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FROM THE ARCHIVE

Do the right thing even if nobody is watching which is called INTEGRITY

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Food Inflation worsens child malnutrition crisis in northern Nigeria



Obi flays FG for approving N142bn for 6 bus terminals

Food Inflation worsens child malnutrition crisis in northern Nigeria

In Awe, a rural community in Nasarawa State, north-central Nigeria, Salamatu Madaki flips through a register in search of the names of malnourished children. It's the middle of the year, and the numbers in her care as the local government's nutrition coordinator tell a story she wishes she could rewrite before the year ends.

"We feed our children three times a day, but it's just carbohydrates," she told PREMIUM TIMES. "No vegetables, no beans, no meat. Mostly pap in the morning, yams in the afternoon, fufu at night."

Even those plain meals are becoming unaffordable. Between December 2024 and May 2025, cases of severe acute malnutrition in Awe jumped from 64 to 86. Moderate cases also increased, from 28 to 32, according to Ms Madaki.

Across Nigeria's northern communities, a crisis is unfolding silently. As food prices rise, families living on the margins are slipping further into poverty. For many, especially children, the result is devastating: acute malnutrition that stunts not just growth, but future potential.

According to UNICEF, Nigeria has the world's second-highest number of stunted children, with 32 per cent of children under five affected. About two million Nigerian children suffer from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), but only two in 10 receive treatment. Seven per cent of women of childbearing age also suffer from acute malnutrition.

SAM is a serious condition where children do not get enough nutrients and energy to grow and develop properly. It can lead to weakened immunity, making children more vulnerable to infections and even death if untreated.

There are cases of malnutrition in most parts of Nigeria, but the situation is worse and dire in the northern part of the country.

Over 650 children have died from severe acute malnutrition in Katsina State this year, according to the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF).

PREMIUM TIMES reports that the organisation, which has been operating in Katsina since 2021, said it recorded an alarming rise in the number of malnourished children brought to its treatment centres in increasingly critical condition.

In Kano, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said 51.9 per cent of children are stunted due to malnutrition.

In Kebbi, the MSF said it recorded a 74.1 per cent increase in the admission of malnourished children into its facilities between January and June 2025.

In Nasarawa's Awe and Niger State's Maikunkele community, mothers describe a bleak and repetitive diet built on starchy foods. A single egg now costs N250, five times its 2023 price. Cow milk, once a common supplement, has soared from N100 to N500 for a 750ml bottle.

Najahatu Salihu, a mother of two in Awe, became concerned when her nine-month-old daughter couldn't crawl or sit on her own. Diagnosed with malnutrition, the baby remains on the same carbohydrate-heavy diet, lacking vital nutrients.

"I manage a public tap and get about N500 a day from my brother-in-law," she told PREMIUM TIMES. "My husband works in the market. There's no way we can afford meat or milk."

Hadiza Abdullahi, 38, shares a similar ordeal. Her 14-month-old son stopped attempting to walk at 10 months and was diagnosed with malnutrition.

"We used to buy beans and eggs, but now we eat only rice or maize," she said. "We cook once at night and reheat it in the morning. It's the same thing every day."

In Maikunkele, grain seller Mariam Abdulhadi watches her two-year-old daughter, Fatimo, struggle with persistent feeding problems. Slightly built and often clinging to her mother, the child was born underweight and was not exclusively breastfed.



"She only pinches rice when I eat," said Ms Abdulhadi. "She vomits most solid foods and lives mostly on breast milk."

Doctors had recommended a diet of nutrient-rich foods, such as kwash pap, milk, and vegetables. But after a little improvement, the family turned to an herbalist. Even when a health worker suggested adding eggs and fish, her husband dismissed the idea: "So she wants to enjoy when there is no money?" Mrs Abdulhadi remembers her husband saying. Her mother also dismissed the idea with a shake of the head.

"One egg is now N250/N300, and fish is also expensive," she said. "She is not my only child; business has been bad these days." Despite the growing crisis, many communities like Awe and Maikunkele remain excluded from Nigeria's Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme, cutting them off from interventions by UNICEF and other aid groups.

According to Ms Madaki, the last significant support the Awe LGA received was in 2023, through the ANRIN project. In May 2025, the state delivered a small batch of "kwash pap", a nutrient-rich porridge made from soybeans, groundnuts, and millet, commonly known as Tom Brown.

But the support is sporadic and far from sufficient.

Mercy Madumbi, the local nutrition officer in Maikunkele, said the state nutrition office occasionally sends supplies, but they rarely meet local needs.

"Most women are unemployed," she said. "Even when food is available, they can't afford it, and they don't know how to combine what they have for better nutrition."

Yakubu Maaji, ward focal person for Maikunkele, warns that rising food prices are affecting children and pregnant women.

"Some babies are born malnourished because their mothers were not well-fed during pregnancy," he said. "It's transferred from mother to child."

Three years ago, Mr Maaji said, 98 per cent of children in the community were well nourished. That figure has now dropped to 60 per cent, leaving 40 per cent malnourished.

As of 2024, Niger State recorded 3,570 reported cases of malnutrition among children under five, according to State Nutrition Officer, Asmau Muhammad.

She called for urgent government and donor funding, expansion of the Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) programme, and the upgrade of primary healthcare centres with solar power, clean water, and essential supplies like MUAC tapes and Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF).

She also stressed the need to engage traditional leaders, promote peer support groups, and use local-language radio to improve awareness of exclusive breastfeeding and proper child feeding.

Nutrition experts say the crisis begins before birth.

"If the mother has not stocked up enough nutrients, then the child will not get enough. Limbs, organs, and even brain development are affected by a lack of nutrients when the child is still a fetus," Marylyne Malomba, a nutrition consultant for the International Medical Corps, said.

"So it's important to understand that the health of the mother at the point of pregnancy is one of the most important places to start taking care of the child."

In Maikunkele, Hasanna Isah tries to soothe her hungry two-year-old son in their dim, poorly ventilated room. He had just started crawling the previous week.

"He was born weak and underweight, not in a hospital," she said.

Ms Isah tried to breastfeed exclusively but fell ill soon after delivery. Her skin began peeling, prompting a visit to a leprosy hospital. She switched to baby formula, but one tin costs N6,000 and lasts only three days. Now, she feeds him plain pap with no sugar and supplements it with Peak milk sachets when she can afford them.

"One sachet is N200 and I can stretch it for two feedings," she said. "But it's not every time I have the money."

Separated from her husband, Ms Isah lives with her mother and three children. Her mother survives on small remittances from children who earn very little.

"We eat tuwo with dry okra or baobab soup," she said. "Meat is out of reach. I sometimes buy N100 fried fish-gangaria, and shred it so it can go round."

Even vegetables have become a luxury. "One bunch is N200, and it's not enough for my children. Sometimes that's all the money I have."

In the dry season, a poor water supply makes home gardening nearly impossible.

"During that period, even getting water to drink or bathe is hard," said Mr Maaji. "We only manage to plant during the rainy season."

Nigeria is facing its worst inflation crisis in decades. Headline inflation peaked at 34.8 per cent in December 2024 before the National Bureau of Statistics rebased its Consumer Price Index. The new basket lowered the figure to 24.48 per cent in January, but food inflation has remained high.

By June, the country's annual inflation stood at 22.22 per cent, with food inflation reaching 21.97 per cent year-on-year.

Rising prices have forced many farms and businesses to shut down. Insecurity and erratic weather have also reduced food production.

In July 2023, President Bola Tinubu declared a state of emergency regarding food insecurity. However, the situation has only worsened.

According to the SBM Jollof Index, the cost of cooking a pot of jollof rice rose 19 per cent between September 2024 and March 2025, from N21,300 to N25,486.

The report, Staple Under Stress, attributed the rise to soaring prices of ingredients like pepper, onions, rice, turkey, and beef. Protein remains the most expensive element: turkey now costs between N12,000 and N14,000 per kilo, up from N1,500–N1,700 in 2016. Beef has doubled to N7,000–N7,500 per kilo, goat meat is N6,500–N7,000, while Titus fish sells for around N7,000 per kilo.

Grains have also tripled. A cup of guinea corn now sells for N3,000, up from N1,500 in 2023. Soybeans have tripled. Vegetables like spinach or kuka leaves cost N200 a bunch, barely enough for one meal.

In Gosa Market, Abuja, vegetable seller Munachisom Favour put it plainly: "We eat without meat or fish. I can't afford to give my children what they need."

In the 2024 Global Hunger Index, Nigeria is ranked 110th out of 127 countries with enough data to calculate the scores. With a score of 28.8, Nigeria faces a serious level of hunger.

Nigeria ranked 107th out of 113 countries on the 2022 Global Food Security Index and 25th out of 28 in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Economist Intelligence Unit noted that Nigeria scored 0.0 on policy commitments for food security and access, compared to a global average of 47.1.

In response to the crisis, the Nigerian government proposed a 33.7 per cent increase in the 2025 nutrition budget, from N127.24 billion in 2024 to N170.01 billion, bringing the total allocation to N243 billion. That marks a 746 per cent rise from the N10.8 billion spent in 2021.

But despite these figures, hunger persists. More than 35 million children remain trapped in cycles of stunting, wasting, and underweight.

The Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) shows that child nutrition has worsened in the past five years. In 2018, 37 per cent of children under five were stunted. By 2023, it rose to 40 per cent. Underweight cases climbed from 22 to 27 per cent, while wasting increased from 7 to 8 per cent.

In Niger State, the stunting rate increased from 28.2 per cent in 2018 to 43.9 per cent in 2023/24. Nasarawa saw a rise from 31.2 to 35 per cent.

Civil Society Scaling Up Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN) said these figures show a worsening trend even in states with minor changes. Population growth has masked any real improvement.

The group continues to advocate for stronger policies, improved budget releases, and better access to RUTF. It has also pushed for a six-month paid maternity leave bill and the completion of Nigeria's revised nutrition policy.

In February 2025, the federal government launched the N774 Initiative to give local governments more control over nutrition efforts. However, experts remain cautious about how much funding will be released and how effectively it will be spent.

Without urgent and scaled-up intervention, there are concerns that Nigeria risks irreversible damage to its youngest generation.

"Malnutrition doesn't just stunt the body," said Ms Madumbi. "It stunts the mind, the immune system, the future."

Every hour, nearly 100 Nigerian children under five die from malnutrition or related illnesses, according to UNICEF.

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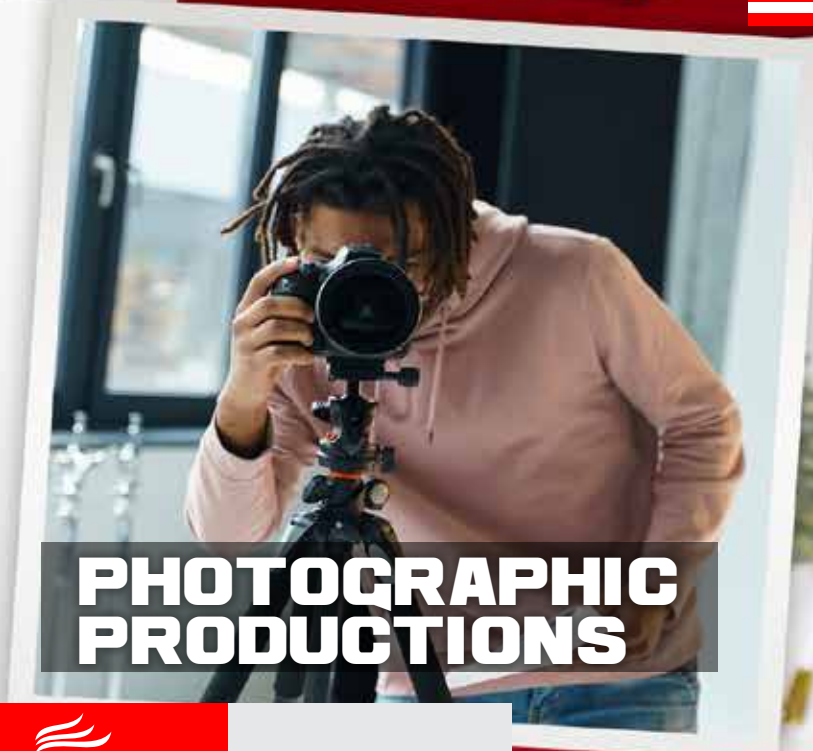


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Obi flays FG for approving N142bn for 6 bus terminals

BY ORIAKU IJELE

Mr. Peter Obi, former Governor of Anambra State and the Presidential candidate of the Labour Party in the 2023 presidential poll has blasted the Federal Government for approving the construction of 6 bus terminals in each of the 6 geo-political zones at the cost of N142 billion, calling it a trait of poor leadership.

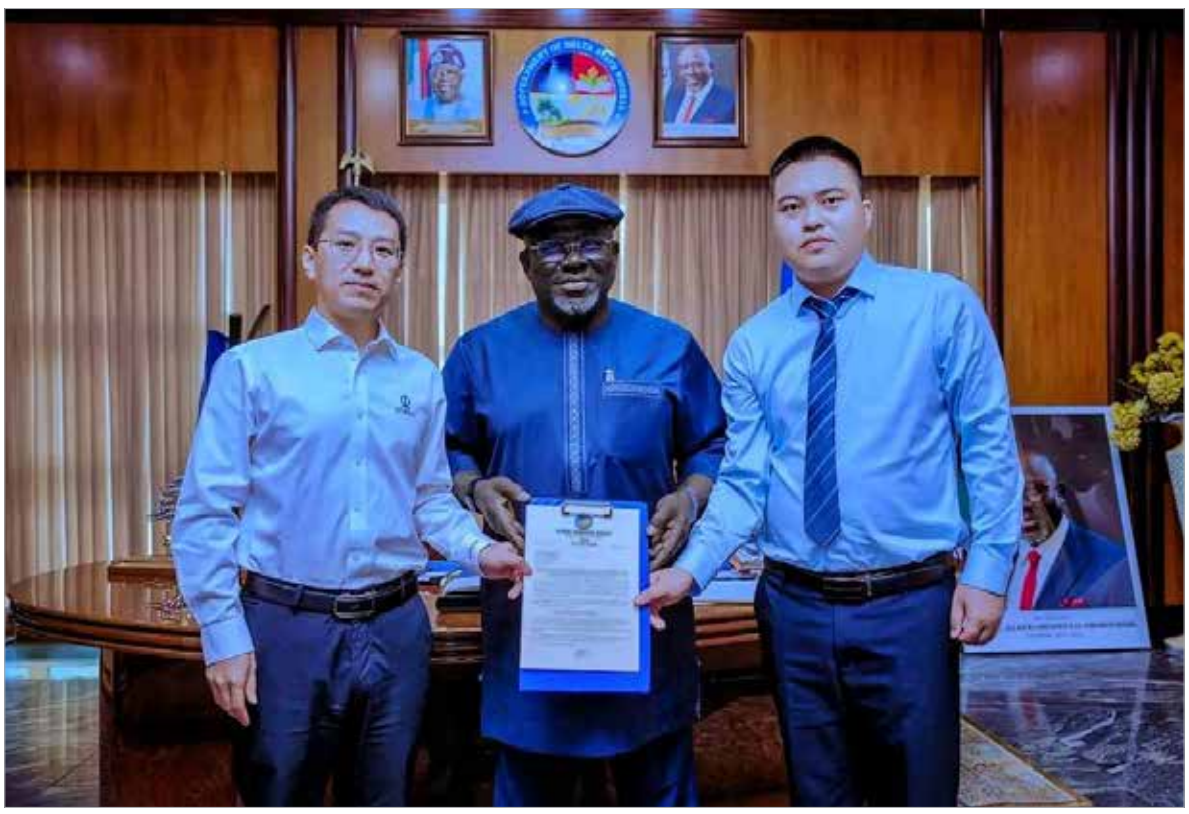
Obi in a post on his social media handles yesterday said: "The difference between the success and failure of the development in any nation is how you prioritise your scarce resources.

"The recent announcement that a sum of ₦142 billion has been approved by the Federal Government for the construction of one bus terminal in each of our six geopolitical zones further affirms the lack of competence, lack of focus and poor leadership.

"In the 2024 budget, which is the operational budget today, the entire budget of all the teaching hospitals across all the federal universities in the country, as well as the federal psychiatric centres, is under ₦100 billion, yet the government has approved ₦142 billion for bus terminals.

This is disturbing, considering that Health is one of the most critical areas of development, which is deteriorating and remains grossly underfunded. WHO recently reported that over 20 million Nigerians are living with mental health issues.

"This is not only a misplaced priority but a tragic irony of our country. This is not governance."



The Delta State Government during the signing of MOU with Chinese construction giant, CCECC for the reconstruction of the Warri–Sapele–Benin Road dual carriageway, covering the stretch from the Spare Parts Market in Effurun to Ohore Junction.

Polytechnic lecturers threaten industrial action over non-payment of 12 months arrears

BY LUKA YELMI, BAUCHI

The Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP) has threatened to embark on strike action if the government fails to respond to their demands within 21 days.

The union is asking the government to pay its members their 12 months arrears and also implement some of the resolution reached with the government previously.

Addressing a press conference in Bauchi on Friday, the Zonal Coordinator of ASUP, Zone B, Lumpye Innocent Simji disclosed that the union at her last emergency National Executive Council meeting on 14th August at Abuja, resolved to issue a 21-day notice to address some lingering issues or face industrial action.

"The NEC during the meeting gave 21-day ultimatum to the government to address some Germane issues that is threatening the survival of the Polytechnics sector", he said .

According to the Zonal Coordinator, Chapters of the union were also directed to organize press conferences in their localities to draw the attention of all and sundry to the plight of the tertiary education in Nigeria.

He stressed that the issues demanding solution, include non-release of circular by the national salaries incomes and wages commission (NSIWC) to cover the peculiar academic allowance.

Simji explained that the peculiar academic allowance paid to academic staff across Polytechnics is a component of the ASUP/FGN 2010 agreement.

He however, decried that the sustenance of the peculiar academic allowance is being threatened by the non-release of the requisite circular by the NSIWC to enable budgetary provisions in that regard.

"Currently, the allowance has been removed from the budgeting template and the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) has failed to intervene in definite terms on this subject", the ASUP decried.

The zonal coordinator mentioned other issue requiring solution as non-release of arrears of the 25/35% salary review/non-Implementation of Same in State Owned Polytechnics.

He further disclosed that the government is yet to release the funds required for the payment of the arrears of the 25/35% salary review.

Simji regretted that the arrears covering a 12 - month period which has been captured in the budget is yet to be released for reasons beyond the comprehension of ASUP and its members.

He said, the ASUP would be forced to go on strike due to non-committal disposition of the federal ministry of education to genuine dialogue and lack of will to execute previous resolutions on some of the items.

"Our Union's National Executive Council (NEC) has resolved to issue a 21-day ultimatum and if nothing is done to this plethora of issues, we will be forced to take this painful but necessary action by declaration of a trade dispute and withdrawal of services of our members across public polytechnics and monotechnics nationwide", he noted.

The Zonal coordinator who pointed out that the situation is worse in State Owned Polytechnics where some states have not implemented the salary review, added that most state governments have failed to implement the New National Minimum Wage.

NFC, others sign Performance Bond at 2025 Sectoral Retreat by FMACT&CE

NFC and other MDA's, including private stakeholders at the 2025 Sectoral Retreat organised by the FMACT&CE, have assured of their commitments towards the implementation and achievement of all projects and programmes objectives through, collaboration/partnerships; effective and timely service delivery.

The retreat took place, Wednesday 20th - Thursday 21st, August 2025 at the Nigerian Army Resource Centre, Abuja.

The retreat, themed - Strategic Repositioning of Nigeria's Art, Culture, Tourism and the Creative Economy for National Development and Global Competitiveness, had in attendance Barr. Hannatu Musawa (HM,FMACTCE), Dr. Muktar Muhammad MFR,Mni(Perm. Sec FMACTCE), Dist. Senator Mohammed Ogoshi and Hon. Mohammed Muktar of the National Assembly, Chief Executive Officers and Directors of MDA's, as well as other art, culture and tourism stakeholders.

NFC's delegation was led by the Managing Director/Chief Executive, Dr. Ali Nuhu.

The objective of the two-day retreat was to, among others, align the Ministry's strategies with government's national development priorities, strengthen inter-agency collaboration, develop a performance and implementation framework, identify and deal with key legislative, institutional and financing reforms, and the adoption of a global mission, vision and values to guide the seamless implementation of the Multi-Sectoral Strategic Plan (MSSP 2026-2030).

Highpoint of the retreat was the signing of the Performance Bond between the Hon. Minister, the Perm. Sec and Chief Executive Officers, and Directors of MDA's, affirming their commitments towards the implementation of (FMACTCE) Ministerial Deliverables.

"At the NFC, we are not only committed to supporting the delivery of projects and programmes that align with governments national development priorities; we identify, create enabling environments, offer professional and transformational critical intervention services, provide training and capacity building opportunities, and film commission services, among others", Nuhu noted.

Final Whistle: Peter Rufai laid to rest amid criticism of government neglect

BENJAMIN OMOIKE

Family, friends, and former teammates of late Super Eagles goalkeeper Peter Rufai gathered at Ikoyi Cemetery on Friday to pay their final respects, nearly two months after the football legend passed away at age 61 following a prolonged illness.

Rufai, fondly known as "Dodo Mayana," was Nigeria's first-choice goalkeeper at the 1994 FIFA World Cup and widely regarded as one of the nation's finest shot-stoppers. His death has sparked renewed criticism of the Nigerian Football Federation (NFF), as well as the Federal and Lagos State governments, for their alleged failure to support the late goalkeeper's family or contribute to his burial expenses.

Speaking at the funeral, former Super Eagles defender Taribo West expressed outrage at what he described as systemic neglect of Nigerian football heroes.

"What kind of nation is this?" he asked. "With the examples we've seen — Stephen Keshi, Rashidi Yekini, Shofoluwe, and now Rufai — I would never advise my son to play for this country."

West accused the NFF and relevant government bodies of shirking responsibility and leaving the financial burden of the burial to Rufai's family and friends.

"It's disheartening," he said. "The family had to beg for contributions. I felt in my spirit that there's nothing worth putting your life on the line for anymore."

Overcome with emotion, West abandoned the interview before completing his remarks.

Also paying tribute was former Stationery Stores player Taiwo Afinnih, who attended the same secondary school as Rufai. He described Rufai as a disciplined and humble sportsman.

"He never argued with anyone," Afinnih recalled. "Back then, every young footballer dreamed of scoring against him — he was that good, even as a teenager."

Rufai's legacy as a football ambassador, gentleman, and national hero continues to resonate with those who knew him — but his death has once again reignited calls for better welfare, recognition, and support for Nigeria's retired athletes.


THE SUPREME COURT OF NIGERIA
History, Establishment, Jurists & Speeches
By
Lawal Pedro, SAN, FCIArb.
Abdulrasheed Ibrahim, Notary Public
Foreword By:
Hon. Justice Olukayode Ariwoola, GCON
Chief Justice of Nigeria

Shaibu drags Edo Govt, Obaseki to court, demands N5.8bn withheld entitlements

JONATHAN IDIAHI, BENIN

Former deputy Governor of Edo State, Philip Shaibu, has dragged the state government before the National Industrial court of Nigeria, Abuja, demanding payment of over N5.85bn outstanding withheld allowances and entitlements by Godwin Obaseki's administration.

It will be recalled that Shaibu was restored by the Court of Appeal, Abuja Division, affirming the judgement of the lower court that reinstated him as then deputy Governor of Edo State in the wake of the hostility between him and then Governor Godwin Obaseki.

The appellate court accordingly dismissed the appeal, seeking to oppose his impeachment on April 8, 2024 by the State House of Assembly, which earlier adopted the Report of a 7-man Committee set up by the State Chief Judge to investigate allegations of misconduct levelled against him by the Legislative Arm.

Governor of the State, Monday Okpebholo and the State House of Assembly are amongst the respondents in the petition by the Claimant who is amongst others, seeking ₦1.9 billion in security votes of ₦1.5 billion for 3 armored Toyota Land Cruisers worth in addition to ₦1.5 billion for 3 official Toyota Hilux trucks.

Other Respondents listed in the suit marked:

AUCN/ABJ/133/2025, include the former Governor of the State, Godwin Obaseki, Edo State Attorney-General, the State Commissioner for Finance, the State's Auditor-General and the Accountant-General. No date has been fixed for hearing in the suit.



Executive Secretary, Niger State Pilgrims Welfare Board presenting a gift to the visiting ICPC boss in his office in Minna at the weekend.

"We lost everything" – Anambra flood survivors recount experience

Survivors of the devastating floods of 2012, 2022, and 2024 in Anambra, on Friday, recounted their experiences during a community flood preparedness simulation by the Red Cross Society.

The event, held in Inoma Community in Anambra West Local Government Area, brought together residents, who still continue to grapple with the aftermath of annual flooding.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the repeated incidents took many lives, destroyed homes and ravaged farmlands.

The drill, one of 12 simulations under the Italian Government-funded Flood Resilience Project, aimed to improve community preparedness and emergency response readiness in flood-prone areas.

A survivor and youth leader in Inoma, Mr Francis Odotule, recounted how flood washed away his entire farm business.

"Flood has damaged our farmlands, livestock and livelihoods. What Red Cross is doing today is a big relief.

"We appeal to government and agencies to sustain this support because our survival depends on it," he said.

Another survivor, Mrs Ndidiamaka Iroegbu, a mother of four, said she lost everything – her home, farm, and livestock, adding that she had never felt so helpless in her life.

"We relocated to makeshift camps set up for the displaced.

"Sometimes, there will be food shortage. We also face poor sanitation and the risk of disease outbreaks

"But we appreciate Red Cross for this intervention.

"The training will help us better prepare for future emergencies," Iroegbu said.

A farmer, Mrs Maureen Omataala, described how flood has repeatedly turned life upside down in the community.

"I am a farmer, but since 2012, flood has been ravaging our communities.

"Whenever flood comes, it submerges our houses, destroys our crops and sweeps away property worth millions naira.

"Many times, we escape by climbing rooftops or flee with boats.

"Today's simulation has taught us safety measures and how to be first responders before help arrives," she said.

Speaking during the exercise, Anambra Branch Secretary of Red Cross, Mr Kingsley Okoye, said the exercise underscored the importance of proper planning and community training.

Okoye said the simulation aimed to strengthen local resilience and equip vulnerable communities with life-saving skills, as climate-related disasters grow increasingly frequent and severe.

"This simulation is both a success and a learning opportunity.

"It demonstrates the critical role of first responders in reducing disaster impact.

"With teamwork and collaboration, lives can be saved and losses reduced," Okoye said.

Also addressing the community, Mrs Idarabo Ekanem, the Senior Disaster Management Officer and Project Manager, Flood Recovery and Resilience Project, talked on the broader aim of the exercise.

"The project is ongoing in 12 states, including Anambra.

"Our goal is to improve resilience by sensitising communities to what to do before, during and after floods.

"We are also renovating public facilities, strengthening water plants and providing financial and technical support to reduce vulnerability," Ekanem said.

The exercise recreated a realistic flood emergency scenario, such as early warning broadcasts, community engagement and distribution of relief items.

Others are rapid evacuation drills, boat-led search, underwater search and rescue as well as first aid response and transportation of casualties with ambulance.

Bauchi records 78 murder cases in 5 months

BY LUKA YELMI

Bauchi state police command has disclosed that 78 culpable homicide cases were recorded in the state within the period of five months.

The state's Commissioner of Police, Sani-Omolori Aliyu who stated this during a press briefing in his office on Thursday, explained that, in the 78 reported cases, 171 suspects were apprehended by detectives.

The CP further disclosed that 14 cases of attempted culpable homicides were also recorded, leading to the apprehension of 24 suspects.

He stated that the command also arrested 16 suspects in 7 grievous hurt cases, while 44 rape and indecent cases resulted to the arrest of 72 suspects.

The police commissioner revealed that during the period of his duty in Bauchi since 28th March, 2025 to date, a total number of 394 criminal cases were recorded in Bauchi, resulting to the arrest of 748 suspects.

He said that the command has recorded tremendous successes in crime control in Bauchi state since his assumption of duty as the 46th Commissioner of Police in Bauchi.

The CP said, under him, the Command has remained steadfast in addressing crime and criminality within the state, through professionalism, and strong emphasis on effective intelligence gathering.

According to him, considerable challenges were faced but the tenacity, dedication, and commitment of his officers have been instrumental in sustaining a relative peace within the State.

The CP who attributed the successes to guidance and directives of IGP Kayode Adeolu Egbetokun, said the cases and arrests recorded were linked to various criminal activities within and beyond Bauchi State.

Mining pit collapse: Ebonyi Govt. begins investigation, refutes negligence claims

The Ebonyi Government says it has commenced investigation into the collapse of a mining pit in Ihietutu, Ishiagu, Ivo Local Government Area of the state.

Mr Chidi Onyia, Commissioner for Solid Minerals, Ebonyi, said this on Friday in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN).

Onyia said that the investigation commenced following a fact finding mission embarked by his office alongside federal mines officers and security agencies on Wednesday.

It would be recalled that two persons lost their lives, while three were injured when the pit collapsed last Friday.

Reports in some quarters alleged negligence on the part of the company, Greenfield Metals Ltd., but Onyia said preliminary investigation suggested natural occurrence.

"Mining, like many industries worldwide, comes with hazards and from our preliminary findings, this was a natural occurrence and not a result of negligence.

"Investigation is ongoing by all regulatory bodies, including the Federal Ministry of Solid Minerals, police, Department of State Services, and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, to ensure transparency.

"We are looking at two weeks to conclude this investigation. We may not be correct if we base our report on what we saw on the field and we do not want to rule out the fact that people we met on ground may not be telling us the truth of what happened.

"In most cases, it is not always the fault of the miner, at times it is the fault of some of the people working in the pit; it could be as a result of their carelessness and this is the rainy season.

"The strength of the overburden in the rainy season and dry season can never be the same, so, we want to have a balanced assessment of what happened.

"If we discover that the collapse happened due to the miners' carelessness, we will not hesitate to sanction him, but if it is a natural occurrence, we must accept it as such," Onyia said.

According to Onyia, there is an existing license from the Federal Ministry of Solid Minerals through the Cadastral Office, Abuja, which makes the site functional, contrary to reports that it has been parceled out to illegal miners.

The commissioner commiserated with the bereaved families and urged the public not to worsen their grief with false claims, emphasising that the state does not encourage illegal mining, as it respected licenses issued by the federal government.

"Part of the problem we face when issues like this happen is that the immediate families will start negotiations with the company for compensation or the burial for their dead, even before the case is brought to the authorities.

"Some will say they don't want a case, police or government involvement but it is not enough for us to be silent on compensation.

"When the incident happened, they reported to the Divisional Police Officer in Ishiagu, who then notified the office of the Commissioner of Police, but before we could establish contact with the people, the family of the deceased were already negotiating with the company.

"As I speak with you, one of the victims has been buried by the family, while the other corpse is still in the mortuary.

"I can tell you that the family had reached a compromise and collected a certain amount from the company which I may not call compensation.

"However, at the end of our investigation, we will now look at the proper compensation that will be paid to these families," he added.

Onyia further said that those that were injured were hospitalised and taken care of by the company.

"I am aware that the company has given a certain amount to the injured, and that is not going to be final; we will ensure that they are properly taken care of by the company."

Prince Fabian Chukwu, one of the community leaders, and Board of Trustees Chairman, Ihietutu Development Union, said the company had empowered a lot of people in the community.

"They built the road to this site and never delayed in giving the community its due entitlements.

"That is why we stand by them in this unfortunate incident."

The company had since suspended operations at the site pending the outcome of investigations.

2025 Hyundai Santa Fe vs. 2025 Acura MDX: Clash of styles and priorities





The mid-size SUV segment is a battleground of practicality, comfort, and increasingly, style. Two contenders vying for attention in 2025 are the Hyundai Santa Fe and the Acura MDX. While both offer three-row seating and a suite of modern features, they approach the market with distinct philosophies. The Santa Fe, fresh off a bold redesign, emphasizes value and a unique aesthetic, while the MDX, a stalwart of the luxury segment, leans on its reputation for refinement and performance. Let's delve into a detailed comparison to see which SUV emerges as the better choice for your needs.

Styling: A Tale of Two Approaches

The 2025 Santa Fe makes a statement with its boxy, almost retro-futuristic design. It's a departure from previous iterations, sporting a more rugged and adventurous look. The prominent grille, squared-off wheel arches, and distinctive lighting signature contribute to its head-turning presence. Inside, the Santa Fe boasts a modern and spacious cabin, with available premium materials and technology.

The Acura MDX, on the other hand, exudes a more understated elegance. Its sleek lines, sculpted surfaces, and signature "diamond pentagon" grille convey a sense of sophistication. The interior is meticulously crafted, with high-quality materials and a focus on driver-centric ergonomics. While not as overtly flashy as the Santa Fe, the MDX's design speaks to a more mature and refined sensibility.

Performance: Where Luxury Meets Practicality

Under the hood, the Santa Fe offers a variety of powertrain options, including a standard 2.5-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine and an available hybrid powertrain. These options prioritize fuel efficiency and everyday usability. While not necessarily sporty, the Santa Fe provides ample power for most driving situations.

The MDX, in contrast, emphasizes performance with its standard 3.5-liter V6 engine. This engine delivers a more spirited driving experience, with smooth acceleration and a refined exhaust note. Acura also offers a performance-oriented MDX Type S, boasting a turbocharged V6 engine for those seeking more thrills.

Features and Technology: A Modern Duel

Both the Santa Fe and MDX come equipped with a comprehensive suite of features and technology. Expect to find modern infotainment systems with large touchscreens, smartphone integration, and advanced driver-assistance systems. However, the MDX, being a luxury vehicle, typically offers more premium features as standard or available options, such as a premium sound system, head-up display, and advanced safety technologies.

The Santa Fe, while not skimping on technology, focuses on providing value-packed features at a more accessible price point. It may not have all the bells and whistles of the MDX, but it covers the essentials and offers a compelling value proposition.

Practicality and Space: Room for the Whole Family

Both SUVs offer three-row seating, making them suitable for families. However, the third row in both vehicles is best suited for children or smaller adults. The Santa Fe, with its boxier design, might offer slightly more cargo space compared to the MDX. However, both SUVs provide ample room for passengers and their belongings.

Value: The Deciding Factor?

One of the most significant differences between the Santa Fe and MDX is their price point. The Santa Fe, with its focus on value, undercuts the MDX by a considerable margin. This makes it an attractive option for budget-conscious buyers seeking a well-equipped and spacious SUV.

The MDX, on the other hand, commands a higher price tag, reflecting its luxury status and more premium features. For those willing to pay a premium for a more refined driving experience, a longer list of features, and a prestigious badge, the MDX remains a compelling choice.

Which One to Choose?

The choice between the 2025 Hyundai Santa Fe and the 2025 Acura MDX ultimately comes down to your priorities. If you prioritize value, a unique design, and a comprehensive set of features, the Santa Fe is a strong contender. Its recent redesign has made it even more appealing, offering a compelling alternative to more established players in the segment.

However, if you seek a more luxurious and performance-oriented SUV, the MDX is the better choice. Its refined driving dynamics, premium features, and reputation for reliability make it a top pick in the luxury mid-size SUV segment.

The 2025 Hyundai Santa Fe and 2025 Acura MDX represent two different approaches to the mid-size SUV segment. The Santa Fe impresses with its bold design, value-packed features, and spacious interior. The MDX, on the other hand, excels in its refined driving experience, luxurious appointments, and performance-ori-

Why you should maintain your car's exhaust system regularly



When it comes to vehicle maintenance, the exhaust system often gets overlooked. In fact, most drivers may focus on oil changes, tire rotations, and other routine tasks, but the exhaust system plays a crucial role in the overall health and performance of a car, especially when it comes to fuel efficiency.

In an age where gas prices fluctuate unpredictably, finding ways to improve fuel economy is more important than ever. One way to achieve this is through regular maintenance of the exhaust system.

Understanding the Exhaust System

The exhaust system is responsible for directing harmful gases away from the engine and out of the vehicle. It includes components like the exhaust manifold, catalytic converter, muffler, and tailpipe. Each part works together to ensure that the engine runs smoothly, emissions stay within legal limits, and noise levels are kept in check. What many people don't realize is that a poorly functioning exhaust system can directly impact how much fuel a car consumes.

Between Exhaust System and Fuel Efficiency

One of the key components of an exhaust system that affects fuel efficiency is the oxygen sensor. The oxygen sensor monitors the amount of oxygen in the exhaust gases and sends this information to the car's computer, which adjusts the air-to-fuel ratio. If the oxygen sensor is malfunctioning or dirty, the car may inject too much fuel into the engine, leading to inefficient combustion and poor fuel economy.

Additionally, the catalytic converter, which reduces harmful emissions, can get clogged over time. A clogged catalytic converter can cause backpressure, meaning the engine has to work harder to push exhaust gases out. This increased workload translates into higher fuel consumption, as the engine burns more fuel to generate the same power output.

Even the muffler plays a role in fuel efficiency. If the muffler is damaged or has holes, it can cause improper airflow, which in turn can disrupt the engine's performance and lead to a decline in fuel economy.

Benefits of Regular Exhaust System Maintenance

Various studies have showed that a well-maintained exhaust system ensures that the engine runs efficiently by maintaining proper airflow and combustion.

Improved Fuel Economy:Regular checks on the oxygen sensor, catalytic converter, and muffler can help prevent excess fuel consumption and ultimately save you money at the pump.

Reduced Emissions

Maintaining the exhaust system not only improves fuel efficiency but also reduces the amount of harmful pollutants your vehicle emits. A clean and functional catalytic converter helps the vehicle pass emissions tests, contributing to a cleaner environment.

Enhanced Engine Performance

An engine running with an optimized exhaust system performs better, providing smoother acceleration and overall operation. This can be especially noticeable in vehicles that travel long distances or carry heavy loads.

Cost Savings on Repairs

Neglecting your exhaust system can lead to costly repairs down the line. For instance, a damaged catalytic converter is expensive to replace. Regular maintenance helps catch potential problems early, preventing more significant damage and keeping repair costs to a minimum.

Increased Vehicle Lifespan

Regular maintenance on any car part contributes to the vehicle's longevity, and the exhaust system is no exception. By maintaining the system, you help the engine run cleaner and cooler, which reduces wear and tear over time.

Maintenance Tips for Your Exhaust System

Check for Leaks and Noises: Unusual noises like rattling or hissing can indicate exhaust leaks or damage. If you notice these sounds, have your exhaust system inspected by a professional.

Inspect the Catalytic Converter

Watch out for signs of a clogged or failing catalytic converter, such as poor acceleration, reduced fuel efficiency, or a sulfur-like smell from the exhaust.

Clean or Replace the Oxygen Sensor Manufacturers generally recommend replacing the oxygen sensor every 60,000 to 100,000 miles. Doing so helps maintain accurate fuel-air mixture ratios and prevents fuel wastage.

Watch for Rust

The exhaust system is exposed to moisture, road salt, and other elements that can lead to rust and corrosion. Regularly inspect the system for rust, especially in older vehicles or if you live in an area with harsh winters.

Maintaining your vehicle's exhaust system is one of the most effective ways to ensure fuel efficiency, protect the environment, and avoid costly repairs. By prioritizing regular checks and addressing issues early, you not only save on fuel costs but also contribute to a longer-lasting, smoother-running vehicle. Whether you're a commuter,

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CHRIS NDUKAEZE DALINGTON ESEKA

SUNRISE: APRIL 1ST 1955 - SUNSET: MAY 11TH, 2025

OBSEQUIES

Commendation Service: 11am,
15th August, 2025
Anglican Church of the Ascension,
Omodara Street, Awuse Estate,
Opebi, Ikeja, Lagos.

Service of Songs/Wake Keep:
4pm, Thursday, 28th August, 2025
at Ejeme-Aniogor, Delta State.

Lying in state: 10am
29th of August, 2025
Funeral Service at 11am-Ejeme
Aniogor, Delta State.

Burial: Friday, 29th August, 2025

Interment/Reception:
Immediately afterwards.
Shell Road, off T Junction
Ejeme Aniogor, Delta State.

New Jersey under state of emergency for Hurricane Erin

The US state of New Jersey has declared a state of emergency as Hurricane Erin threatens to cause coastal flooding, rip currents and gale-force gusts along the Atlantic coasts of the US and Canada.

Early on Friday, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) stressed that conditions still posed a threat to life - even as the storm continued to drift away from North America.

The first hurricane of the Atlantic season is weakening and will soon lose its status, before bringing rain to the UK next week.

In the meantime, a storm surge up to a metre (3ft) in height is possible in US states such as Rhode Island and Virginia, as well as Canada's Atlantic coast.

As a result, Erin has brought stormy conditions up and down the US east coast, causing beach and road closures despite not making landfall at any point.

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy made his emergency declaration on Thursday afternoon - citing high winds, large waves and flooding expected to strike parts of the state.

"Over the past couple of days, we have seen the effects of Hurricane Erin along the Jersey Shore in the form of dangerous rip tides. Today and tomorrow will be no exception," Murphy said.

Among the other regions that can expect strong gusts are Massachusetts in the US, and Nova Scotia and Newfoundland in Canada, the NHC said.

Sri Lanka's former president Ranil Wickremesinghe arrested

Sri Lanka's former president Ranil Wickremesinghe has been arrested in connection with the alleged misuse of funds, police have said.

He faces three charges related to trips he took abroad while serving as president.

He served as president from 2022 to 2024, stepping into the role after the country's worst ever economic crisis triggered a popular uprising caused his predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee.

He was widely credited with helping put the island nation back on the road to economic recovery.

Wickremesinghe also served six separate terms as prime minister from the 1990s onwards.

According to BBC Sinhala, the 76-year-old made 23 foreign trips during his time as president, at a cost of more than Rs 600 million ($2m; £1.4m).

Friday's arrest relates to a stop over made in the UK in 2023, on Wickremesinghe's way back from a G77 summit in Cuba, news agency AFP reports.

On that occasion, he and his wife had attended a University of Wolverhampton ceremony.

Sri Lanka's CID allege this was a private visit for which state funds were used - something Wickremesinghe has denied.

Their investigation was initially referred to a court in June.

Wickremesinghe, who is the first former president to be arrested in Sri Lanka, has been a feature of the island nation's politics since he was first elected as MP in 1977.

A lawyer by profession, he comes from an affluent family of politicians and businessmen.

India top court shelves plan to lock up Delhi's one million street dogs

India's Supreme Court has modified its previous order asking authorities in Delhi and its suburbs to move all stray dogs into shelters amid widespread protests by animal welfare groups.

The three-judge bench said that strays should be released after being vaccinated and sterilised but added that dogs with rabies or aggressive behaviour should be immunised and kept in shelters.

The court also banned feeding of stray dogs in public spaces and ordered dedicated areas to be set up for the purpose.

On 11 August, a two-judge bench had expressed concern over the rising "menace of dog bites leading to rabies" in Delhi and its suburbs.

Delhi's stray dog population is estimated at one million, with suburban Noida, Ghaziabad and Gurugram also seeing a rise, municipal sources say.

India has millions of stray dogs and the country accounts for 36% of the total rabies-related deaths in the world, according to the World Health Organization.

To deal with the dog menace, on 11 August the Supreme Court ordered authorities in the capital and its suburbs to round up all stray dogs and put them in shelters.

It ordered authorities to build shelters to house these dogs in eight weeks' time.

The order went against existing rules that state that stray dogs should be released to their original site after being sterilised at shelters, sparking strong protests and legal challenges from several animal welfare groups.

They called for more humane solutions like vaccination and neutering and warned that putting all strays in shelters would lead to problems like overcrowding and culling.

Following the backlash, the Supreme Court set up a three-judge bench to hear the challenge.



New bodies found near site of Kenya's starvation cult burials

Five bodies have been exhumed from fresh graves suspected to be linked to Kenya's notorious starvation cult.

In one of the worst ever cases of cult-related mass deaths, more than 400 bodies were found in 2023 in the remote Shakahola Forest, inland from the coastal town of Malindi.

It is believed they were followers of self-proclaimed pastor Paul Mackenzie, who is alleged to have encouraged them to starve themselves to death.

These exhumations were ordered in July after the disappearance of some children triggered a new probe. Prosecutors said 11 people had been arrested in connection with the case, including three who were followers of Mr Mackenzie at the time of "Shakahola Forest Massacre".

The latest discoveries seem to confirm fears raised by the government earlier in the year that the cult might still be active.

In April, Interior Minister Kipchumba Murkomen said there were allegations that Mr Mackenzie was actively communicating with his followers from jail - using a mobile phone.

Mr Mackenzie, who was arrested last year and pleaded not guilty to manslaughter, allegedly told his followers they would get to heaven more quickly if they stopped eating.

According to the AFP news agency, a Mombasa court adjourned his ongoing case earlier this month citing the discovery of new evidence.

The mother who fled Shakahola forest to save her children

At the site of the exhumations in Kwa Binzaro village near Shakahola Forest, government pathologist Richard Njoroge said more than 20 other gravesites had to be exhumed.

"We have not exhausted the search; the area is very, very vast. So we expect more bodies," he said.

"This is to appeal to the members of the public who may have lost their loved ones or who may suspect that their loved ones are missing to report to Malindi District Hospital. We have a Red Cross desk there, where their details will be taken, and also their DNA samples will be taken."

In July, Kenya's Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions said it believed those buried might have been "starved and suffocated as a result of adopting and promoting extreme religious ideologies".

"The first body which was found by itself appeared to have been put there fairly recently - two to three weeks back. But the other four appear to have been there a while and were in a decomposing state," he told the BBC.

He said the situation at one of the gravesites hinted at foul play.

US tightens anti-immigration policy, reviewing all 55 million visas issued



The US is reviewing the records of more than 55 million US visa holders to assess if they have broken conditions for entry or stay in the country.

People with US visas will be under "continuous vetting", a state department spokesperson told the Associated Press news agency.

Visas will be revoked if there are indications of "overstays, criminal activity, threats to public safety, engaging in any form of terrorist activity, or providing support to a terrorist organisation", an official said.

President Donald Trump has made anti-immigration the cornerstone of his second administration, from mass deportations and full-on travel bans on countries to revoking 6,000 student visas.

As part of the wide-ranging review, prospective students and visitors to the US will be subjected to social media vetting with officials looking for "any indications of hostility toward the citizens, culture, government, institutions, or founding principles of the United States".

State Department officers have also been instructed to spot individuals "who advocate for, aid, or support designated foreign terrorists and other threats to national security; or who perpetrate unlawful antisemitic harassment or violence".

Matthew Tragesser, a spokesperson from US Citizenship and Immigration Services, said in a statement: "America's benefits should not be given to those who despise the country and promote anti-American ideologies."

He added that the immigration service was committed to "implementing policies" that "root out anti-Americanism".

The latest announcement came after Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the US would "immediately" pause the issuance of worker visas for truck drivers.

"The increasing number of foreign drivers operating large tractor-trailer trucks on U.S. roads is endangering American lives and undercutting the livelihoods of American truckers," Rubio wrote in a post on X on Thursday.

Since Trump came to power in January, several foreign students have been arrested at US university campuses for taking part in protests against the conduct of the war in the Gaza Strip by Israel - which is supported by the US.

A few weeks ago, the US announced that citizens from Malawi and Zambia would be required to pay a $15,000 (£11,300) deposit for a tourist or business visa.

486 pharmacy premises sealed by the PCN in Niger

In what appealed as a renewed hope agenda and fulfillment of its mandates the Pharmacy Council of Nigeria PHC, has sealed no fewer than 486 premises in Niger state.

The Pharmacy Premises were sealed for alleged contravening relevant regulations including 69 pharmacies, 127 patent medicine stores, and 290 unlicensed shops within and outside the state capital.

The was disclosed by the Head of Enforcement PCN headquarters, Dr Suleiman S. Ciroma while briefing journalists at the PCN North Central Zonal office in Minna after the inspection exercise in the state.

He stated one person was arrested and would be prosecuted for obstruction PCN inspectors in the discharge of their duties, while the inspection was focused strategically on core areas of premises, personnel, pharmaceutical practice, and adherence to the ethics to ensure safe and standard service delivery.

Suleiman Ciroma revealed that a total of 672 premises comprising 136 pharmacies, and 536 patent medicine stores were inspected within 9 local government areas to include; Agaie, Bida, Tafa, Chanchaga, Lapai, Paikoro, Bosso, Suleja, Gurara respectively.

He maintained that the rigorous enforcement exercise would be held simultaneously across the country in order to ensure Nigerians have access to good medicine for compliance with the minimum standards for quality assurance.

According to Ciroma, the inspection uncovered various regulatory breached including illegal operation of unlicensed premises, noncompliance with regulations, unauthorized clinical practice, sales of controlled drugs, training of apprentices, among others.

The Head of Enforcement insisted that genuine pharmacies and PPMVs can be identified by the prominent display of their current licenses within their premises while urging the public to look out for this critical indicator of legitimacy.

House of Reps commends KDSG over healthcare funding

IDIBIA GABRIEL, KADUNA

Kaduna State Government has been commended for consistently allocating over 15 percent of its annual budget to the health sector.

The Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Health Services, Hon Amos Gwamna Magaji gave the commendation at Sir Kashim Ibrahim House on Friday.

The Committee which paid a courtesy call on the Deputy Governor, Dr Hadiza Balarabe, noted that the budgetary allocation is in line with the Abuja Declaration.

The Chairman also expressed delight that the allocations were matched by timely cash releases, describing it as a demonstration of seriousness towards healthcare financing, a statement from government Friday has disclosed.

Hon Magaji further lauded Kaduna State for ranking top in healthcare delivery in Nigeria last year, underscoring the strengthening of its human capital development.

The Chairman however. expressed concern over the persistently high rate of maternal mortality across the country, describing the situation as unacceptable.

Responding, Dr. Balarabe reaffirmed the state government's unwavering commitment to human capital development and efforts to reduce maternal mortality.

She described the loss of women's lives during childbirth as unfortunate and urged the committee to explore the provision of specialized ambulances for hard-to-reach areas as part of national interventions.

Police avert mob action on 2 'okada' snatchers in Nasarawa

BY FRANCIS NANSAK, LAFIA

Two alleged criminals who specialise in snatching motorcycles yesterday escaped death by the whiskers owing to the timely intervention officers the Uke Divisional Police headquarter in Karshi Development Area of Karu LGA, whose swift action averted the lynching of the two by an irate mob.

The incident occurred on Friday when the two suspects snatched a motorcycle at an area known as GRA in Uke, leading to some okada riders, summoning courage to give them a hot chase. They were forced to abandon the motorcycle and dived into River Uke near the popular Zimbabwe Bridge along Abuja-Keffi express road.

The unrelenting mob however followed suit by diving into the river and apprehending them.

The furious mob did not hesitate to beat them upwith stones and sticks and were poised to unleash jungle justice on them but for the timely intervention of the police.

Our correspondent who was at the spot during the incident reports that the police dispersed the mob who are largely motorcyclists, embittered by the frequent attacks by bike snatchers in the area.

One of them, who spoke on condition of anonymity said his brother was killed last week by motorcycle snatchers. "We can't allow the police to keep preventing us from killing those who don't want to work but snatch and kill us for performing legitimate service just to fend for our families", he said.



Scene after a mob caught a bike snatcher who dived into a river, following a hot chase by okada riders in Uke area of Karu, Nasarawa State...yesterday. (Photo: Francis Nansak)

Niger State Pilgrims Welfare Board strengthens collaboration with anti-graft agency

SAKA BOLAJI, MINNA

Niger State Pilgrims Welfare Board has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthen collaboration with the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission and other Related Offences (ICPC) to have a corrupt free Hajj operation in the State.

This was disclosed by the Executive Secretary, of the Board, Sheikh Muhammad Awwal Aliyu when he received on a courtesy visit on the Resident Commissioner, ICPC Niger State, Mr Kennedy Ebhotemey and his team at the Board's office.

The Executive Secretary noted that since his assumption of office in 2023 he has brought initiatives that has put to end all fraudulent activities within the Board and hajj operations.

According to him, ICPC is a major stakeholder for the Board and working closely together will ensure corrupt free Hajj operations and zero pilgrims' fraudulent activities.

He said since his assumption no member of Staff has been involved in any kind of fraudulent activities except for the issue of third parties who used to disguise as agents of the Board promising intending pilgrims of getting them slot(s) for less than the official Hajj fare as announced by the government thereby defrauding unsuspecting pilgrims.

While appreciating the Resident Commissioner of ICPC, the Executive Secretary, said the Board will not hesitate to report any crime related issues and will immediately Gazette ICPC as a major stakeholder of the Board .

Earlier, the State resident Commissioner ICPC, Mr Kennedy Ebhotemey decried the attitude of some prominent figures who fraudulently collected monies from innocent individuals with the name of securing Hajj slots for them and not fulfilling their obligations and will not return the money.

"We are handling a similar case presently".

Mr Kenedy Ebhotemey emphasized that as part of their mandate, the ICPC will help the Board in enlightening the public, using enforcement to prevent the prevalence of any such activities and bring sanity into the system.

The interface provided opportunities for questions, answers and clarifications on the activities from both the ICPC and the Board to ensure stronger alliance.

The high point of the meeting was presentation of the Board souvenir containing Date to the ICPC Boss and in turn the ICPC presented the Board with the calendar and other translated documents on the Commission activities.

Middle Belt hails FG for entering security pact with Israel

Middle Belt Forum (MBF) of Nigeria has warmly commended the Federal Government of Nigeria for entering into a landmark security pact with the State of Israel.

The pact was signed in Abuja on 12th August 2025 by Nigeria's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Amb. Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu, and Israel's Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister, Sharren Haskel-Harpaz, according to statement by the forum's spokesman Luka Binniyat on Friday in Kaduna.

The forum described the agreement as historic and strategic, saying it represented a new phase in Nigeria's long struggle against terrorism, banditry, and other violent crimes that have destabilized Nigeria for over a decade and a half.

MBF, speaking for the ethnic nationalities spread across 14 states of the Middle Belt and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), declared its total and unreserved support for this sovereign initiative.

It however lamented that "Unfortunately, but not unexpected, this wise and courageous move by the Federal Government has been met with protest from some quarters".

"On Wednesday, August 20, 2025, some Muslim leaders in Ibadan organized a peaceful demonstration opposing the security ties between Nigeria and Israel.

"The protest was orchestrated by the Ibadan branch of Aqsah Nigeria and attended by Islamic figures including Dr. Dawud Amoo-Alaga, Sheikh Abdulwaheed Abdul Hamid, Sheikh Abdul Fatah Sanni, Sheikh Dhikrullah Shafii including Prof Ishaq Akintola, Director of Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) among others.

"The protesters cited the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, mass civilian casualties, destruction of infrastructure, and starvation as their reason to oppose a military pact with Israel.

"We also note with concern the unfounded claims of Sheikh Ahmad Gumi, after the signing of the agreement when he alleged that Mossad has marked some Muslim clerics for elimination in Nigeria.

"This is dangerous for mongering. Perhaps Sheikh Gumi's anxiety arises from the fact that Israel's intelligence capabilities may already know more about his dealings than even the Saudis, who banned him from Mecca and deported him during the last Hajj. MBF completely disagrees with him. It is those who have skeletons in their cupboard that should fear Mossad.

"We must stress clearly that this pact has nothing to do with religion. It is not connected in any way to the conflict between Israel, Hamas, or any other group in the Middle East.

"Rather, it is a purely security-driven decision, taken to defend Nigerians: Christians, Muslims, and all faiths, against forces that threaten liberties, peace and the very survival of our nation. It is all about National interest over any other consideration.

"Nigeria cannot take sides in Israeli relationships with its neighbours when it has no less grave security challenges at this point.

Nigeria cannot continue to suffer endless killings, kidnappings and economic stagnation while rejecting assistance and cooperation with partners who have shown great degree of success in combating terror.

"It has been estimated that since 2009, Boko Haram insurgency has killed over 35,000 Nigerians and displaced more than 2 million people.

How malaria affects human development

STORIES BY ADA DIKE

The organizers of the Nigeria's National Malaria Elimination Programme (NNMEP) has stated that malaria affects human development in several powerful and long-lasting ways.

They said it comprises: "Education: Missed School Days: Children infected with malaria often miss school due to illness.

"Poor learning outcomes: Frequent infections lead to reduced concentration and cognitive development.

"Dropout risk: Repeated illness can contribute to school dropouts, especially in poor communities.

"Economic productivity: Reduced Work Capacity: Adults with malaria are often too sick to work, leading to lower household income.

"Loss of livelihoods: For farmers or laborers, missing even a few days during planting or harvesting season can severely affect food production and income. National Economic Burden: Countries with high malaria rates often experience slower economic growth due to healthcare costs and lost productivity."

Thirdly, the health system strain is an another problem. They said it could lead to overburdened facilities, adding that malaria consumes a large share of health budgets, leaving fewer resources for other diseases.

"Reduced Access: People may avoid or delay care due to cost or overcrowded facilities."

The fourth one is Poverty Trap. "Cost of care: Families spend money on treatment, travel, and recovery time—pushing them deeper into poverty.

"Cycle of Vulnerability: Poor housing, lack of nets, and low access to healthcare increase the risk of infection, which then perpetuates poverty," they explained.

"Maternal and Child Health: Pregnancy Complications: Malaria in pregnancy can cause miscarriages, stillbirth, low birth weight, and maternal death.

"Child Mortality: It's one of the leading killers of children under 5 in endemic regions. Malaria slows human development by weakening education, reducing productivity, worsening poverty, and straining health systems. Eliminating malaria is essential for achieving long-term human capital development and economic growth."



NAFDAC alerts public on the circulation of counterfeit Cowbell Milk in Nigeria

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) has alerted the public concerning the circulation of counterfeit Cowbell "Our Milk" 12g sachet milk in Nigeria.

The agency maintained that Promasidor Nigeria Ltd, the Marketing Authorisation Holder and Manufacturer of Cowbell, stopped producing Cowbell "Our Milk" in September 2023 and replaced it with Cowbell "Our Creamy Goodness".

"The counterfeit products currently in circulation are imitations of the discontinued "Our Milk" packaging and are not manufactured or distributed by Promasidor. They bear unauthorised use of the brand name, NAFDAC Registration Number, and packaging design," said the agency.

With Public Alert No. 026/2025, NAFDAC said consumption of counterfeit milk poses serious health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, unapproved additives, or diluted ingredients. "Risks include foodborne illnesses, allergic reactions, organ damage, and in severe cases, death. Infants, children, pregnant women, and the elderly are particularly vulnerable.



"Counterfeit Product Details: Product Name: Cowbell "Our Milk" 12g sachet

•Purported Manufacturer: Promasidor Nigeria Ltd, Production Date: 04/2025 and expiry Date: 12/2028."

The agency urged healthcare professionals and consumers to report any suspicion of the sale of substandard and counterfeit food products to the nearest NAFDAC office, call 0800-162-3322 or send an email to sf.alert@nafdac.gov.ng.

NPHCDA ED commends Kogi PFMOs, National Health Fellows



The Executive Director of the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA), Dr. Muyi Aina, has commended the National Health Fellows (NHFs) and the Performance and Financial Accountability Officers (PFMOs) for their good works.

These agencies were deployed to all the local government areas in Kogi State by the Federal government, for the evolution in their feedback, proposing innovative solutions to teething problems in the Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities, and owning their own their roles.

This disclosed this in a statement made available to The Daily Monitor.

Speaking during an interactive session with the NHFs and PFMOs, Dr. Aina said the vision of His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in establishing the NHF and PFMO program is 'to build a cohort of leaders - emerging or future leaders in public health, primary healthcare, and other associated fields.'

Dr Aina informed the NHFs and PFMOs that Nigeria operates a 'national health system that includes the federal government, the state government, and in fact, the local government', working together in unison. He then provided insights into how the National Health Systems (NHS) works, and that all the three tiers of government are working together to revitalize PHCs across the country to ensure every Nigerian has equitable access to quality primary health care services.

The ED/CEO interactive session with NHFs and PFMOs was part of the ED/CEO working visit to Kogi state on Thursday 21 August 2025.

Present at session were NPHCDA North Central Zonal Director, Engr. Onojo Otowo, Kogi State Commissioner of Health, Dr Abdulaziz Adams, and the Executive Secretary of the State Primary Health Care Development Agency (SPHCDA), Muazu Musa, the Chief Medical Director (CMD) of Confluence University of Science and Technology Teaching Hospital, Dr Stephen Shuaibu, Acting CMD, Kogi State Specialist Hospital; Dr. Folagbade, Acting CMD, PAAU Teaching Hospital, Dr Nayo Anthony, and Kogi state SWAp desk officer, Dr. Bola Kelvi, andsome of the agencies' staff.

Herbal products for HBP, joint pain, others



A herbal practitioner, Adwao Asamoah, has advised patients suffering from some ailments including high blood pressure, varicose veins, joint pain and so on, to use bay leaves, hibiscus flowers and cloves, among others.

Adwao said those herbs can be used as natural remedy for high blood pressure, poor blood circulation, varicose veins, cellulite, joint pain, stomach discomfort and inflamed or bloated abdomen.

In her words: "Ingredients: four bay leaves, a handful of hibiscus flowers(Zobo leaves), one tablespoon of cloves, six well-washed guava leaves and three cups of water.

"Instructions: Put all the ingredients into a clean saucepan. Add three cups of water, bring the mixture to a boil and let it simmer for about 15 minutes over medium heat.

" Strain the liquid. Pour the infusion into a cup or container.

"How to Take It: Drink one cup of this infusion each morning on an empty stomach. Drink this for 10 days

"Tip: For best results maintain a balanced diet and avoid excess sugar, processed foods, and alcohol during this period."

The herbal therapist made a disclaimer by saying that: "Disclaimer: This is a natural home remedy that may support wellness, but it is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment."

FMOH takes stock, publishes 2 years achievements

The Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare under the leadership of Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, have published their achievements of two years.

This record, according to the ministry, started from when President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR came to power.

They itemized them as follows:

₦ 1,003 PHCs revitalized nationwide; 5,500 in progress, towards a target of 17,000.

₦ 37 million Nigerians accessed PHC services in Q1 2025 alone.

₦ Improved infrastructure across all states, with model PHCs replacing dilapidated facilities.

₦ 172 priority LGAs targeted under the Maternal and Neonatal Mortality Reduction Innovation Initiative (MAMII).

₦ 6 million pregnant women received multiple micronutrient supplementation in 2024.

₦ 13.1 million antenatal care visits and 4.2 million deliveries by skilled birth attendants recorded (May 2023 – April 2025).

₦ Free Caesarean sections provided in empaneled facilities.

₦ President Tinubu named AU Champion for Human Resources for Health.

₦ Health training institution quotas doubled; nurse enrolment rose from 28,0



NACCIMA inaugurates new chamber in 9th Mile, Enugu

The Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (NACCIMA) has inaugurated the 9th Mile Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (9CCIMA) in Enugu State.

The National President of NACCIMA, Mr Jani Ibrahim, inaugurated the new chamber and its founding President, Chief Leonard Ugwu, on Friday in 9th Mile in Udi Local Government Area of the state.

The NACCIMA tasked the new chamber to ensure that all business and commercial concerns were represented in the association.

Ibrahim urged the chamber leadership to build a robust and all inclusive chamber, which would lead to rapid growth and development of the 9th Mile area, Enugu State and the entire country.

Represented by Chief Humphrey Ngonadi, the President of South-East Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (SECCIMA), the national president noted that the 9th mile area was already endowed with natural resources, industrial parks and striving companies.

"I foresee a rapid growth of the chamber. However, the chamber and its council must build a robust team spirit that will accommodate all for the aspirations of establishing this chamber to be met.

"I congratulate you on this milestone and as the parent body, NACCIMA, will continue to support your growth as you seek to expand commerce, industry, mines and agriculture ventures," he said.

Speaking, Gov. Peter Mbah noted that 9CCIMA was geographically positioned as the gateway to the South-East and Enugu State, adding that with the track record of the council members, the area was poised for rapid business growth.

Mbah, who was represented by the state's Commissioner for Trade, Investment and Industry, Dr Sam Nwobodo, said that the state had opened two business parks and industrial processing zones in the area before now.

"Niger gas has been revitalised, the state is developing world class motor spare part markets, land mapping and building of massive roads among others to ensure 9th Mile area becomes a major commercial/business hub," he said.

He said that the state would not achieve its target of a $30 billion GDP economy without building a conducive business environment that encouraged active private sector investment and economic participation.

Ajegunle Business School receives accolades for empowering 323 youths

BY ORJI ONYEKWERE

Top-notched Ajegunle Business School, ABS, have received thumps up from Hon Kolawole Taiwo, the former Deputy Speaker, Lagos State House of Assembly.

The lawmaker showered the praises during the 7th edition of ABS 2025, Ajegunle Economic Summit, Business Fair & Exhibition.

Hon Taiwo noted that the business school has been doing great in that part of the state, churning out entrepreneurs that is thriving in their various sectors in Ajegunle.

"I like the ABS because they are doing great in this clime, which is like me, popularly called Mr Ajegunle in the House"

Hon Taiwo used the opportunity to encourage participants to keep hope alive because "this is the first time Nigeria has a hardworking President who means well for the country.

His words, "Nigeria before now is a country that relied wholly on imports but presently, we have seen a President that is bent on changing the trend to make Nigeria export based."

According to the former House of Representatives member, President Tinubu has good intentions for Nigeria because far back in 1975, Nigerians were exposed to importation. For every import into the country without any corresponding export, it has a toll on the economy and it kills the economy, he explained.

He noted further that subsequent governments have shied away from solving the imports, exports deficit or find solutions to the deficit in export and it's tolls on our economy. However, President Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu's government has the will power to change the narrative, through creating a Nigeria with a productive economy and everyone must give him the necessary support.

Keynote speaker, Stanley Oghene Abraham a real estate entrepreneur, encouraged the youths and other guests with his personal experience, giving them insights on business tips that will help them succeed.

He said, if he had looked at the circumstances surrounding him while growing up, he wouldn't have been a successful businessman. His father, he revealed, died few days to his admission into the University and it was only his mother, a vegetable vendor at Alaba-Suru that took care of him and his other five siblings.

He was able to train himself in the University, where he graduated with a degree in accounting. Today, all the six of them are graduates and are doing well in their various businesses.

He therefore tasked the youths not to allow any circumstance deter them from achieving their life ambitions. He asked them to do whatever legitimate things they find with all their might, as if their entire lives depend on it.

ABPP urges Nigerians to engage registered builders to stem building collapse

BY CHIJIOKE SIMON

Builder Oladele Abimbola Isiaka, the National Chairman of the Association of Builders in Private Practice (ABPP), has urged Nigerians to engage only registered builders in construction projects, emphasizing that this move is vital to combat the alarming rate of building collapses throughout the country.

During the inaugural ABPP National Hangout and Dinner held at the Christian Ecumenical Centre in Abakaliki, Isiaka, a Fellow of the Nigerian Institute of Building (NIOB), pointed out that unprofessional practices, corner-cutting, and the pervasive influence of quack builders are key contributors to structural failures in Nigeria.

"Building collapse has become a nightmare in our country," he remarked. "Factors such as the use of substandard materials, incorrect specifications, and the failure to engage registered builders lie at the heart of these problems. If anyone wishes to construct a building, the best professional to engage is a registered builder. We are trained in building production, quality management, and safety protocols for construction sites," he stated emphatically.

Isiaka elaborated that achieving the status of a registered builder necessitates formal education from a university or polytechnic, progression to corporate membership in the NIOB, and subsequent licensing by the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (CORBON) after the successful completion of professional examinations.

Addressing concerns regarding professional rivalry within the construction sector, Isiaka dismissed notions of conflict, underlining that each professional's role is distinctly defined. "Architects design, civil engineers handle structural designs, quantity surveyors manage costing, while builders are responsible for the actual execution and delivery of projects. The main challenge we face is the infiltration of quacks—individuals who lack the necessary training or licenses and attempt to take over jobs designated for professionals," he clarified.

In his address, Isiaka praised Ebonyi State for its peace and hospitality, commending Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru—a fellow builder—for hosting the national body during its 55th Annual General Meeting (AGM) and for his notable infrastructural developments in the state.

Builder Adetunji Adedokun, the Lagos State Coordinator of ABPP, also spoke at the event, highlighting the dinner and awards ceremony as a crucial opportunity for networking, knowledge sharing, and professional collaboration among builders from various states.

The evening culminated in a series of awards and recognitions for deserving members of the association, honoring past leaders of the NIOB and notable professionals in the field.

Isiaka concluded that these awards are intended not only to celebrate excellence but also to motivate younger builders to aspire for professionalism and high standards in construction.

TICAD9: Japan, African Development Bank sign agreement to extend Enhanced Private Sector Assistance



The government of Japan and the African Development Bank on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding launching the sixth phase of the Enhanced Private Sector Assistance (EPSA6) agreement, which provides a framework for critical resource mobilization and development partnership for African countries.

Under EPSA6, the Bank and JICA will work together to support regional member countries for the period 2026-2028, with a financial package of up to $5.5 billion – half a billion more than EPSA5 - while ensuring their debt sustainability.

The brief signing ceremony by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) President Dr. Akihiko Tanaka, and African Development Bank Vice President for Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth Kevin Kariuki, took place during the Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD9), ongoing in Yokohama, Japan. Mr. Katsunobu Kato, Finance Minister of Japan witnessed the ceremony.

The EPSA Initiative, created in partnership with the Government of Japan in 2005, supports the implementation of the Bank's Strategy for Private Sector Development. Its key priorities are power, connectivity, health, agriculture and nutrition.

Dr. Tanaka said co-financing under previous EPSA agreements since 2005, had resulted in $12 billion of support to Africa from the African Development Bank and JICA. The $5.5 billion ambitious new target for EPSA6 is more than five times the original target of EPSA1, 20 years ago, he said. "This reflects the growing strength of our partnership and the increasing importance of our joint effort," he added. He also announced that resilience would be a new priority under EPSA6. "With this focus we are committed to address not only climate change but also a broad range of shocks."

Tanaka lauded the role played by outgoing African Development Bank President, Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, for over half of EPSA's history. "Thanks to his strong ownership and support, we are pleased that EPSA5 is now almost reaching its target of $5 billion by the end of this year," he said.

The EPSA non-sovereign operations component helps finance the Bank's private sector operations through a line of credit from JICA to the Bank on concessional terms. Previous EPSA agreements have helped finance critical infrastructure such as the Bujagali Hydropower Plant (Uganda), RASCOM (the first Pan-African communication satellite), the East Africa Submarine Cable System, Lekki Toll road (Nigeria), and the Kigali Bulk Water Supply in Rwanda.

Olukoyede Charges Legislators on Accountability in Governance

The Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Ola Olukoyede has charged legislators on accountability and good governance.

He gave this charge in Abuja on Thursday, August 21, 2025 while speaking at the Policy Dialogue and Public Unveiling of the 10th National Assembly's Deliberative Barometer and Policy Focus Productivity Report themed " Legislative Governance Accountability and Productivity Index" organized by the Erudite Growth and Advancement Foundation, ERGAF-Africa in collaboration with the Civil society Legislative Advocacy Center, CISLAC.

Olukoyede who spoke through the Director of Public Affairs, Commander of the EFCC, CE Wilson Uwujaren charged organizers to take into consideration the issue of governance and accountability of legislators. He observed that the report and discussions presented were silent on issues of accountability in governance. He, however, applauded the organizers for a great job, adding that it will go a long way in addressing pressing issues.

Earlier, in a remark, Speaker, House of Representatives, Honorable Abbas Tajudeen, represented by Honorable Cyril Godwin Hart disclosed that there was need to constantly raise the standard of representation, lawmaking and oversight by spotlighting legislative output that would altogether make stronger impact on legislative processes and deepen the democratic culture.

He added that beyond institutional reforms, the barometer aligns with the vision of the 10th Assembly to entrench evidence- based lawmaking that will make lawmakers respond to data which will serve as a reference point for legislators and stakeholders seeking to evaluate and strengthen preliminary contributions to national development.

Professor Abubakar Suleiman, Director General of National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies applauded the launch of the initiative for providing data needed to evaluate the activities of the 10th Assembly. He noted that accurate data and artificial intelligence will surely drive decisions which will enhance transparency and accountability of governance.

Also, Honourable Bamidele Salam, in a goodwill message, appreciated the organizers stating that leadership was about taking people to where they should be. He stressed that citizens are more interested in the dividends of democracy and fruits of the mandate given to legislators. He called for support from the government to ensure the sustenance of the initiative.

Ibadan Royalties Applaud Olukoyede's Efforts at Tackling Internet Fraud in Southwest



The Council of Mogajis of the Ibadan Compounds Peace Initiatives, ICPI, Oyo State has commended the Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Ola Olukoyede for his relentless efforts at tackling the scourge of cybercrime among youths in the Southwest region and the country as a whole.

The commendation was given on Thursday, August 21, 2025, by the president of the Mogajis of Ibadan, Mogaji Asimiyu Adepoju Ariori, when he led a six-man delegation of the Council to pay a courtesy visit to the Acting Director of the Ibadan Zonal Directorate of the EFCC, ACE I Hauwa Garba Ringim.

"The Executive Chairman of the Commission has left no stone unturned when it comes to tackling cybercrime and this is evident in the recent sting operations in Ogun State that led to the arrest of 55 and 93 internet fraudsters respectively. The EFCC under the current leadership is poised and determined to curb, if not eradicate cybercrime among youths and the Council of Mogajis under the express approval of the Olubadan designate, Oba Rashidi Ladoja is absolutely ready and willing to lend their voices, unequivocal support and time in collaborating with the EFCC to combat the scourge of cybercrime in the Southwest, especially Ibadan," Ariori said.

Ariori, who noted the importance of periodic community engagement with the EFCC, assured Ringim of timely sharing of credible information, regarding fraudulent internet activities or gatherings within and around Ibadan metropolis with the EFCC.

Ringim, who expressed delight with the visit, assured the Council of EFCC's readiness for collaboration with all relevant stakeholders and solicited improved information flow from the communities under the Mogajis' jurisdictions that could leverage the Commission in its fight against internet fraud in the region.

Benin Court Jails Three for Internet Fraud

Justice M. Itsueli of Edo State High Court, sitting in Benin City, on Thursday, August 21, 2025 convicted and jailed the trio of Efosa Richard, Victor Nwachukwu and Ekaye Emaike for internet fraud.

They were prosecuted by the Benin Zonal Directorate of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on separate one-count charges, bordering on advance fee fraud, obtaining by false pretence, retention of proceeds of crime and possession of fraudulent documents.

The charge against Richard reads: "That you Efosa Richard (m) on or about the 1st of August, 2025 within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court did have in your iPhone 16, with IMEI Number 35776226117235, documents which you knew or ought to have known contain a false pretence and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 6 and 8 of the Advance Fee Fraud and other Fraud Related Offences Act 2006 and punishable under Section 1(3) of the same Act."

They all pleaded "guilty," prompting prosecution counsel, I.M. Elodi and K. Y. Bello to pray the court to convict and sentence them accordingly, while the defence counsel pleaded with the court to temper justice with mercy, stating that they have become remorseful for their actions.

Justice Itsueli convicted and sentenced them to two years imprisonment, each or to pay N200, 000 (Two Hundred Thousand Naira) fine, respectively.All the convicts forfeited their mobile phones and laptop computers, being the tools of their crimes as well as money found in their respective bank accounts, being the proceeds of their crimes to the federal government and further undertook in writing to be of good behaviour henceforth.

Their journey to jail began with their arrest by operatives of the Benin Zonal Directorate of the EFCC, following credible intelligence that exposed their involvements in fraudulent internet activities.

Sting Operation at OOPL: Five More Internet Fraudsters Jailed In Lagos

The Lagos Zonal Directorate 2 of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Friday, August 22, 2025, secured the conviction and sentence of five more internet fraudsters before Justice D.I.Dipeolu of the Federal High Court sitting in Ikoyi, Lagos.

The convicts are: Jinadu Rasaq Gbemisola, Salako Peter Kunle, Adeshina Kehinde Ibrahim, Olawale Quam Alao and Oladele Opeyemi.

They are among the 93 suspected fraudsters arrested during a sting operation on Sunday, August 10, 2025 at a hotel within the precincts of Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library, OOPL, Abeokuta, Ogun State.

They were arraigned on Friday on one-count separate charges bordering on impersonation, identity and internet fraud.

Some of the charges reads: "That you, Jinadu Rasaq Gbemisola, sometime on or about 10th August, 2025 in Nigeria,within the Judicial Division of the Federal High Court of Nigeria, with intent to defraud, fraudulently held out yourself on Facebook account titled "Daniel Lamon", a woman, in order to defraud unsuspecting members of the public, with intent to gain advantage for yourself and you thereby committed an offence, contrary to and punishable under Section 22(3) (a) (c) of the Cyber Crimes (Prohibition etc) Act Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2015."

Another charge reads:"That you , Salako Peter Kunle, on or about the 10th August 2025 in Lagos, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, and with a dishonest intent, held out yourself as "Karen Crowe" (female) through your Gmail Account; crowekaren92@gmail.com to various unsuspecting members of the public and procured financial benefit to yourself, thereby committed an offence contrary to and punishable under Section 22(2)(b) of the Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention etc) Act. 2015."

Another charge reads:" That you, Adeshina Kehinde Ibrahim (male), sometime in August, within the Lagos jurisdiction of the Federal High Court of Nigeria, fraudulently held out yourself out on 'Bigo Live' as one Natasha Smith', with the intention to gain advantage for yourself and you thereby committed an offence contrary to and punishable under Section 22 of the Cybercrimes (Prohibition etc.) Act, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2025."

They each pleaded "guilty" to the charges when they were read to them.

In view of their guilty pleas, prosecution counsel, Godsent Akhanolu, S.M.Yabo and Ayanfe Olowonihi, called on EFCC's Investigagors Taiwo Owolabi, Muhammad Sani Raji and Adamu Yakubu, who respectively reviewed the facts of the cases.

The prosecution counsel, thereafter, respectively sought to tender, in evidence, the extra-judicial statements of the defendants; the N525,999 manager's cheque raised as restitution by Gbemisola; Kunle's iPhone 15 pro max ; Alao's one Samsung phone and the N500,000 manager's cheque issued as restitution as well as the forensic investigation documents printed from their mobile devices.

They were all admitted as exhibits by the court.

The judge, in view of the defendants' guilty pleas and evidence tendered by the prosecution, found them guilty and convicted them accordingly.

The defence counsel, O.O. Akintoye, Ifeoma Ubabudu, A.O. Idowu, D.I. Oluseyi and D.Y. Oluwole, respectively, prayed the court to "temper justice with mercy," and grant their clients non- custodial sentences, adding that they were first-time offenders who have shown remorse.

Delivering judgment, Justice Dipeolu convicted and sentenced Gbemisola, who confessed to have benefited the sum of $350 Dollars(Three Hundred and Fifty United States Dollars) to three months imprisonment , with an option of fine of N300,000(Three Hundred Thousand Naira).

The judge also ordered that the N525,999 manager's cheque raised as restitution be forfeited to the Federal Government of Nigeria.

Hellen Ati drops diss track against Cubana Chief

Hellen Ati, the alleged baby mama of business man Pascal Okechukwu aka Cubana Chief, is set to drop a diss track against Cubana Chief.

The controversial lady made this revelation through her Instagram page. The Kenyan lady had accused the business man of fathering a child through her and have called for a DNA test to prove her case.

Hellen said she titled the single, 'Pascal Okechukwu don cast'.

Her words …

"I am dropping my first single today midday 12:pm nageria

time 10 am. Title of the song pascal okechukwu you dnt cast"

However, Cubana Chief has once again denied allegations of fathering a child through Hellen Ati.

He revealed this, during a conversation with a content creator Peller. He told Hellen that instead of creating drama over this very issue, she should bring his alleged son back to Nigeria for a DNA test.

He noted that fatherhood is a serious business which should not be used for online revenge, as he would want to be with his child.

According to Cubana Chief, "You said you have a child for me and you feel the best way to get my attention is to rant on social media. If you have my child, you have what is more than diamonds in your hands. You come dey talk say I be blood money person, say I dey do 419, I be drug dealer, but your wan chop child support of juju man.".

Why I stepped back from acting -Bimbo Thomas

Beautiful Nollywood actress Bimbo Thomas says, she reduced her appearance in movies because producers were beginning to stereotype her. So, to avoid being reduced to a particular character she has to to step back.

Bimbo who is prominently known for her role in the movie Omo ghetto, the Saga, said; she has been limited to a single type of character and she feels restricted by this.

The actress's noted that she can play any character. For her, since she can deliver pidgin language roles effortlessly, that does not mean she grew up in such environment.

"I felt they wanted to box me, they wanted to put me in a corner.

"One minute I'm speaking phonetically, the next, I do ghetto and so on.

"I wasn't born in the barracks, so pidgin isn't my thing,"she corrected.



Theresa Emegwara breaks Guinness World Record for longest makeup application

Nigerian makeup artist, Theresa Emegwara has broken the Guinness World Record for the longest makeup application by an individual.

This is contained in a statement by her media aide, Robert Ekat, on Tuesday in Lagos.

The statement said that Emegwara, popularly known as TesGlam, broke the record on Aug. 19 at 7.15 a.m., when she clocked 103 hours, 25 minutes, 34 seconds to beat the previous record.

According to the statement, the artist, who is aiming to set a new milestone by a significant margin of 144 hours, will still continue her quest, after breaking the previous record.

It added that the 28-year-old, who launched her quest under the banner of Glam 4-144, commended family and friends for their support in helping to achieve the new record.

"I am filled with immense gratitude and energy from the support of everyone cheering me on.

"This has really tested me; I have cried and nearly given up.

"We are not yet done, the aim is 144 hours,"the statement quoted her.

Ghana's Akosua Mantey Roselyn, the previous record holder, set the last record on April 3, 2024.

Emegwara's quest, Glam-4-144, was approved by Guinness World Records, to commence on Aug. 14.

The artist's quest for 144 hours of non-stop makeup application is expected to run for approximately six days.

Her achievement adds to the growing list of record-breaking feats by Nigerians recently, including Tunde Onakoya's chess marathon and Chef Hilda Baci's cook-a-thon.

Nigerian politicians are 'spiritual husbands' -Jaruma admits dating former vice president



Controversial aphrodisiac merchant, Hauwa Mohammed, popularly known as Jaruma; has made a shocking revelation that she has only dated two men in her life. They are former Cameroonian national team goal poacher, Samuel Eto'o and a former vice president of Nigeria.

She made this revelation via her X handle. Jaruma, however refused to name the former vice president describing Nigerian politicians as "spiritual husbands". She noted that if she should name the vice president, they will wipe out everything about about her image on this earth.

"I have only dated two men in my life, Samuel Eto'o, the international footballer, and a vice president. That vice president's name cannot be mentioned because, if you do, they can wipe out your whole image from the face of the earth," she said.

"Nigerian politicians are like spiritual husbands. You cannot mention their names, even if they've been in your life," she stated.

She further clarified that making this revelation will also set the record straight on how she was able to afford her luxurious lifestyle before venturing into her kayamata business

Jaruma further explained that she studied in Istanbul, Turkey and later lived in Dubai and all these exposures helped to shape her life.

"Before I even started selling kayamata, I was already living large. People kept asking how I could afford such an expensive lifestyle. The honest truth is, it was only these two men that I dated in my whole life," she added.

My mum once accused me of dating her boyfriend -Kaffy

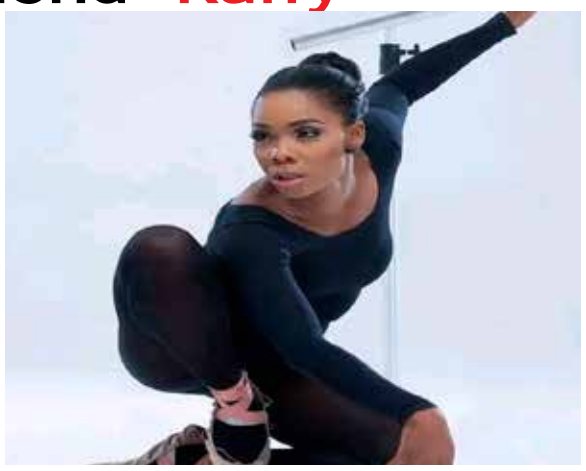
Award winning dancer, Kafayat Oluwatoyin Shafau, popularly known as Kaffy, has opened up about the rejection she is facing as a single mother. The 45-year-old single mother said that men don't want to marry her because of her single status.

Kaffy revealed this while answering questions on the latest edition of the Honest Bunch podcast.

She said, "I have had somebody tell me because I'm a single mother, he can't even think of dating me because I have two children. What makes you think that a woman that has been divorced is not even the better candidate if she had worked on herself? What's the guarantee that two single people today are not going to be divorced people tomorrow?

"Why are people insisting on marrying someone fresh? But both of you are going into the same data that the world has computed for you that over 70 per cent of marriages crash. You are part of the 70 per cent."

According to her, "The stigmatisation of single mothers and divorcees is crazy.



"For the records, no one gets married with the intention of getting a divorce years after. The same people who advocate for the "Leave to Live" philosophy are still the ones pointing accusing fingers at these people.

"No girl or young woman maps out her life to be a single mother; circumstances make people choose the option of single parenting.

"For some, it is not even an option, life tossed that hard choice at them, and seeing they have no choice, they decide to live each day at a time with a trademark society has forced them to acquire.

The Guinness World Record holder also made startling revelation about her upbringing, how her mother once accused her of dating her boyfriend. While growing up, her mother dated different men after she divorced her father. So, she and her siblings were close to the men whom they sometimes called 'daddies'.

According to Kaffy, an incident happened when she was 13 years. Her mother accused her of sleeping with one of her boyfriends. She was stripped naked and flogged in front of everyone in their seating room for allegedly sleeping with one of her boyfriends after her mother walked in on her, cleaning a blood stain off his shirt after he cut himself while shaving.

"I was 13 when my mother started suspecting me with her own men. Because of the divorce, she had different kinds of people. She will have different men she is dating and we will see those men as daddies because we were also missing that father [figure].

"The closer you are to the men, the more she is insecure. And there was a day that I was stripped naked in front of that man in the living room and punished for just trying to help 'daddy' clean a blood from his face because he was shaving and cut himself. My mother walked into the room when I was saying, 'Daddy, see.' And she misinterpreted what was happening and I was flogged naked in front of everyone.

Marriage is not about length of years but grace -Actress Biodun Okeowo

Nollywood actress Biodun Okeowo, popularly known as Omoborty, said some men can still show their 'Solomon trait,' no matter how long they have been married. The beautiful actress voiced this on her Instagram page while airing her opinion on the conversation trending about marriage on the Instagram.

She wrote: "Marriage isn't about length or years, it's about grace… even after 50 years, some men can still show that Solomon trait in them. At this point, one can only pray, may God bless every good and intentional man who keeps his vows pure."

"Following all the gist on Instagram about the recent event, one lesson is clear for every woman. Sadly, length of years in marriage doesn't stop a man from misbehaving or even taking a second wife.

"It's all in God's hands, because while some will stain your white, there are still good, intentional, and determined men. May God have mercy on women! As a woman, never remain where peace is lost just because of what people will say. Let them talk, your peace is your true wealth."



Osun ranked best in South-West, 6th nationally for civil society-friendly environment

BY MIKE DIKE OSOGBO

In a landmark achievement, Osun State has emerged as the best-performing state in the South-West and 6th nationwide in creating an enabling operational environment for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

This recognition was announced during the 2025 South-West Conference for Civil Society Stakeholders, held on Thursday, at JAGZ Hotel, Ibadan.

The event was organized by Global Rights Nigeria, a Community of Practice initiative, with support from the European Union.

Just a few years ago, Osun State ranked 26th nationwide. Now, under the progressive leadership of Governor Ademola Jackson Nurudeen Adeleke, the state has surged into the top 10, surpassing all South-West counterparts in fostering civil society growth and collaboration.

The state's dramatic rise is credited to Governor Adeleke's commitment to inclusive governance, transparency, and citizen engagement. His administration has institutionalized mechanisms for regular dialogue with civil society actors, including the appointment of Senior Special Assistants on Civil Society Engagement, ensuring consistent liaison between government and CSOs.

Some of the landmark achievements under Governor Adeleke include: becoming a signatory to the Open Government Partnership (OGP); Signifying a commitment to transparency, accountability, and citizen participation; Official recognition of CSOs: The state has issued commendation certificates and financial support to high-performing NGOs operating at the grassroots level; Deliberate inclusion of civil society voices in policy formulation and program implementation, fostering trust and synergy between the government and its people.

These reforms have strengthened democratic governance and redefined civic space in the state, positioning Osun as a national model for collaborative governance.

Several top officials from Osun State were present at the Ibadan conference, including, Hon. Ibrahim Abiodun, Chairman, Osun State House of Assembly Committee on Women Affairs, Children and Social Welfare, Comrade Ebenezer Olusegun Ige, Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Civil Society Engagement, Comrade Solanke Hamzat, Chairman, Osun Internal Revenue Service and Barr. Abimbola Babatunde, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women Affairs, Children and Social Welfare

Makinde disburses N600m compensation for Circular Road project

STEPHEN GBADA–MOSI, IBADAN

Oyo State government has released the sum of ₦600 million as compensation to property owners affected by the ongoing Circular Road Project in Ibadan, the state capital.

According to a statement by the state Commissioner for Information and Orientation, Prince Dotun Oyelade, on Thursday, the fourth batch of N200 million was released Thursday at the office of the Commissioner for Lands Housing and Urban Development, Hon. Williams Akin-Funmilayo.

Oyelade said the governor promised that the payment of the total sum of N1 billion compensation would be completed soon.

"With this exercise, we are gradually approaching the ₦1 billion mark. Today, beneficiaries will receive between ₦3 million and ₦5 million each, with payments to be credited immediately," Akin Fumilayo was quoted.

He explained that the Circular Road corridor was first acquired in 2006 and expanded in 2018 before Makinde assumed office and had witnessed all forms of encroachments ever since.

"However, the governor directed that even though the corridor expansion did not take place under his watch, owners of both the legal and illegal structures should be compensated," he said.

The commissioner cautioned beneficiaries against falling victims to fraudsters, stressing that they should report any government official who asked them for kickbacks.

Speaking at the event, Oyelade, described the project as one "ordained by God," noting that its concept dated back to 2005

"If you look at it very well, it would appear that this is a project the Lord had ordained, because the concept started 20 years ago by former governor, Oba Rasidi Ladoja, who incidentally, is being coronated as the Olubadan of Ibadanland, 20 years after, and after which the Circular Road has been named," he said.

Representatives of the beneficiaries, Alawiye Adebayo and Iyafin Abigeal Opelopeoluwa, commended Governor Makinde for keeping to his promises and demonstrating compassion in governance.

EKSU VC canvasses support for postgraduate studies, says they're bedrock for innovation

STEPHEN GBADA–MOSI, IBADAN

The Vice Chancellor of the Ekiti State University (EKSU), Ado-Ekiti, Professor Babalola Ayodele, has called on students to embrace postgraduate programmes for innovations to thrive in the Nigerian university system.

He described postgraduate programmes as the bedrock of innovation and critical inquiry.

According to a statement by the Deputy Registrar/ Head, Directorate of Information and Corporate Affairs of the institution, Bode Olofinmuagun, on Friday,

Professor Ayodele made the remarks while addressing matriculants at the matriculation ceremony for the newly-admitted candidates into the regular, sandwich and professional postgraduate programmes of the university for the 2024/2025 academic session.

"The vice chancellor, who was represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academics), Professor Williams Adebayo, maintained that the postgraduate programmes were to nurture and prepare the students for the future by becoming enigmas of great repute.

"Professor Ayodele challenged the matriculants to foster a culture of pursuing researches with rigour for the purpose of translating their results into making real impact in the society.

"He further advised the new postgraduate students to strive towards addressing pressing global challenges, such as climate change to other challenges posed by natural phenomena like the outbreak of diseases.

"He, therefore, congratulated them on their admission into the university and charged them to make best use of the opportunities offered by the university, which is currently the best state university in Nigeria," Olofinmuagun said.

The matriculation oath was administered on the matriculants by the Registrar, Mr. Ife Oluwole, after the presentation of the candidates by the Provost, College of Postgraduate Studies, Professor Babatope Oyewole.



The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Head of Kaduna Operations Office Kaduna, Mal. Suleiman Muhammad and Abdulhalim Yazid , the Kaduna State Coordinator for Hydroelectric Power Producing Areas Development Commission (HYPPADEC), jointly presenting life–saving jackets donated by the commission to communities around Gurara Dam, Kachia, Kaduna.

Obasa hails First Lady's visit, backs leadership initiative for girl-child

BENJAMIN OMOIKE

The Speaker of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Mudashiru Obasa, has commended the recent visit of Nigeria's First Lady, Senator Oluremi Tinubu, describing it as a meaningful reaffirmation of her enduring ties to Lagos and her commitment to national development.

Obasa made the remarks during an engagement session the First Lady held with traditional rulers, religious leaders, and political stakeholders in the state. He said the visit served as both a symbolic and practical gesture, reinforcing Senator Tinubu's dedication to the welfare of Lagosians.

"It's very good to have her back in Lagos. She has always been our mother — first as the First Lady of Lagos State, and now as the First Lady of the Federation," Obasa said. "Her well-organised and impactful visit sends a clear message that her bond with Lagos remains strong and that she is deeply invested in the state's progress."

The Speaker lauded Senator Tinubu's developmental agenda, particularly her focus on food security, poverty alleviation, and her strategic engagement with traditional institutions, saying these efforts resonate with both constitutional responsibilities and grassroots needs.

Obasa also used the occasion to highlight Lagos State's ongoing legislative efforts to protect the rights of children, especially the girl-child, referencing existing laws on rape, abuse, and school safety.

However, he noted that a particularly promising idea emerged during the First Lady's visit — the establishment of a focused institution dedicated to grooming young girls for leadership roles.

"One key issue raised was leadership training for the girl-child. I agree completely," he said. "Beyond legislation, we must actively nurture leadership consciousness among our girls. It's an initiative we are taking seriously, and we will explore how best to integrate it into our developmental framework."

Obasa's endorsement of the proposal adds momentum to the broader national conversation on empowering the next generation of female leaders in Nigeria.

Asagba of Asaba inspects rehabilitation centre donated by Obi Elunor

BY NOSA AKENZUA, ASABA

The Asagba of Asaba, HRM Prof. Epiphany Azinge, on Wednesday inspected a facility donated by Obi Nduka Elunor to the Asaba community for use as a Drug Addicts Rehabilitation Centre.

The monarch, accompanied by palace chiefs, explained that the visit was aimed at assessing the facility and exploring options for its effective utilization. He further directed the Welfare and Endowment Fund Committee of the palace to identify and recommend the necessary equipment required to make the centre functional.

Speaking during the inspection, HRM Asagba Azinge expressed optimism that, in no distant time, experts and professionals would be engaged to provide proper care for addicts and victims who would benefit from the centre.

The revered traditional ruler commended Obi Elunor for his generosity, noting that the facility, originally serving as an Ogwa (meeting place), was magnanimously released to the Asaba people for a noble cause.

While appreciating other donors who have supported the initiative, the Asagba called on well-meaning Asaba indigenes and residents to contribute meaningfully to the project. He stressed that collective effort was necessary in combating the rising challenge of drug addiction within the community.

"This is a significant step toward safeguarding the wellbeing of our people," the monarch said, adding that the centre would, when fully operational, stand as a beacon of hope and rehabilitation for many.

TICAD-9: When will Mr. President nominate Nigerian ambassadors?



Let's not get it twisted, this week's noisy Mission To Tokyo has again exposed consequences of absence of ambassadors in our foreign missions for two years.

Nigeria has again been under fire at the just concluded Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD-9) in Japan after observers noticed that the country's booth was left unmanned despite the presence of a large government delegation.

The TICAD9 2025 Nigeria's President attended has been so mismanaged and poorly explained that a Nigerian entrepreneur based in Japan, Idris Ayodeji Bello's alarm on social media, expressing embarrassment that Nigeria was the only country without representation at its exhibition stand has become a great news point.

Bello who claimed he was compelled to salvage the country's image, said he informally assumed the role of an "Honorary Consul," taking charge of the Nigerian stand to engage curious visitors.

He noted that for hours, he fielded diverse questions from international delegates and investors, ranging from agriculture and real estate to oil and gas, manufacturing, and even fashion. 'Ambassador' Bello also disclosed that his impromptu representation caught the attention of Nikkei Asia, one of Japan's leading financial publications, which interviewed him on why Nigeria remained a strategic partner for Japan, particularly in the context of shifting global trade dynamics sparked by the Trump administration's trade policies.

His words: "I hate to show negative things about Nigeria but it is sad that Nigeria is the only unmanned booth at TICAD9 in Japan… So ashamed, I have now designated myself as an 'Honorary Consul' and taken over the booth to engage visitors," Bello wrote, noting that several Japanese attendees had approached him with questions about Nigeria. The emergency brand ambassador added: "It's been a few hours now fielding questions and inquiries on all topics under the sun from crops to real estate…to sports… Thank God for residual knowledge from the life of an Afropreneur…"

Reacting to the development, angry critics and speakers for the opposition platforms have accused the government of unspeakable negligence. They criticised what they described as the administration's 'anyhow-ness' pointing out that despite traveling with a large entourage, no official was available to man the booth.

One critic noted: "This is incompetence that follows the President abroad. After this jamboree, who will follow up to ensure that Nigeria actually benefits from TICAD9? When we asked them to appoint ambassadors, they went ahead and appointed KWAM 1…"The ugly incident has fueled debate in the media with many Nigerians questioning accountability and the effectiveness of the country's participation in high-level international events. But curiously, the government's reaction to criticism of empty booth, absence of delegation at Japan Summit was quite confounding and poorly coordinated. Ministry of Foreign Affairs said contrary to claims made by the participant at TICAD9, Nigeria's booth had not yet been opened, barely a day to the end of the Summit. Yet another spokesperson noted that Nigeria didn't go there for the optics, insisting that Nigeria didn't go there for the trade exhibition in a pavilion.

Nigerian officials post claimed: "Contrary to a tweet made by a participant at TICAD, the Nigerian Booth at #TICAD9 has not yet been opened. The booth will be officially inaugurated on Thursday, 21st August 2025, after which it will become fully operational and serve the delegates of TICAD".

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded to the criticism, stating that the booth had not yet been officially inaugurated and would be fully operational after the opening ceremony. Presidential spokesperson Bayo Onanuga clarified that Nigeria's official delegation was focused on strategic discussions, not trade exhibitions. He emphasised that the country's presence at TICAD9 aimed to foster bilateral and multilateral partnerships, stimulating economic growth and development.

And so as Nigeria's uncoordinated response to reports of an empty pavilion at the (TICAD-9) has sparked widespread criticism, re-echoing concerns about the country's diplomatic effectiveness, the controversy coincides with the ongoing debate about Nigeria's failure to post ambassadors to foreign missions for two years after recalling them.

Here is the thing, it is now clear that the absence of ambassadors in foreign missions for two years has raised concerns about Nigeria's diplomatic relations and economic growth. Some of the implications include: Diplomatic Gap: The lack of ambassadors has resulted in a significant diplomatic gap, affecting Nigeria's ability to engage in high-level diplomatic discussions and negotiate meaningful trade agreements. Economic Losses: Many Nigerian companies rely on our embassies to navigate foreign markets and attract investment. Without ambassadors, this support is slowed down, reducing opportunities for economic growth and international business expansion. National Security Risks: Ambassadors play a key role in intelligence sharing, joint operations, and rapid crisis response. Without them, Nigeria may be cut off from vital global security networks.

The empty pavilion in Tokyo highlights the reproachful challenges Nigeria faces in its diplomatic efforts, particularly with the inexplicable absence of ambassadors in foreign missions. The government must address these concerns and ensure effective coordination among agencies to promote Nigeria's interests abroad. By doing so, Nigeria can strengthen its diplomatic relations, attract foreign investment, and promote economic growth.

Nigeria's ambassadorial crisis has been strangely ongoing for nearly two years, with the government yet to appoint new envoys to represent the country abroad. In September 2023, President Bola Tinubu recalled all Nigerian ambassadors, citing the need for a fresh start. However, the delay in appointing new ambassadors has raised serious questions and concerns about what the country's interest is at the moment. There have been so many promises unfulfilled in this regard. What is worse, so many fake lists have appeared on the social media networks.

The delay in appointing new ambassadors has been attributed to various factors, including financial constraints: The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yusuf Tuggar, once cited financial and economic challenges being faced by the current administration as a reason for the delay. Government priorities have also been implicated, in this regard. There is a point that the government may be prioritising domestic economic reforms over foreign policy considerations, leading to a delay in appointing new ambassadors. This claim too has been incredible as domestic policies have been crushing even as a former finance minister who now serves as chief executive of the WTO, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala recently noted that government has indeed stabilised the economy.

Impact on Nigerians Abroad

The absence of ambassadors has also affected Nigerians living abroad, who face administrative challenges and difficulties in accessing essential services. Some of the issues Nigerians in the diaspora face include: travel difficulties. Without ambassadors, Nigerians may face challenges in obtaining travel documents, emergency assistance, and other essential services, some of which have dominated social media space in recent time.

There may be financial distress too to diplomats serving abroad without organic diplomatic heads at the Missions. There have been reports that foreign service officers are being owed salaries already, leading to financial difficulties in meeting family and social obligations.

The TICAD-9 crisis has now brought to the fore why President Tinubu should expedite nomination of new ambassadors to address the diplomatic vacuum and protect Nigeria's interests abroad. Although the Nigerian government has attributed the delay to financial constraints and procedural issues, however, experts have argued that these reasons are unconvincing, given the country's significant budget allocation for foreign missions. The lack of ambassadorial appointments therefore suggests a disconnect between budget planning and diplomatic priorities.

For instance, a Nigerian Ambassador to the United States could have played a crucial role in negotiating with US authorities to ease visa restrictions, promoting better understanding, and advocating for Nigeria's interests. The absence of a Nigerian ambassador in the US has left a void in diplomatic representation, hindering the country's ability to effectively address these critical issues. Besides, all the verbal darts that a Nigeria-born British politician, Olukemi Badenoch who has served as a Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Conservative Party in the U.K has been hurling on Nigeria from the United Kingdom should have been dealt with from the source if Nigeria had had a High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. That is one more reason the Nigerian government must prioritise appointing qualified Ambassadors to the United States, United Kingdom and other global powerhouses to protect and promote the country's interests, particularly regarding visa policies and bilateral relations.

Meanwhile, whatever happened to us in Tokyo this week could have been better managed if the president's men had allowed a properly coordinated information management. It was a diplomatic impasse that the Foreign Affairs Ministry and the presidential communication team should have been allowed to manage and control the damage professionally.

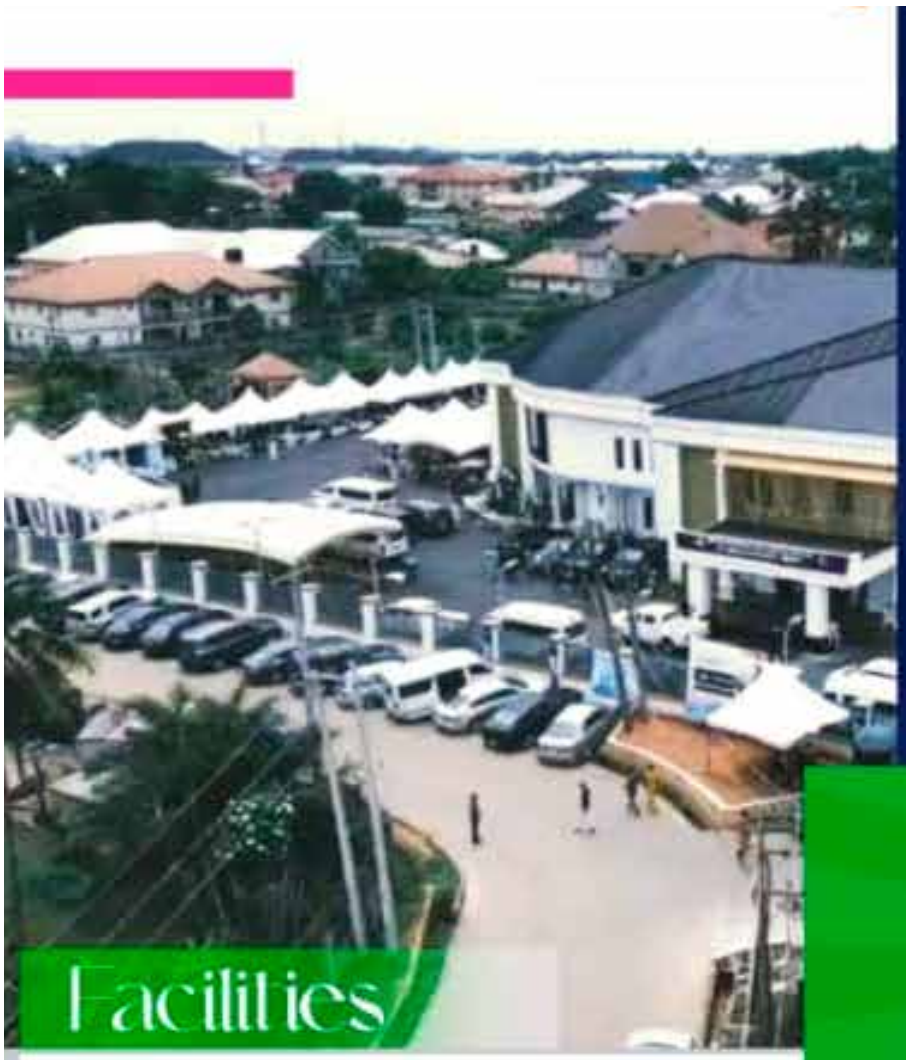
The role played by another presidential 'spokesman' Otega (TheTiger) Ogra

Has complicated the damage control mechanism of the president's men. He claimed in the controversy:

"I feel compelled to set the record straight regarding Nigeria's so-called booth at TICAD, which has become the subject of some unfortunate commentary. The space in question is not a conventional national pavilion. It is set out as part of the designated spillover area typically used by delegates without access to the main auditorium to follow proceedings or engage informally.

These rooms can often be used as workspaces, quiet zones, or hubs for side meetings or as some countries have done, converted to National pavilions. They are not required to be continuously manned or styled as permanent showcases. Any Nigerian delegate can use the space at any time to work, provide support for official activity, or showcase material…Now to the heart of the issue. Nigeria is not in Japan for optics. We do not need to mimic others to prove our relevance. Visibility is not the only metric. Value is.While some chase optics, Nigerian officials have been working deliberately, consistently, and with focus…"This claim contradicted what the Foreign Affairs Minister and Mr.Bayo Onanuga claimed. This isn't good for the optics they all sought too.

All told, President Tinubu should not delay the list of ambassadorial nominees a day longer than necessary. The list of competent nominees should be filed to the National Assembly today to avoid the reproachful discussions of our image in global context.



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Many Nollywood actresses climbed to the top with their bodies - Actress Ola Iberu

Nigeria's film industry popularly referred to as Nollywood, without bias or sentiment is awash with beautiful and sexy ladies. For some, their belief is that beauty is paramount than brain, for any lady to be successful in the make-believe profession. Actress Samuel Olanrewaju Tope aka (Ola Samuel, Ola Iberu), also agrees with the notion that most established actresses are not talented, rather they slept their way to the top. The with The Daily Monitor's Society Editor, AJIBADE ALABI on this sundry issues. Excerpts:



How would you describe yourself?

My name is Samuel Olanrewaju Tope. But I am popularly called Ola Samuel or Ola Iberu, some people even call me Amope Olounje. I am an actress and also an ambassador of so many companies. I am a mother of two boys. I am always happy for the wonderful boys God gave me. I have been in the industry for close to 20 years. It is a work that I have interest in and have been giving me joy.

How would you describe your growing up, were you born with a silver spoon?

I wouldn't say I was born with or without silver spoons. All I know is that I enjoyed myself while growing up and even till now. The reason being that our family never lacked anything good. My parents were up to the task in taking care of me and my siblings, so we lacked nothing whatsoever while growing up.

I am sure you will like to say something about your love life?

You missed it, in fact my love life is no go area. I don't discuss my love life on the social media or with journalist during interview…

(Cuts in) One thing with you actresses is , you will not like to discuss your relationship but at the end it would be exposed. Why is that?

Well, I can't talk on behalf of anyone or defend anybody. Personally, I don't discuss my love life on the pages of newspapers or celebrate it on social media. I am somebody who likes privacy and I believe love life should be private and not what should be a topic of discussion in public or during interview with journalists, either on social media or newspapers.

But some of your colleagues do flaunt their relationships?

That is for them. For me, I don't like it: so I keep my relationship or love life out of press interviews or social media. Even at then, I don't want to involve myself in any relationship for now. I want to face my career and my children squarely.

If you must hear, men are not worth dying for. I wouldn't say more than that. So, I don't really want to talk about my relationship. Let me satisfy your question for now. I don't have any serious relationship. If God wishes, I will go into relationship.

Take us through your journey in the movie industry?

I started my movie career with Baba Suwe Theatre Group School. That is Babatunde Omidina, may his soul continue to rest in peace. I stayed at least 10 years with him, learning the ropes of acting. I must say this, while with him; he never did well for me. You see, anytime we face challenges while with him, he ignored us and never came to our aid. I am using we as a plural because we were many under him learning the ropes.

He wasn't good to us. I am not saying this because he is dead. No. Even while he was alive, I do tell him whenever we meet on location. But we did not leave his group, we held on because of the love and passion we have for the industry and we thank God, for his mercies. Before you knew it, I was through with him as an apprentice.

After leaving his group, I started doing production on my own. My first production was in 2008. Though I have done one before that time, that was in 2006, but I don't like to count it as part of my production

Why?

I don't just want it to be mentioned as my first movie. The one I did in 2008 was titled " Tanimola" and it was directed by Bayo Tijani, the film was well embraced by everybody. I also produced " My Love, My Career" "Amope Olounje" " Igberaga ' " Ola Iberu" " Torera" " Ako Igbin". My latest one which I must say is a hit is titled " Omo Elewon" and was directed by Austin, though there was a controversy on who should direct it, but I stood my ground. It was marketed by Yoruba Plus and it sold-out. But you know this our work, if you don't do what others are doing you might not get to the top or popular as them.

What is that thing that your colleagues are doing to get to the top that you can't do?

Many dirty things. Like doing hookups, carrying sugar daddies. Or you think all those actresses that are claiming big girls or leaving big did not go through sugar daddies or not sleep their way to the top?

I don't know until you tell me or tell our readers…

Yes, I will tell you. Most actresses slept their way to the top. What I am saying is that most of them are not good or talented as they portray in films. They get to the top through their body.

I can tell you for free, most of the ladies parading themselves as actresses are just fortunate because they used their bodies to get roles. I can personally tell you that I used my talents to acquire all I have. I opened my house last year September, I am using a good car and all are through my sweat. Not all my female colleagues can proudly say that

What is your take on the current state of filmmaking in Nigerian?

Is good because we have really improved, though there is still room for improvement. The Nollywood industry has done extremely well especially in terms of contents. Now, we have many films in cinemas and I believe we are still learning everyday with invasion of good technology

How do you handle male admirers, especially those who come in the name of being a fan?

I handle them with maturity. I do make them feel loved and wanted. It is because of them that we are doing what we are doing, so we have to be careful with them and not to be rude to them.

I had an encounter with a man who have been watching my films. Unknown to me when I met him in an event, I was nice and good to him. It was while I was leaving the party that he approached me, he told me that he has been watching my movies and that he loved the way I do act. He said, he thought I will be arrogant but he was surprised with my humility. That is me for you. I don't put the tag of celebrity on my head.

Are you into any caucus in the industry?

See, I don't belong to any caucus. I am myself. I don't have friends in the industry, I am a lone ranger, I do my things the way I want it. I report to no one. So I don't belong to any caucus

Was there any love relationship between you and Austin?

No. We are just a professional colleague. Austin is someone I respect a lot.

Do you see yourself as being sexy and intelligent than some of your colleagues in the industry?

Nobody can lay claim to be superior or inferior to his or her colleagues. I am special in my own way and adorable with the way God created me. Yes. I can say it I am sexy and intelligent than some of my colleagues in the movie industry and it's vice versa

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Senator Nwoko commissions solar-powered boreholes in Umunede, Idumuje Ugboko

The people of Idumuje Ugboko, in Aniocha North and Umunede, in Ika North East Local Government Area of Delta State have every reason to be rejoice following the commissioning of a solar-powered borehole in each of the communities by Senator Ned Nwoko, representing the Delta North senatorial district in the National Assembly.

The Umunede scheme will serve residents of Idumu Isiokwe, Idumu Oroh, Egwuechime, Umu Obi, and New Road.

The initiative was a clear demonstration of the Senator's commitment to delivering clean and safe water to residents who had long struggled with water scarcity.

The commissioning ceremonies, marked by vibrant dances from local women and heartfelt praises from community leaders, underscored the transformative impact of the Senator's initiative and his passion for the well-being of his constituents.

For years, residents of both communities faced severe challenges accessing potable water, which left them with the option of traveling long distances—up to 9 kilometers to Mbiri in the case of Umunede—to fetch water for domestic use.

"It has not been easy for us to get water over the years. I am here to appreciate Senator Nwoko for providing clean water for us", said an Indigene of Umunede, Miss Augusta Agwumaro.

A community leader and Akinuwa of Umunede kingdom, Chief Amos Onyeagwu, also expressed his gratitude, saying, "Water is life. Our problem has been water over the years. Today, water is now here with us through the efforts of our distinguished Senator. Our wish is that God will always remember him for good".

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief of Staff to Senator Ned Nwoko, Dr. Michael Nwoko, emphasized the significance of the project, noting, "The basic commodity that should be provided for people is water. It's quite unfortunate that we live in a society where there has been acute scarcity of water, common in Delta North.

"Senator Nwoko thought it wise to facilitate and fully attract this project under the 2024 appropriation bill of the Federal Government".

The project was executed by the Benin-Owena River Basin Development Authority (BORBDA), with local indigenes trained to manage and maintain the systems for long-term sustainability.

Senator Nwoko has also championed the near-completion of the Ogwashi-Uku Dam, now 80% finished, and secured funding for the Aniofu Dam in Aniocha North, both aimed at providing comprehensive water solutions to the people of Delta North.

We are massively mobilising for President Tinubu in Chicago, USA - Hon. Olawale Fatai

BY ORJI ONYEKWERE

A former Deputy Leader of Ifelodun LCDA, Hon Mutiu Olawale has said that his team and other well-meaning Nigerians and friends of President Bola Tinubu living in Chicago, are doing everything possible to mobilise massive support for the President come 2027 presidential election.

Hon Fatai who is currently based in Chicago, USA, where President Tinubu lived and attended University said, the President is doing well with his economic programmes and he needs more time and all the encouragement to finish the projects he has started.

He added that the testimony of Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the DG, World Trade Organisation and other international bodies is a confirmation to President Tinubu's effort at stabilising the economy

According to him, "You can affirm the recent testimony of former coordinating Minister of the Economy and Director General of World Trade Organisation, Dr Ngozi Okonjo Iweala. She passed a vote of confidence on the economic reforms of the government, saying that the President has stabilized the Nigerian economy and that his reforms are in the right directions".

He said with these achievements so far, he and other supporters are mobilising people in diaspora, especially those living in Chicago, USA, towards a successful election for the President come 2027.

"The number one citizen of Nigeria, our leader and President of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, was a resident in Chicago, his friends and acquaintances are still here in Chicago.

"He is a product of Chicago, so we will always support him. At the last general election, we created a group, a whatsapp group here in Chicago and we strongly supported him. We campaigned and did rallies here in Chicago and we held meetings also.

"Presently, we have started the 2027 campaigns for him and we have to relate back to our people back home too. Very soon, back home, they will be hearing from us on the 2027 election.

Benue Assembly suspends deputy chief whip, 3 other members



The Benue State House of Assembly, presided over by its Speaker, Hyacinth Dajoh, has suspended four members, including the Deputy Chief Whip, Mr Alfred Berger (APC/Makurdi North), for three months for attempting to cause chaos in the house.

The other suspended members were Mr Shimawua Emmanuel (APC/Tiev), Mr Cyril Ikong (APC/Oju II) and Mr Abu Umoru (PDP/Apa).

The suspension followed a motion moved by the Majority Leader, Mr Saater Tiseer (APC/Mbagwa), during plenary on Friday in Makurdi.

Tiseer enjoined the house to suspend them for six months for attempting to cause chaos in the assembly.

The majority leader disclosed that the 10th Benue Assembly, like any other legislature, was a hallowed assembly of honourable members, whose words were their bonds.

He recalled that on Wednesday, Aug. 20, the house, in the spirit of unity, passed a vote of confidence on its leadership as well as Gov. Hyacinth Alia's administration.

Tiseer said that he was worried that barely three days after the house adopted resolutions on the matter, Berger and three others went behind to mobilise other members to cause chaos in the house.

The majority leader stated that the actions of the suspended members were inimical to the peaceful co-existence of the house and should not be tolerated.

He emphasised that the house condemned in the strongest terms the dishonourable actions of Berger and his cohorts.

Tiseer recommended that the house suspend the members for indulging in dishonourable actions capable of casting aspersions and causing acrimony in the house.

The motion was seconded by Mr Elias Audu (APC/Gwer East), saying that their actions were condemnable.

Audu further encouraged his colleagues not to allow non-state actors to use them, disclosing that the non-state actors had been intimidating the speaker and the house leadership.

Contributing, Mr Bemdoo Ipusu (APC/Katsina-Ala) said that he felt pained that a member who was a leader in the house would indulge in actions capable of jeopardising the peace and unity of the house.

The speaker, in his ruling, suspended the deputy chief whip and the three others for three months.

Dajoh further announced the dissolution of all committees and appointed Mr Elias Audu as the Chairman of the Information Committee.

He also appointed Mr Douglas Akya (APC/Makurdi South) as the new Deputy Chief Whip and Mr Kennedy Angbo (APC/Otukpo-Akpa) as the new Deputy Majority Leader.

CVR: INEC, LG chairman urge massive participation in Delta community

BY NOSA AKENZUA, ASABA

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in collaboration with Ughelli North Local Government Area on Thursday, August 21, 2025, officially launched the Continuous Voters Registration (CVR) exercise at the Council Secretariat Hall.

The exercise, which commenced online on August 18, 2025, with the in-person component starting August 25, 2025, is designed to capture eligible Nigerian citizens who have attained the age of 18 and provide opportunities for existing voters to update their registration details.

Speaking at the stakeholders' meeting, the Executive Chairman of Ughelli North LGA, Olorogun (Barr.) Jaro Movudu Egbo KSC, who was ably represented by the council Head of Personnel Management Chief(Mrs) Mary I. Oforgbo emphasized the critical importance of the exercise in strengthening democracy. "The voter's card is not just a piece of plastic, it is the key to choosing leaders who will define our tomorrow," Egbo stated.

Mr Samuel Osolease INEC Electoral Officer for Ughelli North revealed that the area currently has 223,083 registered voters, representing 6.92% of Delta State's total 3,221,697 registered voters - the highest number in the state. However, a significant challenge remains as 73 polling units across eight wards have fewer than 50 registered voters each.

"This could lead to the possibility of shutting down such under-populated polling units," the Electoral Officer warned, noting that the CVR exercise provides an opportunity for residents to register in these areas to meet the required threshold.

Regarding Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs) collection, statistics show that out of 223,083 registered voters in Ughelli North, 202,239 voters (90.66%) have collected their PVCs, leaving 20,844 (9.34%) uncollected. The commission has extended the PVC collection period to encourage more voters to claim their cards.

The Electoral Officer stressed that the CVR exercise is exclusively for Nigerian citizens, warning that it is illegal for foreigners to register and constitutes a criminal offense punishable by law. "Anyone indulged in aiding the registration of non-citizens will be handed over to security agencies for prosecution," he stated.

The exercise caters to several categories of citizens including new eligible voters, those who could not register in previous exercises, citizens whose names were not found on the register, and registered voters seeking to transfer to new polling units closer to their residence.

The high point of the event was an interactive session featuring various stakeholders including Principles officer of the LG, representatives of traditional rulers, security agencies, president generals, market leaders, political parties, youth leaders, religious leaders, and road transport union representatives and host of others.

Taraba: INEC presents Certificate of Return to APC's Shittu of Karim I constituency

BY OKERAFOR ATHANATIUS

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has presented a Certificate of Return to the winner of the Karim I State constituency bye-election in Taraba state.

Presenting the Certificate of Return to the All Progressives Congress (APC) candidate, Hon Abner Shittu this Friday at INEC headquarters in Jalingo, the Resident Electoral Commissioner INEC in Taraba State, Alh. Umar Mukhtar Gajiram said the election held Saturday, 16th August 2025 at Karim I of Karim Lamido Local Government Area of the State was conducted peacefully and in accordance with the law.

"At the end of the collation he stressed, the APC candidate, Mr. Shittu scored the highest votes and was returned as the winner.

Today, in fulfilment of the mandate, the Commission is presenting to him the Certificate of Return as evidence reposed in him by his Constituents", he said.

Alh. Gajiram further commended the electorates, other political parties, INEC staff, observers, the media for their various roles in making sure that the process was conducted smoothly and no voter was disenfranchised.

While congratulating Hon. Shittu, Alh. Gajiram said, "the Certificate of Return he's collecting today represents the trust the people of Karim have in him and urged him to serve them with the modest commitment and humility.

Responding, Hon. Abner Shittu who described his victory as victory for Karim I State constituency added that the mandate given to him was built on a social contract.

Mohbad: Naira Marley Opens Up on Rapper's Arrest by NDLEA, Their Money Issues

It's been almost two years since the shocking death of rapper Mohbad, yet new twists continue to emerge. This time, it is from his former record label boss, Naira Marley, who has decided to revisit a key incident that many Nigerians point to as the beginning of Mohbad's downward spiral

He talked about Mohbad's arrest by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in February 2022.

In a tell-it-all video posted on his YouTube channel, the Marlian Music boss stated that he was not in Nigeria when the NDLEA incident happened.

According to him, he was in Sweden when officers stormed his associates, picking up Zinoleesky, Subomi, and eventually Mohbad. He narrated how Mohbad got into a physical altercation with NDLEA operatives before being taken into custody. He stated: "On February 24, 2022, the NDLEA incident happened. I was in Sweden that day. They took Zino and Subomi. Mohbad eventually joined them, had a physical altercation with the officers, and they took him along." The singer explained that after Mohbad was released, he went live on Instagram, allegedly under duress, during a panic attack.

It was during this episode that Mohbad accused him and others of endangering his life. Naira Marley further claimed that after rushing back to Nigeria, he visited Mohbad in the hospital. According to him, Mohbad's behavior raised eyebrows. He stated: "At the hospital, I saw Wunmi, Adura, and Bode, Mohbad's cousin. I then heard that Wunmi was the last person in the room with him before he ran out and went live."

Marley alleged that when he questioned Wunmi, she was incoherent, and others present suggested she was indeed with Mohbad moments before his panic attack. Despite the tension, Marley said he covered Mohbad's hospital bills, medications, and CT scan. "I never cheated him" - Naira Marley Shifting attention to money matters, Marley dismissed claims that he exploited the late rapper financially. He explained that he personally encouraged Mohbad to open a bank account in his own name, rather than relying on one linked to his in-law.

How Customs Partners NDLEA To Confront Economic, Security Threats In FOU Zone 'A'

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) have expressed determination to deepen cooperation in the South West axis of the country in the war against smuggling of contraband, unwholesome products and drug trafficking.

Both Agencies did not only identify the need for further collaboration National interest and that of the citizenry, noting that they have never been in competition but work together in the fight against criminals and economic saboteurs.

These assertions were made by the two government agencies during the handing over of 57 parcels of Cannabis Sativa intercepted by the operatives of the Federal Operations Unit Zone 'A' of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS).

This is coming on the heel of the smashing of syndicates that specialised in smuggling into the country contraband, other unwholesome goods including hard drugs and expired drugs by the operatives of the Federal Operations Unit (FOU) Zone 'A', of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS).

Customs Area Controller of the Unit, Comptroller Mohammed Shuaibu disclosed during a press briefing in Lagos last.

The seized goods include 4,068 bags of foreign parboiled rice of 50kg each, which is equivalent to seven trailer loads, 22 used (tokunbo) vehicles, including two Ashok Leyland drilling trucks, 485 jerry cans of 25 litres each of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) totaling 12,125 litres, 120 bales of used clothing; 57 parcels of Cannabis Sativa, 47 cartons of foreign poultry products and 770 jerry cans of 25 litres each of foreign vegetable oil.

The 8 containers with false or improperly declared items include 4x40ft containers marked MSKU-1629585 containing sacks of used shoes and canvas; MSKU- 0733723 containing auto spare parts, used tyres, and vehicles, TCNU-9441240 containing furniture; ACLU-9673721 containing spare parts, used tyres, and vehicles, 4x20ft containers marked TEMU-4596866 containing furniture, TCLU-3866419 also contining furniture; TCKU-3962096 containing furniture and TCKU-1497232 containing Pali bitters drinks.

The Customs boss said: "In line with this mandate, the Federal Operations Unit Zone 'A' has intensified surveillance and enforcement activities across the six states of the South-West geopolitical zone.

"Today, I am pleased to report significant breakthroughs achieved by our dedicated officers and operatives through intelligence-driven operations over the past three weeks. These efforts led to a total of seventy-six (76) interceptions of smuggled and contraband goods.

NDLEA arrests 27-year-old with N10m worth of cannabis in Kano



The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Kano Strategic Command, says it has arrested a 27-year-old suspect, Umar Adamu-Umar, in possession of 9 kilograms of Cannabis Sativa (Colorado) worth over N10 million.

This is contained in a statement issued on Saturday in Kano by the command's Public Relations Officer, Mr Sadiq Muhammad-Maigatari.

He said that the suspect, a resident of Fagge Local Government Area of Kano State, was arrested on August 6, along the Zaria–Kano Road by the operatives of the NDLEA attached to the Kiru Area Command of Kano.

According to him, the suspect was intercepted while conveying 19 parcels of the illicit substance from Lagos to Kano.

"The suspect confessed to being involved in the illegal drug trade and had been under surveillance by the command for some time," Muhammad-Maigatari said

He explained that the interception dealt a major financial blow to the trafficking network as it denied traffickers substantial revenue, disrupted their supply chain and reduced funds available for further criminal activities

"Removing this quantity from circulation also helps protect vulnerable communities from the social and economic harms associated with the trade in narcotics," he added.

The spokesperson said the Strategic Command under the leadership of Mr Abubakar Idris-Ahmad would intensify patrols and intelligence-led operations to curb drug trafficking in the state. (NAN)

NDLEA arrests 65 suspects in Abia, 7 preosecuted, convicted

The new Abia State Commandant of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, Joseph Owoputi has disclosed that sixty five suspects were arrested by the Command between June and August 2025 with about 82 kilo gram of substances seized from them.

Owoputi who said his Command secured seven convictions within the period under review, disclosed twelve of the arrested suspects are currently being prosecuted.

He stated this on Wednesday, when he led a team of officials from his Command visit Abia State Governor, Alex Otti.

The new NDLEA Commandant also said thirty eight other individuals are undergoing counselling and rehabilitation in the Command's facility.

Owoputi assured the Abia Governor that he would consolidate on the achievements recorded by his predecessor and solicited the assistance of the state government in providing them with operational vehicles for more efficient performance.

He further thanked the Abia Governor for the support he extended to the immediate past NDLEA Commandant in Abia, which he said, assisted the agency in the fight against drugs abuse and illicit drug transactions.

Responding to the new Abia NDLEA boss' appeal, Governor Alex Otti approved two new Hilux vans for the agency and directed that NDLEA'S abandoned vehicles should be retrieved and fixed by the Abia State government.

Otti who called for tougher legislation against drug abuse and illicit drug dealers in Nigeria, lamented that drug abuse is destroying many young persons, including students.

NDLEA Pays Courtesy Visit, Homage To Ogba Monarch, Seeks Support Against Drug Peddling



The new National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Ojodu-Berger Area Command office has expressed a desire to partner with the people of Ogba kingdom to sensitise and extend the fight against drug peddling and addiction to the community.

Deputy Commander Adejumo Gbenga Ayo, the new Area Commander of the Ojodu-Berger Command of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), stated as he led a team of four officers of the agency on a courtesy visit and homage to Oba (Surveyor) Egbeyemi Latif Oladimeji, Madarikan I of Ogba kingdom, in his palace in Agege.

DCN Adejumo Gbenga was accompanied on the visit by Deputy Area Commander, ACN Julius Izang; ACN Stella Ameachi; DSN Ogunseye Alao and ASN Sanusi Rebecca.

The Area Commander congratulated Oba Egbeyemi on his first anniversary on the throne and the celebration of the 2025 Isese day festival.

He said the Ojodu Berger new command was established to bring the sensitisation activities of the Agency closer to the grassroots to sensitise the communities around the kingdom on the danger associated with illicit drug peddling and abuse, saying it has become imperative to take the messages to churches, mosques, market places and within the communities.

"If we preach to them at homes, mosques, churches and marketplaces about the dangers inherent in drug abuse; if they refuse to change, we will go to the next level of enforcement that does not involve prosecution but correctional talks that will make them change and embrace a good life," he explained.

He warned those peddling drugs and using such a pedestal to make illicit money at the expense of innocent youths to desist henceforth, without waiting for the Agency to get hold of them

The Area Commander, who solicited the support of the monarch to enable the new command to go into full operation, pleaded that the Command needed an operational office accommodation to enable it to settle down and function well.

According to him, the Command was established about six weeks ago alongside others in Oshodi, Ibeju-Lekki and Ijora, saying the urgent need for an office has become important to retain the command from being moved elsewhere.

Responding, Oba Egbeyemi, acknowledging the challenges facing youths generally, pledged full support of the palace to the needs of the new command to enable it to swing into action.

D'Tigers' coach satisfied with outing despite loss



The Team Coach, D'Tigers, Nigeria's men's basketball team, Mohammed Abdulrahman, on Thursday expressed satisfaction in spite of his team loss to Senegal.

A sloopy performance would see Nigeria get crushed by Senegal, 91-75 and kicked out of the ongoing FIBA Afrobasket Championship in Angola in the quarterfinals.

Abdulrahman, in his post-match reactions after the defeat, said his team did not raise the game when it mattered most.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the clash, which was dominated by the Senegalese marked a sharp contrast to Nigeria's group-stage form.

D'Tigers had recorded three straight victories against Madagascar,Tunisia, and Cameroon in a flawless group stage encounters which pip them championship contender.

Their flawless start had raised hopes of a deep run, possibly replicating their historic 2015 AfroBasket triumph.

However, Senegal, technically superior on the night, secured their fifth consecutive semi-final berth, ending Nigeria's campaign.

Abdulrahman admitted his team fell short when it mattered most but praised the players for their fight, attitude, and the identity they are beginning to build.

"On a night we were supposed to bring out our A-game, we fell short. I'm not taking anything away from Senegal, they deserved the win.

"I am proud of how we played. We have an identity now and we will continue to build on it," Abdulrahman said.

In spite of the disappointment, Abdulrahman stressed that the tournament offered encouraging signs for the future.

D'Tigers closed their campaign with four games played three wins in the group stage before bowing out in the quarter-finals.

Nuno's future as Nottingham Forest boss uncertain



Nuno Espirito Santo's future as Nottingham Forest manager is uncertain after a breakdown in his relationship with owner Evangelos Marinakis.

Sources have told BBC Sport that Nuno's position is not completely safe despite last season's achievement of qualifying for Europe, and their win over Brentford in the first round of matches in this season's Premier League on Sunday.

The uncertainty, according to sources, has now stretched to the playing squad, who are said to be aware of the situation.

On Friday, 51-year-old Nuno said "where there's smoke, there's fire" amid rumours about his job.

"I always had a very good relationship with the owner - last season we were very close and spoke on a daily basis," Nuno said.

"This season it is not so well [between us] but I always believe that dialogue is important because my concern is the squad and the season we have ahead of us. Our relationship has changed and we are not as close."

When asked if it was good that his relationship with Evangelos Marinakis had changed, Nuno said: "No, it is not good. I think everybody at the club should be together but this is not the reality."

Forest have been active in the transfer market this summer, signing seven players - although they did sell winger Anthony Elanga to Newcastle for £55m.

But before last Sunday's 3-1 win over Brentford, Nuno outlined his transfer concerns.

"We have doubts, who is going to be [here], when are they [new signings] going to come? All these things create doubts," he said.

"Not only me but in the club. What we want is game-by-game to have as many options as possible. Europe will come after, and for sure it will be better, but for now until that happens it is a major concern.

"The owner is aware, the club is aware, everyone is aware. Everybody knows the reality. This is a lost chance that we had as a group to do it."

There have been suggestions that Nuno has not been fully involved in the club's recruitment this summer, which could be a factor in the deterioration of his relationship with Marinakis.

In May, Marinakis appeared to confront Nuno on the pitch after a 2-2 draw against Leicester at the City Ground.

Forest later said the incident was because of the owner's frustration that striker Taiwo Awoniyi had continued to play following an 88th-minute injury which subsequently required what the club described as "urgent" surgery.

The club said there was "no confrontation" and it was "fake news" to suggest otherwise.

Nuno was appointed Forest manager in December 2023 and successfully steered the club away from relegation that campaign, despite a four-point deduction for breaching profit and sustainability rules.

Tears to triumph as Eze nears Arsenal return

It is a scenario that happens to thousands of aspiring footballers around the world. Eberechi Eze, aged 13 and with tears in his eyes, was told he was not wanted at the club he dreamed of playing for - in his case, Arsenal.

For many of those young players, that rejection is the end of their football dream. Not, however, for the resilient Eze.

Via multiple failed trials before spells at Queens Park Rangers and Crystal Palace, the playmaker looks set to come home 14 years later - as an England international - in a £60m move.

"I know so many people who got released from one club, got released from Arsenal, and that was it - they stopped playing," he told BBC Sport in May - days before scoring the Palace winner in the FA Cup final against Manchester City in May.

"The fact I am in this position, I can only say 'God, thank you' because I could be anywhere doing anything."

Eze was at Arsenal, the club he supported, for four years from the age of nine.

"Arsenal was everything," he said. "Just to be play there, to go in with the Arsenal badge and be the kid who plays for Arsenal was special.

"Afterwards it became difficult. As a kid your identity is almost wrapped up in that. When you don't have it...

"I remember playing at Fulham in a game against Arsenal. Speaking to the academy director after the game I had tears ready to pour down my face.

"I remember he's talking to me and because of what Arsenal meant to me at the time... tears, that's it. But these are the things that shape who you are."

These words will be music to Arsenal fans' ears - especially as they look poised to snatch him from under the noses of Tottenham Hotspur.

Spurs had been close to signing him from Palace before the Gunners hijacked the move.

Eze grew up playing cage football around Greenwich with his two brothers - who are both footballers now.

Chimaechi Eze, 22, was released by the Crystal Palace academy this summer - and Ikechi Eze, 28, plays for non-league side Dartford.

"He's exactly how people see him on TV. Freedom, always smiling, laughing, a good character to be around" is how Chimaechi describes his older brother.

"When he's playing I don't think there's anything on his mind.

"Growing up where we're from it forces you to get good at football quickly, otherwise you're in trouble because bigger boys are around. If you're not good you have to go.

"My favourite football memory is at younger ages - me, Ikechi, Ebere going to the Rec or yellow cages to play football in the early morning and afternoon and coming back in the evening. Playing football and doing what we love.

"It would get to 9 or 10 o'clock and she [their mother] would have to send people to come and get us because we'd been playing out all day."

After playing football, the brothers would watch clips of footballers - including Ronaldinho and Arsenal legend Thierry Henry - to try to learn their skills.

Ikechi added: "When he was released by Arsenal he ended up very emotional. It showed his human side.

"By the time he was coming here [cages] he was already with academies.

"So the rare time he was allowed to come after a training session, you could tell he had something different from the other players we were kicking with."

But Eze has interests other than football too - and picked up £15,000 weeks before the FA Cup final by winning an online chess competition against other celebrity content creators and athletes.

Lisa Shaw, his teacher at Fossdene Primary School in Charlton, told the BBC: "He didn't neglect his studies. He was always near the top of the class for his learning.

"When I saw he'd won the chess tournament I thought 'well done' but I wasn't surprised. He was always very determined to do well."

She tells the story of him inviting children from his old school to watch Palace train.

"He sent a fleet of cars to pick them up. It was very generous," she says.

"The children look up to him. He has had a lot of setbacks in his career but he was resilient. That's why he's such a good role model."

After Arsenal, Eze spent two-and-a-half years at Fulham's academy before being released. Then a trial at Reading resulted in a familiar sinking feeling.

Having been told by Millwall he would not be handed a professional contract at the end of a two-year scholarship in 2016, Eze had more unsuccessful trials - with Bristol City and Sunderland.

"I was there [Sunderland] for a week," adds Eze.

"I remember getting home, lying on bunk beds with my brothers and praying: 'Please give me a pro contract, I know I can do it'.

"Then I got the news I hadn't got it. I remember the deflation."

His confidence was at an all-time low. It would have been easy for Eze to give up on his dream of becoming a professional footballer.

Isak saga 'lose-lose' but Howe wants striker back

Newcastle United manager Eddie Howe says he has not seen or spoken to striker Alexander Isak for a week and has described the saga as a "lose-lose situation".

The Sweden forward wants to join Liverpool but a £110m bid was rejected by Newcastle earlier this month.

That led to the 25-year-old releasing a statement this week saying Newcastle had broken promises made to him.

Isak believed he would be allowed to leave if a big club came in for him and offered an appropriate fee - but Newcastle denied that was the case in a statement in response.

The player is now training apart from the first team and missed Newcastle's opening game of the new Premier League season. He will not feature when Newcastle face Liverpool on Monday.

Howe said he has "no way of knowing" what will happen with the former Real Sociedad striker before the transfer window closes on 1 September.

"I haven't seen him this week but when I see him we speak as normal, there are no issues there," said Howe.

"It's a difficult situation from both sides and it's far from ideal for both parties.

"When we bump in to each we speak but as I say I've not seen him this week as he's training later on and detached from the group. We will catch up at some stage and hopefully speak soon."

Newcastle have struggled to sign a striker this summer after seeing Hugo Ekitike, Benjamin Sesko and Joao Pedro all go elsewhere.

Newcastle had a £40m bid rejected for Brentford star Yoane Wissa this week while Wolves are adamant that Jorgen Stand Larsen is not for sale.

Man City defender Dias signs deal to 2029

Manchester City defender Ruben Dias has signed a two-year contract extension.

The 28-year-old's previous deal had been set to expire in 2027 but his new deal will take him to 2029, with the option of a further 12 months.

The Portugal international joined City from Benfica for a fee of £65m in 2020 and was named Premier League player of the year at the end of his first season.

The defender has helped City to four league titles, the Champions League, the EFL Cup and the FA Cup during his five years at Etihad Stadium.

"I am incredibly happy today," said Dias.

"I love Manchester - it is my home now - and I love the Manchester City fans.

"When I think about the trophies we have won and the way we have played our football during my time here, I couldn't imagine playing anywhere else."

Hugo Viana, City's director of football, said Dias is "a leader in the dressing room and on the pitch".

The club are likely to switch their attention to the futures of John Stones and Bernardo Silva in the coming months as both have one year left on their deals, while Ilkay Gundogan and Ederson both have less than 12 months remaining on their contracts.

Spanish midfielder Rodri, England playmaker Phil Foden, Swiss defender Manuel Akanji and Dutch centre-back Nathan Ake all have two years to run on their deals. Defender Rico Lewis is close to signing a new five-year deal.

Man Utd set for busy time before window closes

Manchester United have not ruled out making more signings before the transfer window closes – but it would need players to be sold.

What seems certain to be a busy 10 days before the deadline closes on 1 September has taken another twist with confirmation there has been contact between United and Belgian club Royal Antwerp around goalkeeper Senne Lammens.

The 23-year-old has been described as ideal for the Premier League by fellow countryman and current Real Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois.

However, with veteran England man Tom Heaton having signed a one-year deal this summer, the feeling is United would not bring in another goalkeeper without someone leaving.

Andre Onana's former club Inter Milan seem to be in the hunt for a goalkeeper but Old Trafford insiders are presently sticking to their belief that Onana will not be moving this summer and while Altay Bayindir would be the obvious man to move even though he started the Premier League defeat to Arsenal last week, nothing is imminent around the Turkey international either.

It just adds to the sense of uncertainty given four members of Amorim's 'bomb squad' also remain at the club.

The belief remains that Alejandro Garnacho will eventually join Chelsea, while Real Betis are keen to bring Antony back to Real Betis.

Enyimba FC offers reasons for mass exit of players



Enyimba International FC Sporting Director, Ifeanyi Ekwueme, says the mass exit of players from the club is a calculated move to build a formidable squad for the new season.

The club cleared out 20 players from the 2024/2025 Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL) season and has since embarked on recruiting new talents.

ueme told newsmen on Saturday in Aba that the management was dissatisfied with the club's performance last season, and was determined to strengthen the team ahead of the forthcoming campaign.

He explained that the departure of 20 players was not due to any internal crisis but part of the management's master plan to restore the club to its glory days.

"The mass release not because of crisis as people and even the club supporters thought, but a rebuilding process to restore the club championship pedigree.

"This move is not about losing players but upgrading the squad and the focus is to bring in hungry, committed professionals who are ready to fight for the club badge.

"Enyimba, as Nigeria's biggest club, is determined to maintain the highest standards with several signings already being lined up.

"We wish to assure the supporters of commitment more competitive team heading into the new season," Ekwueme assured.

Katsina Football Academy celebrates 5 players signed by Katsina United

Katsina Football Academy on Friday, congratulated five of its players — Usman Abdullahi, Ahmad Nasir, Umar Yusuf, Abubakar Hassan, and Kabir Muhammed Kabir — on their recent signing by NPFL side Katsina United.

Management's congratulatory message is contained in a statement issued by the academy's Director, Shamsuddeen Ibrahim, on Friday in Katsina.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the five players are among the 12 recently signed by the senior clubs.

Ibrahim revealed that the development came at the time when their clubside was preparing for the Nigerian Premier Football League 2025/2026, season, set to begin on Friday (today) at different venues across the country.

He further congratulated the players for reaching another milestone in their football careers.

The director, while wishing the players success, also charged them to be good ambassadors while at the number one clubside in the state.

Similarly, he urged them to redouble their efforts and work harder as they were going to participate in the top league in the country.

Newcastle target Wissa back in Brentford training



Yoane Wissa has returned to training with the Brentford squad and the striker could face Crystal Palace this weekend, head coach Keith Andrews says.

The 28-year-old missed last weekend's Premier League opening-day defeat at Nottingham Forest as he had been training away from the squad after saying he wished to leave the club.

A second bid from Newcastle United worth up to £40m for the DR Congo forward was rejected this week.

Newcastle reopened talks with Brentford on Wednesday but sources have told BBC Sport that the latest bid of a £35m initial fee plus a further £5m in add-ons fell below the Bees' valuation.

Earlier this week, the DR Congo forward removed all association with the Bees from his Instagram account, but Andrews now says he has a "decision to make" over whether Wissa will be involved at Selhurst Park on Sunday.

"He's [Yoane Wissa] been training with the team," said Andrews.

"In terms of being involved this weekend I'll make a decision on the squad on Saturday. He's been part of the group this week."

Asked if Wissa will stay with the Bees beyond the transfer window, Andrews said: "He's a Brentford player right now. My stance around Yoane all along is that I don't want him to leave.

"I don't want to lose a player of that quality and that hasn't really changed throughout the whole episode. So hopefully he is here in the next 10 or 12 days. That is what I would like."

Wissa's 19 goals in last season's Premier League has attracted interest from clubs higher up the league, and Eddie Howe is looking at ways to improve his squad with Newcastle returning to the Champions League this term.

Brentford had previously rejected Newcastle's bid worth up to £30m.

BBC Sport were first to reveal that Wissa had flown home early from their pre-season camp in Portugal in July, after which he threatened not to play or train for the club again if they did not sanction his move to the north east of England.

Wissa expected a move to Newcastle to be agreed this week after Brentford completed a club-record deal of up to £42.5m for Dango Ouattara from Bournemouth.

Brentford have already lost another forward, Bryan Mbeumo, this summer to Manchester United.

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Sustaining successes against bandits and terrorists in Nigeria, By Jibrin Ibrahim



The core impediment against the successful suppression of terrorism and banditry has been insufficiencies in the capacity and capability of our armed and security forces to sustain a barrage of attacks that would finish the combatants. The first problem is that of numbers. Over the last two decades, the numbers of insurgents, terrorists and armed bandits in Nigeria have been growing astronomically, while the size of our security operatives has been growing rather modestly.

On 16 August, Nigeria's National Security Adviser (NSA), Nuhu Ribadu, announced that security services had captured two terrorist leaders who have been on the wanted list for a long time. They are Mahmud Muhammad Usman, a leader of the al-Qaida-linked faction, Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis Sudan, popularly known as Ansaru and his colleague, Mahmud al-Nigeri. The leader, Malam Mamuda, was described by the NSA as someone who had been trained in Libya between 2013 and 2015 under foreign jihadist instructors from Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria, with specialisation in weapons handling and the fabrication of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

The NSA said the arrest was "the most decisive blow against Ansaru" since its inception and it would open doors to more arrests, given the intelligence obtained. The two men have jointly spearheaded multiple attacks on civilians, security forces and critical national infrastructure. I join numerous Nigerians and the international community in congratulating our security forces for this victory.

It would be recalled that Ansaru emerged in 2012 as a breakaway splinter group from Boko Haram. The two sides had developed differences and disagreements over the targeting of civilians and the approach of the then leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Shekau in using mass-casualty violence against civilians and Muslims. Ansaru opted for a tactic of targeting Western and high-profile Nigerian objectives and on hostage-taking for leverage. They also developed close ties with al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which shaped its doctrine and operational tactics.

The capture of leading members of terrorist groups is always an important event but its success in degrading the ability of the group to continue its terrorist activities is always a function of the ability of the security agencies to follow up with more attacks that can prevent the group from recuperating and re-organising after the blow. Way back in 2016, security forces had arrested another leader of the group, Khalid al-Barnawi in Lokoja, Kogi State. It appeared at that time that the group had been decapitated and its activities ceased for some time but it was allowed to rebuild and reorganise. This has happened so many times.

The core impediment against the successful suppression of terrorism and banditry has been insufficiencies in the capacity and capability of our armed and security forces to sustain a barrage of attacks that would finish the combatants. The first problem is that of numbers. Over the last two decades, the numbers of insurgents, terrorists and armed bandits in Nigeria have been growing astronomically, while the size of our security operatives has been growing rather modestly. The numbers simply do not march. This insufficiency has to be addressed with the urgency that is required.

Maybe the greatest concern for all of us should be the concordant reports about the degraded arms, equipment and supplies of our troops. If the insurgents have been scoring more points than our armed forces for such a long time, it must be because they have developed a relative advantage vis-à-vis our troops and that problem too needs to be addressed. How many times have we seen reports about our troops being poorly armed in relation to the sophisticated weaponry regularly displayed by the enemy? In addition, it is often reported that our troops are poorly fed and their allowances not fully paid, which is a situation that is bound to negatively affect their morale. Successive governments have failed to adequately address this problem.

The problems we face go beyond the kinetic level. I am aware that winning the war is no easy matter. Asymmetrical warfare is very difficult to win because the terrorists are mobile and can hide and strike almost at will. Winning the war is virtually impossible if we are unable to address the conditions that led to the insurgency in the first place. Today, Nigeria finds itself in the frightening position of having the largest number of out-of-school children in the world. At the same time, we also have the largest number of poor people in the world, with the majority residing in the northern part of the country, which is the most affected. One key finding by poor Nigerians is that engaging in the war is a profitable venture. The outcome of this discovery has led to more fronts emerging from year to year. What was initially an insurgency in parts of the North-East has now spread to most parts of Northern Nigeria and beyond.

During the first phase of the Boko Haram insurgency, a serious effort aimed at developing and popularising counter-radicalising narratives could have stemmed the growth of the movement but that did not occur. The mass communication of the Boko Haram ideology was not stopped and it grew in strength. When Boko Haram started, many ulema criticised their religious ideology, while articulating robust theological refutations of their doctrine. If the State had provided significant support for such initiatives, their growth might have been stemmed a long time ago.

Maybe the most serious generator of violent extremism and bandit terrorism in Nigeria is the perception that Nigerians have developed about the governing class. Its members are accurately seen as being extremely corrupt, self-serving and completely disinterested in the progress of the nation. Many within the younger generation have come to see themselves as inheritors of the governing class and are copying its behaviour. They are adopting its culture of using violence to steal the people's resources, rape and assault women, and engage in the primitive accumulation of capital for its self-aggrandisement. This explains the trajectory taken of procuring arms and using them to impoverish the community and society for their selfish interests. If leaders will not work for the people and will continue to exploit and oppress them, they ignite the same behaviour in the young generation. The way forward is to have a national leadership that has integrity and works for the interest of the ordinary people; they can then breed a new leadership in their image. Don't ask me how.

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