volumes. Between June and November 2024 alone, Bauchi State received over ₦52.7 billion in FAAC allocations. Specifically, over ₦17 billion was disbursed in October and November. Yet, the people of Bauchi endure untold hardship, with no discernible improvement in infrastructure, healthcare, or education. This begs the question: where has the money gone?

"Governor Bala Mohammed's response to these allegations was as empty as his achievements. Not once did he cite a single completed project, a functioning hospital, a world-class school or a transformative initiative. His claims of "construction of hospitals and schools" are laughable at best, as he failed to name even one location where such facilities exist. The reality is clear: these so-called achievements exist only on paper, not in the lives of Bauchi's citizens. And the citizens of Bauchi know this better," the statement read.

The forum which was responding to the State Government's response to Ambassador Yusuf Tuggar's criticism of the Governor's management of the State stated that the country's foreign affairs Minister who hails from the State had rightly criticised the Governor as Bala Mohammed's tenure was "marked by ineptitude, mismanagement, and a disturbing absence of developmental progress in Bauchi State."

Describing Bala Mohammed as "the worst Governor in Northern Nigeria today", the Bauchi Progressives Forum stated that "under Governor Bala Mohammed's watch, Bauchi State has become a symbol of decay and despair," noting that "His administration's record is a testament to wasted resources and squandered opportunities. Roads remain impassable, schools crumble, and hospitals barely function—despite the tens of billions at his disposal."

It further accused the Governor of carrying out land-grabbing schemes against the indigenes of the State who the group stated were afraid of coming out due to fear of victimisation.

"Moreover, Governor Bala Mohammed's history of alleged corruption precedes his governorship. From accusations of land-grabbing during his tenure as Minister of the Federal Capital Territory to similar allegations in Bauchi State, his track record reeks of betrayal of public trust. We challenge the Governor to deny these claims and pledge not to intimidate Bauchi residents, and we will produce ten victims of his ruthless land-grabbing schemes who fear that if they come out, he would victimise them and their families."

Defending Ambassador Yusuf Maitama Tuggar's criticism of the Governor the forum stated that his criticisms were neither politically motivated nor baseless and that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is a statesman that is deeply invested in the State's progress.

Benin Airport Set for Expansion and Renovation – Chris Omoaghe



The current condition of Benin Airport has raised concerns among prominent Nigerians, prompting calls for the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Olorogun Festus Keyamo, CON, SAN, to initiate plans for the expansion and modernization of this historic airport, one of the oldest in Nigeria.

In a media briefing held in Abuja on January 23, 2025, Mr. Chris Omoaghe, the Special Adviser on Special Projects and Duties to the Minister, highlighted the airport's rich history.

Constructed in 1956 by the former Public Works Department (PWD), the airport underwent significant upgrades between 1975 and 1978 before being officially handed over to the Nigerian Airports Authority (NAA).

"In 2007, the airport was renovated and expanded to accommodate larger aircraft and increase passenger capacity," Omoaghe explained.

"However, there is an urgent need to remodel the airport to align with the rising commercial activities in the state. Benin City serves as a vital gateway to the eastern, south-south, and northern regions of Nigeria."

Omoaghe emphasized that it is essential to enhance the airport's facilities to support its evolving role in the Nigerian economy.

The Minister has acknowledged this necessity and has assured that work will commence shortly at the Benin City Airport, as well as at other airports with similar concerns nationwide.

This initiative aligns with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's objective to elevate the aviation sector in Nigeria, a vision championed by the Minister.

Midwest Herald Awards: Keyamo Wins Minister of The Year, 20 Years After Picking Human Rights Award

The Honourable Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Olorogun Festus Keyamo, CON, SAN has won Midwest Herald Minister of the Year Award.

The vote tally saw Keyamo beating the Federal Capital Territory Minister, His Excellency Nyesome Wike and Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr. Tunji Ojo to second and 3rd position respectively.

Votes were weighed on Key Performance Index (KPIs) of the various ministries, that formed the metrics to measure the ministers performances.

The award to Keyamo as Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, is in recognition of the visible changes and innovations at the Airports across the country; the strict monitoring and supervision of airlines operating in Nigeria, as well as major institutional reforms that he has introduced for the ongoing transformation of Nigeria's aviation industry.

Keyamo, who is widely referred to as "The Game Changer Minister and Politician," said the award will spur him and his team to redouble their efforts and ensure that Nigerians have the safest air transportation system in Africa and become a major player in global aviation industry.

In a short ceremony held at the ministry's office in Abuja, to announce the proposed award, Keyamo thanked the Hon. Orobosa Omo-Ojo JP, Publisher and the Editorial Board of Midwest Herald for the well-deserved recognition.

"Myself and my team are very grateful for the award, especially coming from a distinguished company like yours. Unknown to many people, I received this same award 20 years ago for my human rights activism and now this." The Senior Advocate of Nigeria said.

President Bola Tinubu is among several Nigerians that have praised Keyamo and his team for the tangible and intangible changes the Delta State born lawyer and politician have achieved in just 15 months.

The 2024 Investiture Ceremony comes up in March 12th, 2025 in Benin City, Edo State. Ten other categories are being collated for announcement in the coming week.



Hon. Orobosa Omo-Ojo JP, Publisher Midwest Herald presenting the Minister of the Year letter to the Minister of Aviation, Olorogun Festus Keyamo CON, SAN in his office

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NDLEA arrests 734 suspects in Katsina, convicts 253

The Katsina Command of the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), says it has arrested 734 suspects in connection with various drug-related offences in 2024.

The Commander of NDLEA in the state, Mr Mohammed Aminu-Abubakar, disclosed this while briefing newsmen in Katsina on Wednesday.

According to him, about 253 of the suspects were prosecuted and convicted, while 107 cases are ongoing before the Federal High Court in the state.

He further said that in the year under review, the Command has succeeded in seizing a total of 1,525.9 Kilograms of various illicit drugs in the state.

Some of the exhibits, he said, included cocaine, methamphetamine, cannabis, tramadol, tranquilizers, among other illegal substances.

The commander said that under the Drug Demand Reduction (DDR), 155 sensitisation programmes were carried out, while 58,483 individuals were reached out within the year under review.

"Additionally, within 2024, a total number of 454 persons, including arrested drug users (clients), were briefly counselled, while 38 were residentially treated and rehabilitated by the command's rehabilitation centre.

"Also in collaboration with the state government and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), a total of 533 Chairmen/Councillors contestants carried out a voluntary integrity drug test at the commands DDR Unit," he said.

Aminu-Abubakar said that NDLEA was grateful to Gov. Dikko Radda and his administration for the support and assistance enjoyed by the command which contributed to its successes.

The NDLEA boss expressed appreciation to all stakeholders who directly or indirectly contributed to the fight against illicit drugs scourge in the state.

"We remain indebted to all law enforcement agencies in the state for collaborating with us to enhance our operations, especially the Nigerian Police Force, DSS, Army, customs service, among others.

"Additionally, I am deeply proud of the dedication and hard work of our officers and men in working diligently to combat the menace of illicit drugs in the state.

"These operations demonstrate our unwavering commitment to creating a drug-free society; we will continue to work tirelessly to disrupt drug trafficking networks and bring those involved to justice," he said.

Aminu-Abubakar further urged the public to continue to cooperate with the command by providing credible information that could assist in their investigations.

NDLEA Arrests Two Drug Dealers In Kano

Following the discovery of illegal narcotics and firearms during the January 20, 2025, raid, there was a violent altercation with the suspects.

During a targeted operation in Rahama Round in the Bebeji Local Government Area, two suspects, Musa Usman, 25, and Buhari Ya'u Bashir, 24, were taken into custody by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Kano State Command.

Following the discovery of illegal narcotics and firearms during the January 20, 2025, raid, there was a violent altercation with the suspects. According to the NDLEA, 1.1 kilograms of cannabis sativa (wraps), 8 grams (38 tablets) of diazepam, and 59 grams (165 pills) of Exol were seized during the operation.

Abubakar Idris Ahmad, the state commander, acknowledged the arrest and denounced the suspects' aggressive behavior.

"During the operation, one of the suspects, Musa Usman, armed with a dagger, attempted to attack our officers, causing injury to one of them," he said.

The injured officer is reportedly receiving treatment, and the State Commander reassured the public of the agency's commitment to its duties.

"Attacks on law enforcement officers in the line of duty will not deter us from carrying out our mandate to rid society of the scourge of drug abuse and trafficking," Ahmad stated.

The accused are presently being held and will face charges of assaulting a law enforcement official and drug-related offenses. The Command's Public Relations Officer, Sadiq Muhammad Maigatari, reaffirmed the organization's zero-tolerance policy for offenses involving drugs.

"This operation underscores the NDLEA's resolve to make Kano State safe and free from the influence of illicit drugs," Maigatari said.

In order to support the continuous battle against drug addiction and trafficking, the NDLEA asked the public to report any suspicious activity.

We arrested 38 drug suspects, impounded N134.2bn illicit drugs in Lagos Port in 2024



No fewer than 38 suspected drug traffickers were arrested by operatives of the Tin-Can Island Strategic Command of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) at Tin-Can Island Port, in Lagos in 2024.

The operatives also intercepted N134.2 billion worth of various types of illicit drugs within the period under review.

This was disclosed by Commander of Narcotics Ofoyeju Mitchell during the command's 2024 Media Briefing and Awards Ceremony held at Grimaldi Conference Hall, Tincan Island Port, Lagos.

The operational results, he said, helped to insulate the economy from the adverse effects of criminal proceeds and promote public health and safety.

"The year 2024 presented us with many challenges, but through teamwork, strategic planning, and intelligence-led operations, we have achieved remarkable milestones by disrupting the illicit drug trade, promoting community engagement, and deepening collaboration with stakeholders," Mitchell stated.

He stated that the 38 suspected drug traffickers arrested, includes one female and 37 male and that a whopping seizure of 339,576.91 kg of illicit drugs were made.

According to him, the command also won 12 conviction, while 26 cases are still pending at the different law courts.

He gave the breakdown of the seizures to include: codeine 305,323.37 kg; tapentadol 13,370 kg; tafradol 11,230.8 kg; benzhexol 5,888.8 kg; cannabis indica 3,601.25 kg; methamphetamine 83.301 kg; cocaine 56.39 kg; and heroin 23 kg. The estimated monetary value of the seized drugs is 134.2 billion naira. A total of twelve (12) convictions were won while no fewer than 26 cases are pending at the law courts.

"Drugs and crime are intertwined. It is either the cartels are using proceeds of drugs to fund their acts of criminality or they rely on the influence of drugs to perpetrate heinous activities. This obviously underscores the crucial role of the NDLEA at the seaports in disrupting drug supply chains and mitigating the impact of criminal acts in our communities.

"In January last year, we detected narcotic drugs, firearms, and ammunition in one container. The command will remain vigilant in protecting our country from the painful grip of kidnapping, gruesome murder, and related crimes that are aggravated by drugs.

"As frontline gatekeepers, we understand that these seizures and arrests have significantly contributed to the relative peace enjoyed by citizens across the length and breadth of our beloved country.

"It has equally enhanced a conducive environment for the ease of doing business in the maritime industry. Our mandate is to encourage legitimate commerce and eliminate any act of criminality that is injurious to economic growth. This is our modest contribution to national security, and we will leave no stone unturned until Tincan Island port is completely impenetrable by the drug trafficking cartels," Mitchell stated.

He stated that in addition to enforcement measures, that NDLEA also focused on public education through the War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) campaign.

According to Mitchell, the impressive scorecard was made possible through the Command's shared commitment to promoting zero tolerance for drug trafficking.

The Commander also used the occasion to honour deserving outstanding officers with special awards for their excellence and commitment to service.

Commander Mitchell shared the award categories, which ranged from Most Productive Officer-in-Charge to Best WADA Media Partner of the Year.

The list of awards and the recipients include the Most Productive Officer-in-Charge of the Year won by ACN Adefunke Akindele, Most Enterprising Officer of the Year won by ACN Muje Stephen, WADA Facilitator of the Year won by ACN Salihu Isa Machi, and Most Dedicated Officer of the Year won by CSN Audu Samuel, while the Best Dressed Officer of the Year went to SNA Mohammed Musa. The Best WADA Media Partner of the Year was won by Mr. Davidson Iriekpen of Thisday newspaper for his tenacity and dedication to anti-drug abuse public enlightenment.

The event also marked the launch of the inaugural edition of the Tincan Strategic Command quarterly newsletter. This publication aims to inform stakeholders of the command's operations, community engagement activities, and significant achievements while promoting greater collaboration in the fight against drug abuse.

"The dynamic drug trafficking trends have kept us on our toes. Apart from cannabis indica that is imported from Canada and the United States, pharmaceutical opioids from India, cocaine is imported from South America, and heroin comes from the far east, like Pakistan and Iran. Within the period under review, we discovered the first shipment of methamphetamine from Canada. We will continue to monitor the trend and thwart every criminal manipulation," he assured.

Commander Mitchell expressed heartfelt appreciation for the enabling environment provided by Gen. Buba Marwa to tackle the challenge of drug trafficking at the seaport.

He acknowledged the hard work and dedication of NDLEA personnel, as well as other stakeholders in the anti-narcotic campaign.

NDLEA destroys expired drugs in Jigawa

The National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, in partnership with the Association of Pharmaceutical Chemists, has destroyed expired drugs valued at over N800,000 in Gumel Local Government Area of Jigawa State.

The chairman of Gumel Local Government Council, Alhaji Lawan Ya'u Abdullahi, disclosed this during the event in Gumel.

He reaffirmed the council's commitment to safeguarding public health, emphasising the importance of collective efforts in building a healthy society.

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He reaffirmed the council's commitment to safeguarding public health, emphasising the importance of collective efforts in building a healthy society.

Speaking earlier, the chairman of the local chapter of the Association of Pharmaceutical Chemists, Malam Bashari Dahiru Gagarawa, expressed gratitude to both the state and local governments for their continued support in improving healthcare delivery.

NDLEA seizes 4,880kgs of drugs, arrests 536 suspects in Adamawa

The Adamawa State Command of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, seized 4,880 kilograms of illicit drugs and arrested 536 suspected drug offenders in the course of the year 2024.

The state Commander of the agency, Agboalu Samson, who disclosed this in Yola on Monday, said 518 of the suspects were males while 18 were females.

During a review press conference in Yola, the NDLEA commander mentioned the confiscated substances as Cannabis Sativa totaling 3,180.36422 kilograms, and psychotropic substances amounting to 1,700.29013 kilograms.

He broke down the seizures as 1,090.63296 kilograms of Tramadol (equivalent to 1,758,868 capsules, tablets, and milliliters), 6.8665 kilograms of Diazepam (33,259 tablets), 577.60667 kilograms of Exol-5 (1,636,989 tablets), and 19.932 kilograms of codeine-laced cough syrups (44,592 milliliters).

He said 0.0381 kilograms of Methamphetamine, 0.015 kilograms of Cocaine, 5 kilograms (22 bottles) of formalin (locally known as Suck and Die), and 1.4 kilograms (15 bottles) of Akuskura herbal mixture were among the seized drugs.

He expressed the worry that the diversity of the seized drugs underscores the evolving challenges of drug abuse and trafficking in Adamawa State.

He added, however, that his command achieved commendable results in legal efforts, securing 148 convictions in 2024, with sentences ranging from three months to 25 years.

"Of the convicted offenders, 143 were males and five were females, all aged between 18 and 65 years," he said, adding that 59 cases remain pending at the Federal High Court, Yola.

According to him, the Command's Drug Demand Reduction Unit admitted 52 clients for counseling and rehabilitation during the year in view, with 40 successfully completing the program.



Gunfire Erupts As Police And NDLEA Clash Over Arrest Of Suspected Drug Dealer, Allegedly A Policeman's Wife, In Bayelsa





The confrontation occurred at the Ekeki Police Division when NDLEA operatives arrived to apprehend a woman accused of drug peddling.

Residents of Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, were thrown into panic on Thursday as a clash erupted between operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and officers of the Ekeki Police Division during an attempt to arrest a suspected drug dealer.

The confrontation occurred at the Ekeki Police Division when NDLEA operatives arrived to apprehend a woman accused of drug peddling.

It was gathered that the NDLEA squad had officially recorded their operation in the police register before proceeding to the suspect's location.

However, as the NDLEA team carried out their assignment, policemen from the Ekeki Division allegedly intervened, obstructing the operation.

This led to a heated altercation between the two security agencies.

Eyewitnesses reported hearing multiple gunshots during the standoff, which caused panic among residents and passersby.

A resident of the area described the scene as chaotic, with people scrambling for safety as tensions escalated.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that two vehicles belonging to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) were seen with deflated tyres after being shot at during a confrontation with police officers.

The incident occurred as the NDLEA operatives attempted to arrest a suspect.

Speaking on the matter, NDLEA spokesman Mr. Howells Obah stated that the operatives followed standard procedures during the operation.

"Our officers carried out a raid near the Ekeki Police Division and properly documented their presence at the station, as required. However, the suspect, reportedly the wife of a police officer, appeared to be under police protection."

"During the operation, two of our vehicles were shot at, and we are currently working to retrieve them while ensuring the situation does not escalate further," Obah explained.

Bayelsa State Police Public Relations Officer, Musa Mohammed, confirmed the incident, stating that he was on his way to the scene to gather more details.

"I am heading there now to find out what happened," Mohammed said on the phone.

NDLEA Sensitises Damaturu Community On Dangers Of Drug Abuse



In a bid to combat the growing menace of drug abuse, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in collaboration with the Damaturu Local Government, organized a community sensitization program in Nayi-nawa and Pompomari wards on January 20, 2025.

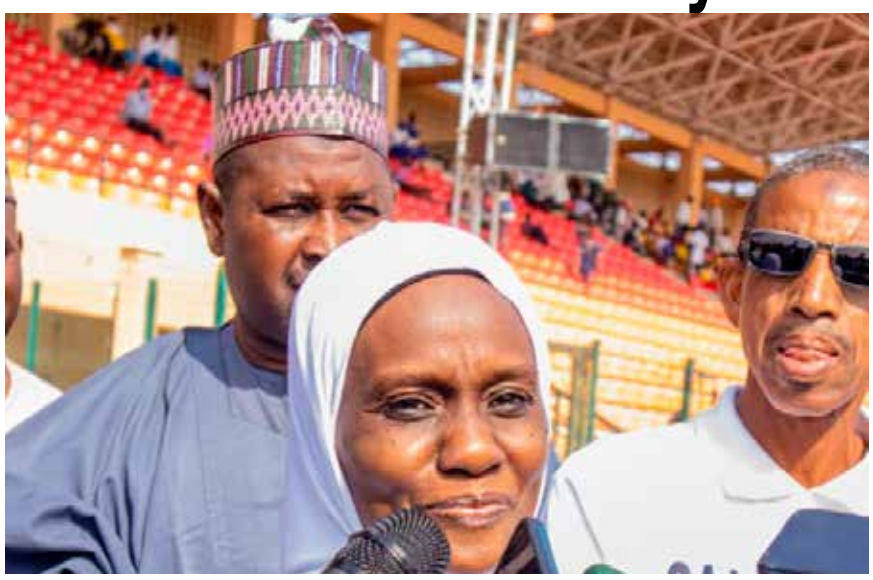
The event, which drew over 300 participants from each ward, aimed to create awareness about the devastating effects and consequences of drug abuse, while also providing a way out for those struggling with addiction through the NDLEA rehabilitation center in Yobe State.

During the sensitization program, participants engaged in a question-and-answer session, seeking clarification on various aspects of drug abuse and its impact on individuals and communities.

This initiative is part of the NDLEA's War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) campaign, a nationwide effort to raise awareness about the dangers of drug abuse and promote drug-free lifestyles.

The success of this event underscores the importance of community-led initiatives in the fight against drug abuse, and the NDLEA's commitment to working with local governments and stakeholders to create safer, healthier communities.

Gombe State to Grant One-Week Break for 2026 Inter-Secondary School Games



The Gombe State Government has pledged to grant a one-week break for schools to participate in the 2026 edition of the Inter-secondary Schools Athletics and Principals' Cup Football Competition.

This assurance was given by the State Commissioner for Education, Dr. Aisha Umar Maigari, during an interaction with sports journalists on the sidelines of the ongoing Gombe State Inter-secondary Schools Athletics Championship.

Dr. Maigari emphasized that this approval would be contingent on the competition's schedule not conflicting with the academic calendar.

"The State Government is in support of the Gombe State Inter-secondary Schools Athletics Championship and the Principals' Cup Football Competition, and that is why His Excellency has approved a one-week break for schools to participate in the competitions, and this is in tandem with the Federal Government policy," Dr. Maigari stated.

She further explained, "We are ready to approve a week break for next year's edition if it doesn't clash with our schools calendar. We will do it in a way that it doesn't affect the school calendar, and we are able to deliver our curriculum for our students to study and prepare for their exams."

Dr. Maigari highlighted the government's commitment to supporting grassroots sports development by providing a conducive environment for the games, including designating one of the state's schools as a camp for the participating teams.

"Our support is that we have provided one of our schools as a camp for the teams, and I think that is the greatest support. It is one of His Excellency's legacies to ensure it benefits children of Gombe State. We have also asked our teachers to support and ensure the success of the games," she added.

This initiative by the Gombe State Government demonstrates a strong commitment to fostering sporting talent among the youth and ensuring their holistic development.

Nigerian Premier Football League – boom or doom?



I admit I have NOT been following the Nigerian Premier Football League, NPFL, as closely as I should.

There are conflicting reports about the state of its affairs. Some stakeholders say that the NPFL is improving and that it is, potentially, on the way to being the best in Africa within a few years.

But that assertion is not supported by the evidence on ground.

Last week, the last of the 4 Nigerian clubs in the two 2024/2025 CAF Club competitions, Enyimba FC, was eliminated from the CAF Confederations Cup. It is not for the first time.

In the past 20 years, no Nigerian club has won any trophy in African Club football.

3 years ago, a private company, GTI Assets Management, was introduced into the Nigeria league structure. The most attractive credential of GTI was that it had spent 10 previous years researching and studying the Nigerian league. So, it came prepared to team up with the League Management Company, managers of the league, to provide a new pathway for domestic Nigerian football.

Their relationship is described as a 'strategic partnership' and GTI's mandate is to change the fortune of a league that had been run aground by endless crisis, chaos and charges of corruption. The reputation of the league was so bad that for the last few seasons, no single sponsor was even willing to touch it with a very long spoon.

It has been 3 years since the GTI intervention started. What's the scorecard?

The clubs are still NOT winning anything in Africa. Governments are running 18 of the 20 clubs in the league. And so on.

Now, the questions:

Have sponsors started to queue up?

Are players and officials being owed their wages and allowances?

Have infrastructure improved, along with TV coverage of matches? Have the fans returned to the stadia, and there is absence of corruption and hooliganism?

What does the future truly look like?

Will GTI not suffer 'fatigue' from funding without early returns?

Is the league now attractive enough to halt reckless migration of players to mushroom clubs abroad, and win over investors, sponsors and fans in a sector where 'winning of trophies' is the only thing that matters and sells?

This Saturday, on '90 minutes with Mathematical' the 'pilot' of the GTI project, a man loaded to the hilt with qualifications and experience in the sports management sector, Executive Director of GTI, University of Ibadan alumnus and 'Hall of Famer', Mr. Nelson Ine, joins me for a forensic examination of the Nigerian Premier Football League. Is it doom or boom for the NPFL?

No stakeholder in Nigerian football should miss this potential 'eye opener' of a conversation on Eagle7 Sports Radio 103.7 FM, Wasimi, this Saturday, January 25, from 7:30 in the morning.

Dr. Olusegun Odegbami MON, OLY, AFNIIA, FNIS.

Nigeria eyes multi-million Sports Industry Growth

The forward-looking vision seems to chart the course for Yusuf Ali after being appointed this week as CEO of the Elite Athletes Development and Podium Board of the National Sports Commission (NSC) in Nigeria.

In statements to The Guardian, he said on Wednesday that Los Angeles 2028 will be decisive.

The new Chief will not be alone. The NSC officially announced the composition of the rest of the team, which will include 13 members, among whom are prominent figures such as Olympians Mary Onyali and Hauwa Kulu Akinyemi, as well as sports development experts like Professor Ken Anugweje.

Yusuf Ali, CEO of the Elite Athletes Development and Podium Board of the National Sports Commission (NSC)

Ali, known for his historic 8.27-metre jump at the 1989 African Athletics Championships, will lead them all.

For Ali, the next Olympic appointment will serve as a key indicator of the success that the policies implemented by the board may hold.

"The 2028 Games will be an important test of how much effectiveness has advanced, and this will also be reflected in other international sporting commitments of the country before that date," he stated.

The main objective pursued by this arm of the NSC, according to Ali, is none other than to achieve outstanding sporting success that leads to visible results.

"Our mandate seeks to achieve excellent performance in all disciplines, which will lead us to be present on the podiums and in the various international sporting commitments," he noted.

Ali, who was previously president of the Edo State Sports Commission, stated that his appointment symbolises national recognition for the work he has been doing over the years in favour of sports development.

In the same vein, he assured that his new position presents him with a significant challenge: to offer the best to place the Nigerian sports sector at the top, making it the engine of an activity that becomes profitable for all those who participate in it. From this perspective, his idea is to turn sport into an economically attractive and sustainable industry.

"In countries with very strong development and implementation policies, sport is a huge business, and that is the goal of the National Sports Commission's leadership.

We want a multi-million naira sports industry that generates income for both the nation and the participants," explainedAli. The NSC expects this project to contribute 5% of the national GDP and generate between 3 and 4 billion dollars (€2.9/4.2 bn) in net annual income by 2027.

Ali made it clear that the seed of good international sports performance begins with the implementation of strong national policies.

"Great elite performance involves ensuring solid talent identification and development, fostering continuous coach training, and ensuring adequate funding allocation in the form of training grants for athletes and coaches.

This will be the core of the board," he stated.

Beyond accumulating in athletics a record that shines with a national long jump record that has been in place since 1989 and the three medals he won in that championship, Ali also has an important track record dedicated to sports management.

In 2022, the then Minister of Sports, Sunday Dare, appointed him as Nigeria's coordinator for the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. On that occasion, the team returned home with 12 gold medals.

The composition of the NSC Board is made up of carefully selected experts, as highlighted by the NSC Director General, Bukola Olopade.

"All committee members were selected for their experience and knowledge to help Nigeria achieve sustainable success on the podium," he noted.



Excitement grows as Nilayo Sports Management Company unfolds Access Bank Lagos City Marathon program

Access Bank Lagos City Marathon Expo has been slated to be held from the 3rd to the 13th of February this year. Nilayo Sports Management Company unfolds the plans as Nigeria's premier road race hits its 10th anniversary.

The Expo is part of key activities to mark the 10th anniversary of the Gold labelled race, which is now one of Africa's most prestigious road races.

According to the Organisers, the Expo has been well designed to carry a full package of Entertainment and fun throughout the event at the Teslim Balogun stadium.

Some of the side attractions of the Expo include lots of music, exhibitions, health talks and pick up of Marathon kits for runners participating in the Marathon on the 15th of February 2025.

This year's Access Bank Lagos City Marathon is expected to have in attendance over four thousand international runners while the organisers are also expecting about one hundred elite runners from all over the world at this year's Race.

The International Association of Athletics Federation, IAAF, says the Access Bank Lagos City Marathon attained the Gold labelled status because it has continued to professionally distinguish itself both at the level of organisation and participation.

The Marathon has become a key feature in the annual calendar of World Athletics, and one of the World's fastest-growing road races.

After signing new deal with Chelsea, son of Nigeria's 1994 World Cup star makes PL2 debut

Fresh from signing a new contract at Chelsea, Landon Emenalo made his Premier League 2 debut on Friday night as the development squad suffered a 2-0 defeat at the hands of Southampton.

This week, the versatile tri-national midfielder, who is eligible to represent the United States, England and Nigeria national teams, put pen to paper on his first professional contract after celebrating his seventeenth birthday.

Landon is the son of Michael Emenalo, a former Nigeria international left-back and current director of football for the Saudi Pro League.

A former Chelsea technical director, Michael Emenalo played for Nigeria at the 1994 World Cup as a replacement for the injured Benedict Iroha and was included in the squad for the King Fahd Cup the following year.

In his final season as a schoolboy, Landon Emenalo made his competitive debut for Chelsea U21s, coming off the bench for the last 13 minutes of a 4-1 victory against Colchester United in the Premier League Cup in January 2024.

Midway through the first half, Irish-Nigerian attacking midfielder Romeo Akachukwu put the visitors ahead with an impressive finish into the bottom corner.

In the fourth minute of first half stoppage time, Chelsea suffered a hammer blow as Jay Robinson doubled Southampton's advantage just as the whistle was about to be blown.

Landon Emenalo made his first appearance in the Premier League 2, coming on as a substitute in the 70th minute to replace Harrison McMahon.

The England U17 international made his FA Youth Cup debut last month and has also featured in this seasons' U18 Premier League and Premier League Cup.



SLIDING TACKLES: GOLDEN EAGLETS COACH , MANU GARBA (ANAMBRA SCOUTING HARVEST); ENDS IN A (BUSY) GRAND FINALE !

" THE POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES ; OF THE LAUDABLE (SCOUTING) EXERCISE "!

Yes! It's NO LONGER NEWS that the Coach of the Nation's U17 Boys Football Team fondly Called - The GOLDEN EAGLETS, COACH MANU GARBA Breezed into AWKA (The CAPITAL CITY of the LIGHT OF THE NATION, ANAMBRA STATE); on Tuesday for a HISTORIC 2-DAYS SCOUTING/SCREENING PROGRAMME Exercise initially Planned for ONLY ANAMBRA U17 PLAYERS! Yes! The COACH MANU GARBA's ANAMBRA STATE U17 SCREENING PROGRAMME, was indeed MARVELOUS and a Highly Gratifying WELCOME DEVELOPMENT! Yes! The COACH MANU Bold INVASION of the ANAMBRA STATE U17 FOOTBALL System was HISTORIC as this is the 1ST TIME in Recent History, that a NATIONAL YOUTH TEAM COACH, is Embarking on SUCH A MASSIVE OUTREACH SCOUTING PROGRAMME Exercise to FISH GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL TALENTS in the STATES! Yes! It's an UNDENIABLE TRUTH that Ever since the Mercenary INVASION of the Nation's FOOTBALL HOUSE by some CLUELESS (Self seeking) INVADERS led by AMAJU PINNICK as the (Non Contributing) STATE FA CHAIRMEN NFF BOARD in 2014? Our NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAMS SELECTION have left the STATES GRASSROOTS Sector of our Football Industry! And, Crookedly DIVERTED to the Present CASH AND CARRY System where NATIONAL YOUTH TEAM PLAYERS are INVITED inside the TOP OFFICES of the NFF BOARD!

Yes! It's ANOTHER UNCONTESTED TRUTH, that Ever since the CASH AND CARRY Criminal Elements System of INVITATION of NATIONAL TEAMS PLAYERS (instead of the GRASSROOTS SECTOR located in both the STATES and LGAs of our Nation)? Our NIGERIA FOOTBALL, has PLUMMETED to the LOWEST EBB and the NATION HAS NOT WON EVEN (ONE TEACUP); Ever since the Tragic CASH AND CARRY Policy was introduced! So! Bearing the Nefarious PAST SYSTEM which FAILED the Nation, WOEFULLY! One cannot but give HUGE KUDOS to Eaglets COACH, MANU GARBA and his Eaglets General Coordinator, BELLO GARBA GUSAU for Approving, Embarking and Achieving the Patriotic SOUND OBJECTIVE of SCREENING the U17 GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL TALENTS of ANAMBRA STATE! Of course, ONE Cannot Also FAIL to COMMEND the Laudable VISION of the Capacity CHAIRMAN of the ANAMBRA STATE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION, GENERAL CHIKELUE ILOENYOSI, for the Audacity to MASTERMIND the EAGLETS ANAMBRA SCOUTING PROGRAMME Exercise! Then! Our SPECIAL KUDOS Shall also go to the ANAMBRA FOOTBALL CLUBS and their teeming U17 PLAYERS For the MASSIVE TURNOUT and Unbelievable ENTHUSIASM for the COACH MANU EAGLETS (Opportunity) NEW YEAR PRESENT to the ANAMBRA U17 FOOTBALLERS!

THE " POSITIVES " AND " NEGATIVES " OF THE COACH MANU GARBA (ANAMBRA) SCOUTING PROGRAMME EXERCISE !

POSITIVES

Yes! It's True that the COACH MANU GARBA (Eaglets) SCOUTING OUTREACH PROGRAMME in ANAMBRA, Was a HUGE SUCCESS, both in TERMS of Unprecedented MASSIVE INTEREST and Record-setting PARTICIPATION of the ANAMBRA FOOTBALL CLUBS and their Enthusiastic U17 PLAYERS who thronged out in their NUMBERS to SHOWCASE their Highly GIFTED RAW FOOTBALL Talents! Yes! The TURNOUT and PARTICIPATION of U17 PLAYERS was heart-gladening to the extent that the ANAMBRA EAGLETS (Scouting) PROGRAMME Exercise? Turned into (Not ONLY for ANAMBRA U17 PLAYERS); But AN Entire SOUTH EAST Affair as TEAMS from Enugu, Imo, Abia and Ebonyi States); CAME to be a PART of the RARE GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY, Granted Them by the 2013 FIFA U17 WORLD CUP Winning, COACH MANU GARBA!

Yes! A Practical CONFIRMATION of the SUCCESS of the just Concluded COACH MANU GARBA (ANAMBRA) EAGLETS SCOUTING Show! Can be Better Understood, from the FACT that OVER 200 CLUBS, PARTICIPATED in the SCOUTING Exercise with 30 PLAYERS each CLUB! The POSITIVES of the COACH MANU GARBA (ANAMBRA) SCOUTING PROGRAMME Exercise, also include that the STANDARD and QUALITY of PLAY by the Boys, WAS QUITE HIGH and ADMIRABLE! But! The Most Heartwarming of ALL, was that the ANAMBRA EAGLETS SCOUTING OUTREACH PROGRAMME, Confirmed ONCE AGAIN; THAT OUR TALENTED GRASSROOTS PLAYERS abound; and are SERIOUSLY ENTHUSIASTIC to PLAY for OUR NATIONAL TEAMS (If ONLY GIVEN the OPPORTUNITY by NATIONAL TEAMS Handlers)! Yes, a lot of RAW TALENTS, Came to the MANU GARBA (ANAMBRA) EAGLETS SCOUTING Party! SLIDING TACKLES is Supremely Confident, that World Cup Winning Coach MANU GARBA and Eaglets General Coordinator, BELLO GUSAU, MUST be GRINNING from Ear to Ear as a RESULT of the TOP QUALITY EAGLETS Materials discovered in ANAMBRA STATE!

NEGATIVES

Yes! Despite the HUGE SUCCESSES of the COACH MANU GARBA (ANAMBRA) EAGLETS SCOUTING Show! The NEGATIVES of the SCOUTING EXERCISE, Stiil RESIDED in our Age-long UNREPENTANT OVER AGE CHEATING Syndrome which blurred the COACH MANU SCOUTING Objectives! Yes! It's True that about 50 Percent of the PARTICIPATING PLAYERS, WERE CLEARLY ABOVE the TARGETTED 17 YEARS! Even though, the OVERAGE MERCENARIES, Came to DISRUPT the LAUDABLE SCOUTING PROGRAMME! But! A lot of YOUNG GIFTED BOYS, STOOD UP TO BE COUNTED! This is to Forewarn OTHER STATES who COACH MANU, Will VISIT to PREVENT the OVERAGE PLAYERS from COMING to the SCOUTING EXERCISE!

Barrister lyke Igbokwe
Torchlight Of Nigeria Football
WhatsApp: 09136715922

Ahead of AFCON Draw: It's Destination Morocco, Where Sports Flow in Royal Veins

The clock ticks down to 18h00 GMT on Monday when the draw for the final competition of the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations will be held at the Mohammed V National Theatre in Rabat.

Then the roadmap would have been laid for the first Africa Cup of Nations to be held in December and spilling to the following year.

It triggers the series of football competitions that the Kingdom of Morocco will hold this year.

The kingdom has always been the sports destination on the continent. Great thanks to the facilities that Morocco has put in place.

From great stadiums to world-class hotels, and efficient communication and transportation systems, Morocco offers a plug-and-play scenario making it the ultimate destination for hosting events, even at short notice.

One of the outlandish facilities is the Mohammed VI Football Complex.

It was founded in 2009 in Salé, on the instigation of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God assist him, in his letter to the National Sports Conference held in Skhirat on October 24, 2008.

In this Royal letter, His Majesty the King called for the development of a modern and efficient system to organize the sports sector based on the restructuring of the national sports landscape and the upgrading of sports.

The Mohammed VI Football Academy, the jewel that produces Moroccan stars, was built according to criteria that correspond to the best international standards in terms of training centers in order to put in place the conditions for the training of Moroccan talents, enabling them to play in the biggest soccer clubs, whether in Morocco or in Europe.

One of the items that catches the attention at the vast entry lounge is a huge framed picture of the reception accorded the 1976 Africa Cup of Nations winning team of Morocco.

The reception of the AFCON winning team of Morocco in 1976. In the middle and wearing a blue suit is Prince Mohammed who is today, King Mohammed VI.

All the players in the picture wore maroon-coloured suits. In the middle of the group picture is a young boy, then 13. He wore a blue suit and a striped tie.

That was the then Prince Mohammed who is today, King Mohammed VI. The magnificent football complex in Rabat is named after him.

Information gathered that there are three more such football training complexes, though on a lower scale, in Morocco while others are still being planned.

King Mohammed's association with sports, especially football therefore predated his ascension to the throne on 23 July 1999 upon the passing on of his father, King Hassan II.

Football in Morocco has blossomed under King Mohammed VI. In 2022, Moroccan clubs were holders of both the CAF Champions League and the CAF Confederation Cup.

Women's football has received a big boost as the Moroccan women's team made a debut at the FIFA Women's World Cup to be co-hosted by Australia and New Zealand in 2023.

Before King Mohammed VI's reign, the Moroccan women's team was like a punching bag in the African Women's Championship.

For instance, the team was pummelled 8-0 by Nigeria on 17 October 1998. But in 2022, Nigeria's Super Falcons struggled in vain and were eliminated by Morocco in the semi-finals of the Women's Africa Cup of Nations.

King Mohammed VI was born on 21 August 1963, the day the Nigeria Football Federation (Founded 1933, though they seemed not aware) clocked 30.

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Gombe State to Grant One-Week Break for 2026 Inter-Secondary School Games

Novak Djokovic retires injured to put Zverev into Australian Open final

Novak Djokovic retired injured after losing the first set 7-6(5) against Alexander Zverev on Friday to put the German through to his first Australian Open final and extend his wait for a record 25th Grand Slam title.

Zverev will meet either Jannik Sinner or Ben Shelton in Sunday's decider as he bids for his first Grand Slam title, but Djokovic will remain locked with Margaret Court on 24 major trophies until at least the French Open.

There were doubts about Djokovic's left thigh following his taxing quarter-final win over Carlos Alcaraz when he took a lengthy medical timeout after the first set against the Spaniard.

The 37-year-old Serb skipped a training session on the eve of the semi-final and entered Rod Laver Arena for the afternoon match with the thigh strapped.

But there was little indication he was struggling until late in the set when he began trudging slowly between points and muttering in frustration at his players' box.

He gave up the set by hammering a regulation forehand volley into the net and promptly walked to Zverev's side to shake hands and embrace the German, leaving the crowd gasping.

With a rueful expression, Djokovic held two thumbs up and clapped at the terraces but there was a round of boos as the 10-times champion made his exit.



Djokovic later said he had been trying to nurse a torn muscle and he was in increasing pain as the set wore on.

"I knew even if I won the first set, that it's going to be a huge uphill battle for me to stay physically fit enough to stay with him in the rallies, you know, for another God knows what, two, three, four hours," the Serb told reporters.

"I don't think I had that, unfortunately, today in the tank."

'SHOW SOME RESPECT'

Zverev said he was also surprised by Djokovic's retirement but noted the Serb's movement had fallen away in the tiebreak.

"I thought it was a high level first set," he added.

"Of course there are some difficulties . . . in the tiebreak he was not moving. I did see him struggle a bit more."

Zverev also admonished sections of the crowd for jeering Djokovic, who has dominated the year's opening Grand Slam since winning his first trophy at Melbourne Park in 2008.

"The very first thing I want to say is, please guys, don't boo a player when he goes out with injury," Zverev said.

"I know everyone paid for tickets and everyone wants to see hopefully a great five-set match.

"But . . . Novak Djokovic is someone who has given this sport for the past 20 years absolutely everything of his life.

"He has won this tournament with an abdominal tear, won this tournament with a hamstring injury.

"So please show some respect."

The truncated semi-final win is a huge boost for Zverev's hopes of finally winning a Grand Slam, having missed out to Alcaraz in last year's French Open final and surrendering a two-set lead before losing to Dominic Thiem in the 2020 U.S. Open decider.

The rangy 27-year-old has been tipped for Grand Slam success since his teen years but was often thwarted by the likes of Djokovic and the now-retired Roger Federer and Rafa Nadal.

Zverev was strong on serve on Friday and appeared content to wage attritional rallies with the Serb while biding his time for chances.

Though failing to convert all five break points he had over Djokovic, Zverev was rock-solid in the tiebreak.

He thrashed a forehand down the line to bring up set point with a 24th winner before Djokovic made his stunning exit, a year after being shocked by Sinner in the semi-finals.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SPORTS
National Stadium Complex, Surulere, Lagos.

The Director General, Prof. Olawale A. Moronkola
invites

50TH Anniversary

Mr/Mrs/Dr./Prof./Chief/Hon. _____ *to the*

9TH CONVOCATION CEREMONY/50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

for the award of Certificates to graduates and Conferment of Fellowship of the Institute (FNIS) on some distinguished Nigerians .

EVENTS:

World Press Conference:
Date: Monday, 27th January, 2025. Time: 1:00 pm Venue: NIS Conference Hall

Pre-convocation/50th Anniversary Lecture
Prof. Raimi Abiodun Moronfolu, Lagos State University, Ojo
Date: Wednesday, 29th January, 2025 **Venue**: NIS Conference Hall **Time:** 11.00am

Alumni Dinner/Award Night (*By Access Card*)
Date: Wednesday, 29th January, 2025 **Venue**: National Institute for Sports, Gymnasium Hall **Time:** 5:00PM

Convocation Ceremony
Date: Thursday, 30th January, 2025
Venue: National Institute for Sports, Gymnasium Hall, National Stadium, Surulere, Lagos. **Time**: 11:00am

R.S.V.P

Mr. Bako Haruna
Chairman, 50th Anniversary Committee
08059184943

Mr. Belmond Benson
Chairman, Convocation Committee/Registrar
07038132083

Prof. Olawale A. Moronkola JP, MNAE, FNSHA, FIMPD, nssmfe
Director General/CEO
07038132083

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