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FROM THE ARCHIVE

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

FUBARA'S BROADCAST: 'The costliest peace is cheaper than the cheapest war'

Senator Ike Ekweremadu: Recalling a legacy of service, reform, and resilience, By Anselm Okolo KSM



Religion and politics – Bishop Akpabio and Chief Imam Bago, presiding

Senator Ike Ekweremadu: Recalling a legacy of service, reform, and resilience, By Anselm Okolo KSM

In the political evolution of Nigeria's Fourth Republic, few figures have left as indelible a mark as Senator Ike Ekweremadu. From his early days in public service to his prominent role in shaping Nigeria's constitutional landscape, Ekweremadu's journey has been one of dedication to democratic principles, a deep commitment to public welfare, and a resilient drive to uplift his people.

For two decades, he served as the Senator representing Enugu West Senatorial District, and for twelve of those years, he held the influential office of Deputy President of the Nigerian Senate—a rare political longevity that speaks not only to his political acumen but also to the trust reposed in him by his constituents and colleagues alike.

● A steward of constitutional reform

Perhaps his most enduring legacy lies in his extensive work on Nigeria's constitutional development.

As Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution, Senator Ekweremadu led critical national dialogues and legislative processes that addressed some of the foundational questions of Nigeria's federal structure. Under his leadership, constitutional amendment processes began to assume a more inclusive and transparent character.

His push for true federalism, state police, decentralized governance, and electoral reform positioned him as a thoughtful statesman with a forward-looking vision for Nigeria. He understood that a functional and fair constitution was central to national unity, economic development, and political stability. These reform efforts, while often encountering institutional resistance, created vital national conversations and incremental progress in recalibrating the Nigerian federation.

His innovative introduction of a piecemeal approach to the components of the proposed



amendments in the Constitution, to prevent a repeat of the situation where, for just one item—the contentious issue of autonomy for State Houses of Assembly—ironically vetoed by some Speakers of the State Assemblies, everything was thought to be proceeding smoothly with his pioneering and radical proposals for amendments to the 1999 Constitution, remains a template for addressing the issue of constitutional amendments even today.

● Champion of grassroots development

Beyond Abuja's chambers, Ekweremadu was a relentless advocate for grassroots development, especially in Enugu State. In his native Mpu community in Aninri LGA, and across Enugu West, he spearheaded numerous development projects—ranging from road construction to educational infrastructure, rural electrification, water projects, and health initiatives.

Through his Ikeoha Foundation, he provided scholarships to hundreds of indigent students across Nigeria, supported widows and rural women through skill acquisition programmes, and created access to micro-credit for small-scale entrepreneurs. These efforts were not mere token gestures; they were sustained interventions that empowered communities and uplifted lives, helping many youngsters to become graduates in diverse fields of study.

NLC demands list of beneficiaries of N330bn cash transfer

● Architect of Enugu West's political transformation

Under his political stewardship, Enugu West transformed from a peripheral district to a centre of influence within Enugu State and the South-east at large. Ekweremadu nurtured a generation of leaders, promoted merit-based representation, and helped position his senatorial district as a vital player in both state and national politics.

His unique brand of inclusive politics—bridging ethnic, religious, and generational divides—earned him widespread respect. Many who emerged under his political mentorship have gone on to serve in critical public offices, carrying forward the values of service and competence.

● Trials, lessons, and the measure of a man

No public life, however, is without its trials. In 2022, Senator Ekweremadu and his family were thrust into a painful legal ordeal in the United Kingdom, culminating in a conviction related to organ trafficking. It was a deeply human story—one of a father's desperation to save his ailing daughter, and one that sparked debate across Nigeria and beyond.

While the courts rendered their judgement, many Nigerians saw in the episode a reminder of the imperfections of even the most revered public servants. Yet even in the face of personal hardship and public scrutiny, Ekweremadu maintained a dignified silence, and his years of service continued to draw empathy and reflection from citizens who remembered his numerous sacrifices.

This chapter, however sobering, does not erase the years of dedicated service he rendered to the nation. Rather, it adds a human layer to a man who, like all who strive in the public eye, navigated the complex terrain of leadership, personal responsibility, and family loyalty.

● A Legacy Beyond the Senate

As Nigeria continues to grapple with the demands of reform, the legacy of Ike Ekweremadu remains a point of reference. His work on constitutional amendments laid the groundwork for ongoing debates around decentralization and governance. His humanitarian efforts continue to resonate in communities he touched. And his story, in both triumph and trial, serves as a profound lesson in public service, perseverance, and the burdens of leadership.

History will remember Senator Ike Ekweremadu not merely for the offices he held, but for the values he espoused: service without noise, reform without fear, and compassion without borders. In a country often yearning for visionary leadership, his story offers both a mirror and a map—showing us where we've been, and where we might yet go.

Religion and politics – Bishop Akpabio and Chief Imam Bago, presiding

BY IKEDDY ISIGUZO

TOMES have been written on religion and politics, what the mixture produces, and grave warnings that in some doses, they could inflame passions that are driven by other hungers. There are more reasons to handle them with care – their promotion to enterprises have elicited hungers that are not completely wholesome.

In the past week, two incidents have hinted at governments' ambitions to have better control of religion from the thoughts that produce messages to the delivery of the messages. Governments at the federal and state levels made these public. They are supposedly doing this for the public on whose behalf they claim to act.

Senate President Obong Godswill Akpabio considers himself eminently qualified to wield into any issue and make whatever he wants out of it. When he was made the Chairman of the Planning Committee of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria, that Diocese of Ikot Ekpene hosted, only the organisers knew what they were expecting. The role also had a speaking part. Trust Akpabio to milk it. He did.

Akpabio likened Nigeria's current struggles to the scaffolding of a great cathedral under construction. "Do not despair when the winds blow strong or the scaffolding shakes. A nation is not raised overnight but stone by stone, prayer by prayer, hand by hand." The audience included the Apostolic Nuncio, Most Rev. Michael Francis Crotty.

"Let us bind the wounds of division, banish the cynicism of despair, and walk together -Church and State, pulpit and parliament, faith and policy - towards a brighter dawn. Transformation is not the burden of one arm of society, nor the privilege of a select few."

Is Akpabio following his own preachment in the management of the Senate?

Delivering President Tinubu's message, Secretary to the Government of the Federation, George Akume, assured that bold economic reforms were underway to stabilise the economy, attract investment, and ensure inclusivity: "This administration is building a Nigeria that works for all, and no one will be left behind." People not being left behind has a new meaning or means nothing to the administration that Akume represents.

If you google Niger State, about 324,000 results pop up. If you add Governor Mohammed Umar Bago's directive that preachers should submit their sermons for approval and register for preaching licences, the search on Niger State produces 1.21 million results. Almost one million people could be searching Niger State on religion, not the its muted agricultural possibilities which push out only 424,000 results when searched. If you stretch the search to disasters, the results pump to 1.64m.

Bago defended his decision on TVC's Politics on Sunday, by asserting that the government would not allow "anti-people" or "anti-government" sermons. "It's in that direction. We want to be able to see what they are preaching, hear what they are saying. We are working together with security agencies; the Department of State Services (DSS), the police, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), and the military," he added.

"I didn't ban evangelism… For everyone going to preach a sermon on Friday, he should bring his scriptures for review, and it's normal. Even in Saudi Arabia, this is done," the Governor said. It is impressive that the Governor is borrowing the idea from Saudi Arabia. What else should he have learnt from Saudi Arabia?

Has the Governor heard of any of the welfare programmes that Saudi Arabia has for its people? None of them appealed to the Governor who a recent survey revealed that 64 per cent of his State's residents is multidimensionally poor.

According to Bago, sermon approvals apart, the State will implement a licensing system for preachers. Umar Farooq, head of Niger State Religious Affairs, had earlier stated that clerics must secure licences within two months.

"It is true, the state government has banned preaching. Any preacher who wants to preach must secure a licence between now and the next two months. All they need to do is visit our office, get, and fill out the form. After which, they will have to face a panel that will screen them before they can start preaching," Farooq added.

How would the Governor and his approval team determine messages that are "anti-people", and "anti-government"? Is this scheme not for the benefit of the Governor, with the main objective being to curb rising criticisms that the Governor faces in mosques?

With the enormous responsibilities Governors are meant to bear - most recently, including seeing the President off and welcoming him from his numerous foreign trips- where would Bayo find time to vet thousands of weekly messages for the mosques and prayer grounds that dot Niger State?

The concerns are more than the Governor approving messages. These measures seem to align with Bago's disrespect for free speech, and now freedom of worship. Both are fundamental, constitutional rights.

Deploying scarce state resources and attention to religion in this manner, in a State that has had serial humanitarian emergencies, occasioned by flooding and insecurity, questions the Governor's priorities.

Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, Niger State Chapter, has withdrawn its threat of legal action after clarifications that the Governor's directive did not affect Christians.

Bago would be remembered for ordering the shut down of a private radio station, asking security agencies to seal off the premises for demolition, and announcing that he had revoked its licence. He accused the station of broadcasting inciting messages.

Akpabio and Bago were not speaking for themselves alone.

Let us watch out for how the scaffolds of Akpabio's giant cathedral hold as the winds of poor governance thrust them around and how approval of sermons and licensing of preachers would ameliorate poverty in Niger State and create markets for its agricultural products.

Finally...

BANDITS chief negotiator, the cleric, a retired Captain, and former medical officer in the Nigerian Army, Sheikh Ahmad Gumi has warned in a Facebook post that any attempt to attack the armed groups could reignite violence in Katsina State.

"Some people who don't want peace, will provoke them again by attacking them. It's very important to educate them that they are used by capitalising on their ignorance and zeal to vengeance," Gumi wrote. His comments came on the heels of a peace meeting held on Sunday in Faskari between residents, local traditional leaders, and a wanted bandit, Ado Alero, alongside dozens of armed herders.

"What brought about this meeting is that one of my boys was arrested. At that time, we were not on good terms with the security operatives. I asked why they arrested him, but they did not give me any explanation," Alero said.

"I made inquiries from the Faskari Local Government up to the state government. I spoke with the Secretary to the Katsina State Governor, and I also spoke with the then Chairman of Miyetti Allah," he said.

"We followed due process at the time, but we were unable to secure his release. They never told us why he was arrested, and from there, I left the matter."

"There will be no peace if security agencies do not also stop killing our people," a Fulani herder Kwashé Garwa, who was filmed with ammunition strapped to his waist, said. Bandits want peace on their own terms.

WELCOME. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. Aren't you overdue for a French name?

ISIGUZO is a major commentator on minor issues

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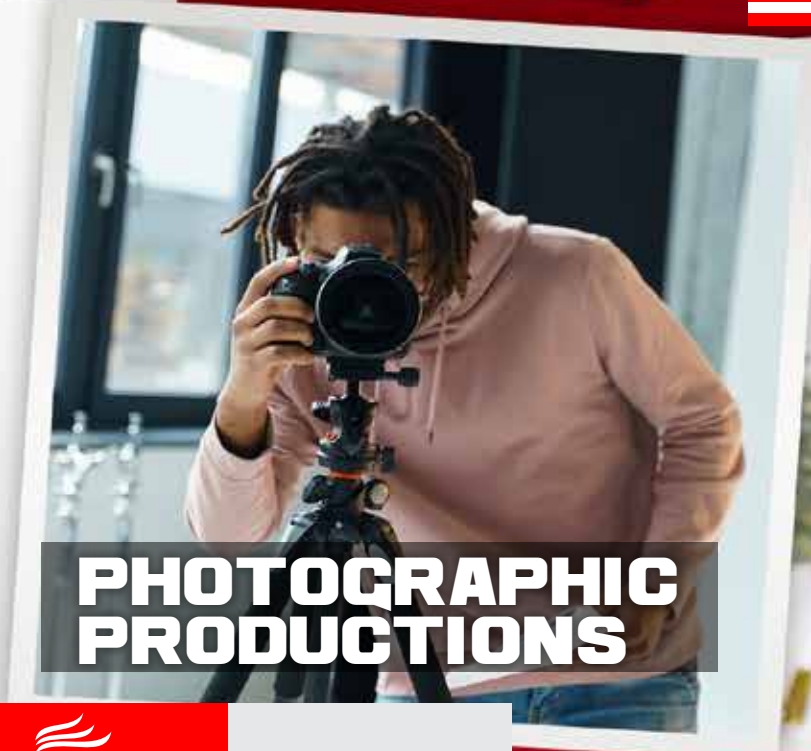


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'The costliest peace is cheaper than the cheapest war'

ORIAKU IJELE & STEPHEN GBADAMOSI

Calm may have permanently returned to Rivers State, or so it seems. Yesterday, Gov. Siminalayi Fubara of Rivers pledged inclusive governance and reconciliation as he resumed office after the six months of emergency rule was lifted by President Bola Tinubu.

The Daily Monitor, reports that Rivers was placed under emergency rule on March 18, following intense political crises that threatened peace, governance, and stability in the state.

Fubara, in a statewide broadcast in Port Harcourt on Friday, described the period as enormously challenging but necessary to restore order and safeguard democratic institutions.

He said that as governor, he chose to abide by the declaration and co-operated fully with Tinubu and the National Assembly, prioritising peace above personal or political gain.

"I resisted pressure to challenge the constitutionality of the emergency declaration, suspension of democratic structures, and other measures taken during the turbulent period," he said.

The governor noted that after Tinubu brokered peace among contending parties, himself, FCT Minister Nyesom Wike, and the Rivers State House of Assembly later resolved to bury the hatchet.

He said reconciliation was embraced in the best interest of Rivers people and for the progress of the state.

"We can now look forward to peace and stability, though the difficult experience offered lessons that must guide future political engagements.

"The responsibility now rests on government, the State Assembly, political leaders and stakeholders to put aside differences and serve the common good of Rivers people," he said.

Fubara expressed optimism that peace and reconciliation must be permanent and nurtured through collective responsibility and sincere commitment to unity.

He acknowledged fears and concerns raised about the peace process but assured residents that nothing had been irretrievably lost and inclusiveness would remain a priority.

"The costliest peace is cheaper than the cheapest war," the governor said.

Fubara noted that despite political turbulence, his administration had achieved credible milestones in infrastructure, education, health and other sectors over the last two years.

He pledged to focus on completing ongoing projects, reviving the state's economy, protecting lives and property, and improving the welfare of Rivers people.

The governor thanked the people for their resilience, patience, and peaceful conduct during the emergency period.

"I call on all Rivers citizens, regardless of political, ethnic, or religious affiliation, to unite in rebuilding the state and securing a future of dignity and progress," he said.

Fubara also expressed gratitude to Tinubu, Wike, members of the National and State Houses of Assembly, stakeholders, religious leaders, traditional rulers, civil society groups, women, and youths for their role in restoring peace.

He urged citizens to embrace the new phase as a fresh beginning and work together for a stronger, more prosperous and peaceful state.

"I give glory to Almighty God for sustaining Rivers State and restoring peace and stability," he concluded.



Scene at an international Conference in Accra, Ghana, organised by the 2025 Goodluck Jonathan Foundation Annual Democracy Dialogue with the theme "What Makes Democracy Die?"

Kwara senatorial district closes all cattle markets over rising insecurity

KEHINDE AKINPELU, ILORIN

Sequel to the prevailing security realities in Kwara South Senatorial District, we the Council local government Chairmen, under the aegis of the Forum of Seven Local Government Chairmen in Kwara South Senatorial District, have ordered the immediate closure of all Kara (cattle) markets within the district, was how the notice came

This painful but necessary decision was arrived at after an extensive stakeholders engagement and reviews.

While the invading criminals have been operationally decimated in the last few weeks, cleanup operations by the military and hybrid operatives are still ongoing.

Therefore, all Kara markets have been ordered to shut down with immediate effect from Friday, September 19, 2025, until further notice. All other produce markets are hereby directed to close by 6:00 pm on market days.

This decision, taken collectively by the Executive Chairmen, is part of the ongoing efforts to strengthen the security architecture of the Senatorial District and protect lives and properties.

This measure is a proactive step, aimed at addressing emerging security concerns and ensuring the safety of residents, traders, and commuters within District.

The decision will be reviewed periodically, and the markets would be reopened once a conductive environment is guaranteed.

While we acknowledge and regret the economic impact of this decision on our people, we've chosen to prioritise the safety of lives and properties and adhering to long-term coordinated and structured security advisement over and above short-term inconveniences.

However, we use this opportunity to reassure residents and indigenes of Kwara South, that the local government councils in conjunction with the State government and relevant security agencies are doing everything within its powers to restore a lasting peace to the land.

We therefore, enjoin all and sundry, to be corporative with governmental efforts and security operatives towards collaboratively guaranteeing the return of lasting peace to our land.

C'R State: 5 persons killed as Ikom, Obubra LGAs resume communal clash

IDONGESIT INYANG, CALABAR

Five persons have been reportedly killed in a renewed communal clash between two neighbouring local governments areas of Ikom and Obubra in Cross River State.

"Two were brutally beheaded while others were cooked and chewed as meat," the chairman of Ofutop Traditional Rulers Council in Ikom LGA, HRH Atun Bassey Okey disclosed.

"Four communities in Ikom LGA namely Ekukunela, Alesi, Agbragba and Okosoro are against other border communities of Ochon, Odung and Okom in neighbouring Obubra LGA over boundary disputes and encroachments."

Okey who disclosed this to newsmen in Calabar, has equally raised alarm over his personal safety saying that the deadly crisis first erupted in 2016, continued in 2022 and resumed in 2025.

According to HRH Okey, "We have lost, at least, five persons from my community in this renewed hostility. Two were brutally beheaded. Others were cooked and chewed as meat" adding that, "The video recorded by the other communities is available for sighting."

He said that "Even my own personal safety is at stake due to the high insecurity and direct threats to my person."

Revealing that much of the killings are done in the bushes where the Mbembe people laid ambush against their rivals, Okey, maintained that "They hide in the bushes and launch attacks, abducting and butchering our people."

To defend themselves, the youths of Ofutop clan are mounting surveillance across the 13 villages of Ofutop clan, the traditional ruler said.

Speaking for the Mbembe people of Obubra LGA, a man who gave his name as Chief Mbe Peter said the Ofutop kinsmen are settlers who are claiming their ancestral lands.

He said, "We've been under attack by the Ofutop people. We appeal to the security agencies and state government to come to our aid from these people who are killing us and laying claim to our ancestral lands."

Meanwhile the Cross River State government has deployed security operatives to enforce calm, and also resolve the ownership rights of the disputed land.

Deputy Governor, Dr. Peter Odey, who highlighted the measures during a meeting with leaders and stakeholders of the communities of the two local governments in Calabar said by this singular act, the root of contention is extinguished, transforming the territory into a protected heritage under state custody.

Odey, also emphasized that peace, safety, and collective wellbeing remain sacrosanct, insisting that "elders, youths, and community leaders are enjoined to embrace reconciliation, cooperate with security agencies, and desist from hostilities,"

He noted that "only through unity can progress and stability take firm root across our beloved State."

FGC Minna principal, urges parents to monitor moral conduct of their children

SAKA BOLAJI, MINNA

Parents and guardians have been advised to always monitor the moral conduct and learning process of their children towards achieving academic excellence as students warm up for new school academic sessions

This assertion was made by the Principal Federal Government College Minna Alhaji Sirajo Dar'dau when he fielded questions from newsmen in Minna.

The principal said Parents have a greater responsibility of shaping the child while at home by monitoring their activities and while at school.

He explained, that Students enrolled in School have developed habits and attitudes that are inherent from home which is difficult to swim out by the school without the support of the parents.

Alhaji Darda'u called on both parents and guardians to cooperate with the school Authority to change the narratives in order to instill discipline in the children.

On lateness and delinquencies, he lamented the attitudes of some parents towards Education, adding that it is the right of their children to be educated and need to be encouraged.

tressed, that there must be a synergy to achieve attitudinal change that will guarantee sound education.

He lamented the lackadaisical attitudes of some parents for not paying attention to their children's needs in the school such as not adhered to dressing code, lateness classes especially the morning lesson which mostly affects the Day Students and not promptly paying their school fees.

He also commended, the efforts of the security Agencies especially the police and the vigilante corps in chanchaga for their relentless effort in handling the activities of illegal miners that have been causing havoc to the school Environment.

He reassured parents of the College's commitments towards providing a conducive environment for teaching and learning at all times.

However, he called on all stakeholders in the educational sector to support the college laudable initiative which foster better understanding that will guarantee academic Excellence.


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

Ill-treatment of passengers: NCAA threatens to descend on Qatar Airways, Royal Air Maroc, Saudi Air

CHUKWUEMEKE IWELUNMO

The Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has threatened to sanction Qatar Airways and Royal Air Maroc for failing to comply with its directives and determinations on passenger complaints.

Michael Achimugu Director Public Affairs and Consumer Protection of NCAA posted this on his verified X handle @mikeachimugu01 on Friday, detailing the offence of both airlines.

According to Achimugu : 'The airline @qatarairways has carried on as though Nigerian passengers and the NCAA are not deserving of their respect, dignified treatment, and compliance with Part 19 of the NCAA Regulations 2023. This will be brought to a stop immediately.

He said, a member member of Qatar Airways cabin crew had claimed that, while she was wheeling a passenger during boarding for a flight from Lagos to the United States via Doha, a male passenger who was travelling with his wife had touched her butt.

Achimugu said she did not report this incident in Lagos but on arrival in Doha, she made an allegation against this passenger, leading to his arrest and detention for about eighteen hours.

"During the period, his wife suffered mental, physical, and psychological trauma without any form of care.

She wondered how her husband could have committed such a despicable infraction given that she was with him throughout the boarding process.

"The authorities in Doha made the man pay a hefty fine and forced him to sign a document written only in Arabic! Desperate for freedom to proceed on his journey to the US, the passenger signed a document which contents he did not understand.", he said

Continuing, Achimugu said despite this, the airline refused to fly him to his final destination, as he had to buy tickets on another airline and proceed at great financial and reputational cost.

"Upon invitation by the NCAA, the airline's country manager, who has a penchant for evading meetings with the NCAA, only sent his subordinates to attend.

However, the NCAA made a determination on that matter along with others. As has become typical of @qatarairways, they failed to comply with all determinations made from that meeting. They have also failed to treat subsequent complaints from other passengers escalated to them by the CAA, including a total silence upon receipt of a Letter of Investigation (LOI) sent to them by the NCAA.", he added

The NCAA image maker, who said this behaviour stops now expressed dismay that hat some countries do not have advanced aviation consumer protection regulations like Nigeria does, adding that in certain cases, some countries don't even have any.

"This creates a situation where airlines operating out of those countries (mostly national carriers) act with disdain towards consumer protection enforcement in Nigeria.

"This is not a situation that we would accept here. It is against the law for any airlines not to respond to the NCAA. It is against the law to provide false information to the NCAA. It is against the law to fail to comply with the provisions of Part 19 of the NCAA Regulations 2023.

"When BASAs are signed, they must be respected by both parties. Every airline is expected to, upon approval to operate in Nigeria, understand and comply with consumer protection regulations.To continue to treat our laws with contempt while respecting regulations across Europe and elsewhere is not ideal and must be bought to a complete and final stop.

"This department protects the airlines as much as it protects passengers. The DGCA, Captain Chris Najomo, has never minced words about his position on consumer protection issues, and we will apply appropriate and stiff penalties against the airlines that, in perpetuity, fail to comply.", he added.

Achimugu said Royal Air Maroc and Saudi Air have also been properly advised about certain infractions, adding that failing to comply with the determinations of the CAA, they will be sanctioned heavily.



Governor of Rivers State, Sir Siminalayi Fubara (middle), received by political supporters at the Port Harcourt International Airport after President Bola Tinubu ended the six–month long state of emergency in Rivers State...on Friday.

Police detain 957 alleged terrorists, armed robbers, kidnappers in Imo

The Imo Police Command says it has recorded great milestone in the fight against terrorism and violent crimes with the detention of 957 terror, armed robbery and kidnap suspects in two months.

The Commissioner of Police, Mr Aboki Danjuma, told newsmen in Owerri on Friday that nine kidnap victims and seven stolen children were also rescued and reunited with their family members.

"One of the major breakthroughs was the arrest of notorious IPOB/ESN terrorists and recovery of arms, ammunition and incriminating items.

"Investigations further led to the arrest of some of their sponsors and financiers drastically reducing their nefarious activities and cutting off funding channels.

"In synergy with other security agencies, the command also dislodged IPOB/ESN camps and kidnapping dens in Okigwe, Mbaitoli, Owerri West and Njaba Local Government Areas, and other areas in the state, striking a decisive blow to their capacity for further attacks," he said.

The police boss said: "On September 16, my men from the anti-kidnapping unit, led by ACP Oladimeji Odeyeyiwa, and the Special Intervention Squad, led by CSP Gboyako Adamu, stormed an IPOB/ESN camp at Obudi Agwa in Oguta LGA.

"The hoodlums engaged us in a fierce gunbattle but were overpowered by our superior firepower.

"Sixteen suspects, including their sub-commander, Uzoechi Okechukwu, were arrested."

Danjuma further said that Uchechukwu Nwachukwu, 25, and Chinonso Ozuruigbo, 32, were currently under detention for alleged kidnap of Anayo Iwuoha, 48, on June 18, 2025 at Akabo, Ikeduru LGA.

"The suspects collected ransom of N3 million and were still demanding N10 million as condition for the victim's release," he said.

The police boss said that following incessant kidnapping, armed robbery attacks and other heinous crimes, the command on September 9, arrested and detained a suspected member of IPOB/ESN, Chukwuebika Eruruogu, 27.

He alleged that Eruruogu was terrorising Mbaitoli, Njaba and Orlu LGAs before his detention.

Danjuma also said that four suspected members of a cult group were being detained over the death of Chidubem Orji, who was killed during an attempt to initiate him into the group.

He said that items recovered from the suspects included some defunct Biafra currencies, N1,000 counterfeit notes used within their hideouts.

According to him, the command also recovered marijuana, laptops, cellphones, AK-47 rifles, pump action guns, ammunition, double-barreled guns, locally-fabricated pistols, charms, cartons of cartridges and a register used for training and roll calls.

"We have started blocking the channels where they get their weapons from," he said.

He however said that his men sustained minor injuries throughout the two-month operation.

Danjuma lauded Gov. Hope Uzodimma for his consistent support in welfare and logistics which, he said, greatly boosted their operational capacity.

He also commended the Inspector-General of Police, Mr Kayode Egbetokun, for guiding the command to success.

DTSG committed to fostering more inclusive and resilient society

BY NOSA AKENZUA, ASABA

Delta State Commissioner for Economic Planning, Mr. Sonny Ekedayen has reaffirmed the state government's dedication to fostering a more inclusive and resilient society, ensuring citizens have access to necessary resources and support, especially among the vulnerable.

Mr Ekedayen made the affirmation at the Delta State social protection dialogue held at BON hotel in Asaba with the theme accelerating inclusive social protection Delta state-building stronger systems for poverty reduction and resilience.

"Under the visionary leadership of our Governor Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, Delta State has witnessed significant advancements in the implementation of social protection initiatives, which are carefully designed to address the pressing issues of poverty and vulnerability among its citizens, thereby ensuring a more equitable and just society for all."

The Economic Planning commissioner revealed that D-CARES, a World Bank-supported initiative, has positively impacted over 247,000 residents through direct cash transfers, livelihood support, and other programs, even reaching remote areas of the state.

Supporting the vulnerable in society, the state government has launched the widows' welfare scheme, providing a monthly stipend of 15,000 naira to 10,000 widows and enrolling them into the Delta State contributory health scheme.

Other initiatives include the MORE grant scheme, which has empowered 5,426 petty traders and small business owners, and the Women Empowerment and Skill Acquisition program, (WESAP) which has trained and supported women in practical skills, mental health education, and entrepreneurship.

Notably, the Working Fingers Initiative has empowered 2000 women state-wide through training and support. Furthermore, our Job and Wealth Creation Bureau has provided funding and business support packages to MSMEs under the BIZUP programme.

Mr Ekedayen encouraged everyone to actively participate in the discussion, sharing their expertise and experience to bolster our collective efforts.

Rev. David Ugolor, Executive Director of the African Network for Environmental and Economic Justice, (ANEEJ) outlined the objectives of the dialogue, which included reviewing the current state protection interventions in Delta State, unveiling key findings from the Act Naija project baseline study, and strengthening collaboration between government, civil society, and communities for more inclusive and transparent social protection.

Nigeria plans financial autonomy for NBS, says Lawmaker

The Chairman of the House Committee on National Planning, Rep. Gboyega Isiaka, has announced plans to grant the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) financial autonomy to strengthen its operations and independence.

He made the disclosure on Friday in Abuja while hosting a delegation from the Liberian House of Representatives during a bilateral exchange visit.

Isiaka emphasised the committee's focus on ensuring adequate funding, transparency, and confidence in the data generated by the National Bureau of Statistics for national development.

The lawmaker revealed plans to establish a National Tax Trust Fund, where stakeholders benefiting from NBS data would contribute to secure consistent and reliable funding.

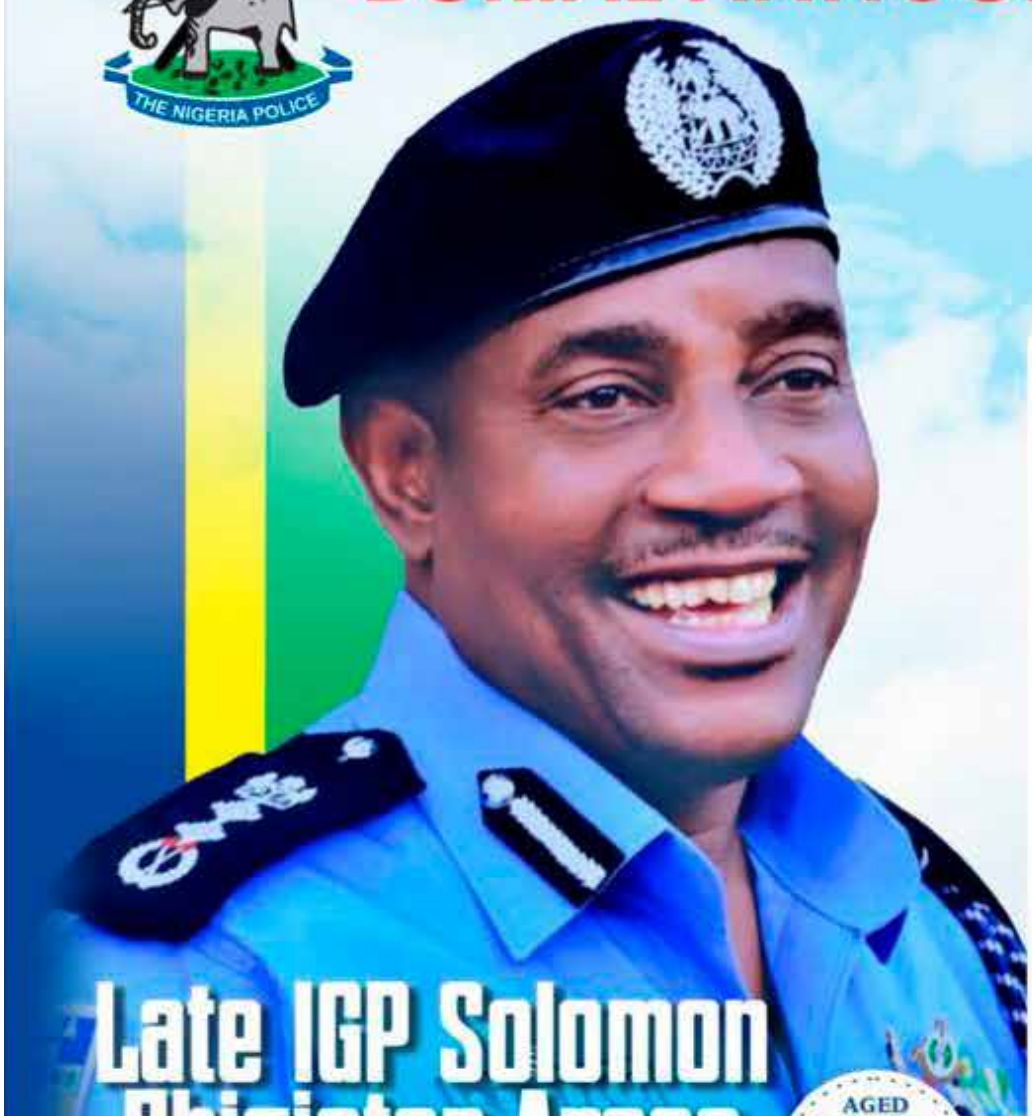
He explained the proposed legislation would empower the bureau to collect data from the private sector, highlighting the necessity of financial independence for effective operations.

Isiaka said the current NBS Act dated back to 2007, amending the original 1957 law, but new reforms were needed to address existing loopholes and funding challenges.

"The bill, recently passed at First Reading, aims to enhance NBS independence, especially in funding, moving beyond reliance on government budget allocations," Isiaka said.

He noted the National Strategy for Developmental Statistics 2024-2028 assigned greater responsibility to NBS, making financial autonomy critical to fulfilling its mandate.

THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE
BURIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



Late IGP Solomon Ehigiator Arase

CFR, Ph.D, NPM, fdc, FCIArb (IGP Rtd.)

AGED 69 YEARS
1956 – 2025

The Nigeria Police Force announces the Burial Arrangements of Former Inspector-General of Police, **IGP Solomon Ehigiator Arase (Rtd), CFR, PhD, NPM, fdc, FCIArb.**

Late IGP Arase, who passed onto Glory on August 31st 2025, was the 18th Indigenous Inspector-General of Police. He served the Force and the Nation with Dedication and Honor.

He will be remembered for his Exemplary and Innovative Leadership, Philanthropy and Commitment to Police Reforms.

BURIAL RITES OF LATE DR. SOLOMON EHIGIATOR ARASE, IGP (RTD)

24TH SEPTEMBER – 5TH OCTOBER 2025

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

LOCATION	Date	Time	Event	Venue	Remarks
ABUJA	*Wed. 24th September, 2025*	*3.00pm – 5.00pm*	**Day of Tribute**	Nigeria Police Resource Centre, Jabi, Abuja	**Dress Code – *Blue***
	Fri. 26th September, 2025	*4.00p.m*	**Requiem Mass**	Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Maitama, Abuja	**Dress Code – *White***
	Sat. 27th September, 2025	*8.00a.m-10.00a.m*	**Lying in State**	House 9, Golfview Estate, 1, Linus Nkachukwu Close, Maitama, Abuja	-
Body Departs Abuja for Benin City, Edo State/ Received at Benin Airport.					
SABONGIDA ORA, EDO STATE	*Mon. 29th September, 2025*	*5.00p.m*	**Procession/Candle Light**	Ministar Event Centre, Sabongida Ora, Edo State	**Branded T-Shirts**
BENIN CITY EDO STATE	*Thurs. 2nd October, 2025*	*10.00a.m*	**Valedictory Session (Edo State Judiciary/Nigerian Bar Association, Benin City, Edo State)**	Edo State High Court, Sapele Road, Benin City	**Lawyers' Robe**
		5.30p.m	**Vigil Mass**	St. Paul's Catholic Church, Airport Rd., Benin-City, Edo State	**Dress Code – *White***
		7.30p.m	**Family Rites/Lying in State**	Private Residence, GRA, Benin City	----
	Fri. 3rd October, 2025	*1.00 p.m*	**Funeral Mass**	St. Paul's Catholic Church, Airport Rd., Benin-City, Edo State	*Police Parade Party to lead the Body into the Church*
		3.00p.m	**Private Interment**	Private Residence, GRA, Benin-City	**Private/Family** *(Police Burial Parade)*
		3.30p.m	**Reception**	Victor Uwaifo Creative Hall, Airport Road, Benin City, Edo State	
	Sun. 5th October, 2025	*9.00a.m*	**Thanksgiving Mass**	St. Paul's Catholic Church, Airport Rd., Benin-City, Edo State	

FOLLOW THE EVENTS LIVE ON NIGERIA POLICE FORCE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

ANNOUNCER: CSP BENJAMIN HUNDEYIN
FORCE PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER, FOR: INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE

Culture enthusiasts call for change on narratives of Ndigbo

EMEKA OKAFOR, UMUAHIA

Against the perceived misrepresentation of beliefs and storylines of Ndigbo by others tribes, two prominent culture enthusiasts in Abia State have made a strong call on the people of the ethnic nationality to consider engaging in writing the true narratives about tl Ndigbo being marginalized and divided rather than uniting at home front.

Speaking to The Daily Monitor on Saturday after the inauguration if the Umuahia South Council Area chapter of Ohanaeze Ndigbo, both Dr. Smart Nwokorie and Professor Chinedum Ihedigbo decried the situation the people especially the political class cry out against marginalization were as they are the ones marginalizing themselves.

Prof Chinedu Ihedigbo, a professor of Computer Science advocated that Ndigbo should choose the right calibre of people to tell Igbo story which the world needs to hear.

"Igbo man stands out with integrity, hard work, success, and resourcesfullness, who will start with nothing but at long run becomes blossom and fertile, even when he is sent into the desert, he added.

The professor who disclosed that he had recently relocated to Nigeria after residing in America for Forty -two years regretted that most times it is the political class whose eyes, aim, and interest are always on money while they are the ones speaking for the race most times, as most often they don't communicate the real truth on the subject matter.

"Most parts of the country tend to dislike the Igbo race not for any offence they have committed but because they see them as people who do not cherish or take nonsense, and they are always successful in any venture they delve into", he said.

He emphasised on the need for Ndigbo to continue to project and teach their children those ideals that have been relegated to the background we have not gotten right for them to learn to make it right and teach them to know and understand that money is not everything, and that it is only through hard work, integrity and resourcesfullness that makes a man great.

Speaking also on the issue of marginalization, Dr. Smart Nwokorie who is the Abia State Pillar of Culture said the perceived campaign of Ndigbo is that they are yet to understand themselves as they are ones marginalizing themselves.

"Language is a veritable identity of any ethnic nationality, but, how would you describe the situation whereby the present generation of Ndigbo have abandoned their language, even when they are speaking among themselves, they engage in English language.

"The Igbo language is the bedrock against marginalization, we have to maintain and promote our language, the problem us for Ndigbo to identify themselves, Igbo language should not be made a second language or optional, until when Government takes bold step to check this growing trend the better for the survival of the ethnic nationality through language and cultural values.

Olubadan coronation: CCII rallies Ibadan rich to organise celebration for Ladoja

STEPHEN GBADA–MOSI, IBADAN

The Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes (CCII) is rallying influential indigenes of the city to support the planned weeklong celebration of new Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba Rasidi Adewolu Ladoja, who takes crown next Friday as the 44th Olubadan.

President-General of CCII, Chief Ajeniyi Ajewole, recently inaugurated a committee headed by two of the city's billionaire businessmen, Engr. Dotun Sanusi and Chief Adegboye Adegoke, to co-chair a team for the celebration.

The Oyo State government had earlier inaugurated a Chief Adebayo Oyero-led committee to work out plans for the Friday, September 26, coronation of Oba Ladoja, in line with its tradition of funding the coronation of first-class traditional rulers in the state.

But the CCII on its own expressed the belief that unlike the previous Olubadans, the current Olubadan-designate, being a successful billionaire businessman, former senator, former governor and elder-statesman, deserved a better celebration.

It, therefore, inaugurated the committee with some frontline Ibadan sons donating N10 million each for the celebration.

The committee picked seven other days apart from the government single day of coronation day, to make the celebration a weeklong event.

Not only that, these influentials have facilitated live rroadcast of the coronation with Arise TV, Channels TV; TVC, Solution FM and Ilaji FM, among other frontline national stations to beam and air the event live.

Part of the weeklong programme, according to Comrade Demola Babalola and Alhaji Kunle Junaid who are both co-chairman of the Local Organizing Committee in charge of Media/Publicity Subcommittee, is the Monday's September 22 inter-religious prayers at Olubadan Palace Oke-Aremo, Ibadan and a stage play on the progenitor of Kabiyesi Arusa at the Apex Hall, Yidi Agodi area.

There is also the Tuesday's Cultural Day holding at the Olubadan stadium; a first Olubadan coronation lecture to be delivered by renown Ibadan-born globally acknowledged historian, Prof. Toyin Falola, at the International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan.

On Thursday, Oba Ladoja will clock 81 years with special programmes for the day like Islamic prayers at the Olubadan palace by 10:00 a.m. and mega praise and worship at the Civic Centre, Agodi, Ibadan starting from 2:00 p.m.



The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Minna Operations Office, in collaboration with the NYSC Emergency Management Volunteers (EMVs), carrying out a flood sensitization and awareness campaign at Kasuwan Gwari Market in Chanchaga Local Government Area of Niger State.

Delta govt reaffirms commitment to safer state

BY NOSA AKENZUA, ASABA

The Delta State Government has reiterated its determination to strengthen security across the state, announcing that the planned launch of the Delta State Security Trust Fund (DSSTF) will significantly boost its security architecture.

This assurance came during a working visit by the Board and Management of the DSSTF to the headquarters of Operation Delta Sweep (ODS) in Asaba.

Speaking during the visit, Chairman of the DSSTF, Hon. Daniel Mayuku, explained that the visit was to obtain firsthand information on the operations and challenges of ODS, with a view to fostering collaboration once the Trust Fund is formally launched in the coming weeks.

In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of the DSSTF, Hon. Barr. Samuel Osasa, commended ODS for its proactive approach in safeguarding lives and property across the state.

He expressed confidence that the synergy between the DSSTF and ODS would further enhance security outcomes in Delta.

On his part, the Director General of Operation Delta Sweep, Hon. David Tower, outlined the agency's operational needs and expressed optimism that the intervention of the DSSTF would usher in a more secure environment for all Deltans.

Abiodun meets Awujale transition council

Ogun governor, Dapo Abiodun, has met with the body overseeing traditional and administrative matters during the transition period of installing a new Awujale of Ijebu-Ode.

According to Rasak Sekoni, Information Officer at the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, the meeting took place on Friday in Abeokuta.

While receiving the Transition Council in Abeokuta, Abiodun said the installation of an Awujale required a detailed and carefully coordinated process.

He recalled that inaugurating the Council in August was necessary to sustain the traditional and administrative roles long associated with the Awujale Palace.

The governor was represented by the Commissioner of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Mr Ganiyu Hamzat.

Abiodun assured government support, stressing that the Council's success was crucial to sustaining the legacy of late Oba Sikiru Kayode Adetona.

He urged the Council to be united, fair and unbiased in discharging their responsibilities in the collective interest of all stakeholders.

Abiodun further charged members to maintain neutrality when the process of filling the Awujale's vacant stool formally begins.

Osun PDP demands probe into alleged "suspicious" letters from 'Office of Federal High Court Chief Judge'

BY MIKE DIKE, OSOGBO

The Osun State chapter of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has called for an immediate investigation into what it described as "suspicious and illegal" correspondence allegedly originating from the office of the Chief Judge of the Federal High Court.

The letters were believed to be linked to the ongoing legal battle over the local government leadership crisis in the state.

Speaking to journalists in Osogbo, PDP State Chairman, Hon. Sunday Bisi, expressed deep concern over two letters that he claimed were improperly issued, potentially violating judicial procedure and raising fears of political manipulation.

According to Bisi, the first letter, dated August 21, 2025, was signed by Joshua Ibrahim Aji, Esq., who identified himself as Special Assistant to the Chief Judge. The letter reportedly assigned a judicial duty to a judge — an act Bisi described as a "gross aberration" and a breach of legal protocol.

"Judicial powers cannot be exercised by proxies or delegated to personal assistants. They are strictly reserved for judicial officers," Bisi stated.

The second letter, dated September 2, 2025, was even more troubling, Bisi said. It was not signed by the Special Assistant, but by an unnamed individual acting on his behalf. The letter also purportedly reassigned a case to another judge, raising alarms over possible forgery and backdating.

Bisi noted that the letter was only delivered to the Osun State counsel on September 11, nine days after it was allegedly signed. Yet, the case had already come up in court on September 8 in Abuja, with no reference made to the letter by either the court or the parties involved.

The PDP chairman argued that under the Federal High Court Act, the transfer of a case from one judge to another can only be done through a formal application made in open court not by private or administrative correspondence.

He further criticized the Chief Judge's office for addressing the September 2 letter directly to Chief Akin Olujinmi (SAN), counsel to the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF), even though the AGF had officially withdrawn from the case.

"Why is the office of the Chief Judge afraid to allow this case to be heard in the Osogbo Division of the Federal High Court where it was filed?" Bisi questioned.

MI6 launches dark web portal to attract spies in Russia

MI6 is launching its own dedicated portal on the dark web in the hope of attracting new spies online, notably from Russia.

Secure messaging platform Silent Courier aims to strengthen national security by making it easier for the intelligence agency to recruit, the Foreign Office said.

Potential agents in Russia and around the world will be targeted by the UK, it adds.

Outgoing MI6 Chief Sir Richard Moore On Friday appealed to potential spies globally to anonymously access the dark web by following instructions on MI6's own YouTube video.

In his final public speech as MI6 Chief, Sir Richard launched the worldwide recruiting drive targeting potential spies in Russia, China, Iran, North Korea and elsewhere.

In the same speech delivered from Istanbul on Friday morning, he expressed scathing criticism of President Putin, saying "there is no evidence" the Russian president has any interest in a negotiated peace, "short of Ukrainian capitulation".

"He is stringing us along".

He added that Putin cannot succeed in Ukraine and said Putin has "bitten off more than he can chew", adding that Russia's economy and demography are in long term decline and "Putin's war is accelerating".

The MI6 Chief also accused China of supporting Russia's war effort both diplomatically and through dual use goods like "chemicals that end up in their shells and electronic components that end up in their missiles".

China's support, he said, along with Iran and North Korea's is preventing Putin from making a sensible deal.

Later this month Sir Richard is due to hand over to Blaise Metreweli.

Ahead of Friday's announcement about the new dedicated portal, Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper said: "National security is the first duty of any government and the bedrock of the prime minister's Plan for Change.

Trump says TV networks opposed to him should lose licence

US President Donald Trump has suggested some TV networks should have their licences "taken away".

The remarks come after pressure from the administration led ABC to suspend Jimmy Kimmel. The late-night TV host made comments about the Charlie Kirk murder suspect, saying Trump supporters had tried to "characterise this kid as anything other than one of them".

Kimmel's suspension following the threat of regulatory action has raised concerns the Trump administration was attempting to curtail the free speech of its critics - with other talk show hosts commenting on the row.

"This is blatant censorship," Stephen Colbert said on his rival CBS show. "With an autocrat, you can't give an inch."

Kimmel also likened Trump's reaction to the death of his 31-year-old political confidant to "how a four-year-old mourns a goldfish".

Kimmel has condemned the attack and sent "love" to the Kirk family in the immediate aftermath of the shooting.

Trump spoke about the issue to reporters aboard Air Force One on Thursday while returning from a state visit to the UK.

"I have read some place that the networks were 97% against me, again, 97% negative, and yet I won and easily [in last year's election]," the president said.

"They give me only bad publicity [and] press. I mean, they're getting a licence. I would think maybe their licence should be taken away."

The FCC's chair, Brendan Carr accused Kimmel of "the sickest conduct possible" and said firms like the Disney-owned ABC could "find ways to change conduct and take action... or there's going to be additional work for the FCC".

FCC chair Carr told Fox on Thursday: "We're going to continue to hold these broadcasters accountable to the public interest - and if broadcasters don't like that simple solution, they can turn their licence in to the FCC."

The FCC has regulatory power over major networks, such as ABC, as well as the local stations that carry their content. Owners of local stations can also influence major networks by refusing to carry shows.

Kimmel's suspension was announced shortly after Nexstar Media, one of America's largest TV station owners, said it would not air his show "for the foreseeable future" as his remarks had been "offensive and insensitive".

Carr praised Nexstar - which is currently seeking FCC approval for a $6.2bn (£4.5bn) merger with another media company, Tegna - and said he hoped other broadcasters would follow its lead.

Sinclair, the largest ABC affiliate group in the US, said it would air a special remembrance programme dedicated to Kirk during the Jimmy Kimmel Live! time slot on Friday.



South African hospital worker arrested with human placentas

A South African hospital cleaner has been arrested after being found in possession of a bag of human placentas in eastern Mpumalanga province, police say.

Rose Mnisi was allegedly seeking potential buyers for the human body tissue when she was picked up by security officers following a tip-off.

"Upon being approached by police, the woman was caught with human tissues. The woman confirmed that she is a cleaner in the maternity ward," police said in a statement.

The 39-year-old woman appeared in court on Thursday, facing charges of illegal possession of human tissues. The body parts were seized and sent for forensic analysis. She is yet to respond to the charges.

Police said the suspect was "hitchhiking" to the Nelspruit area when she was arrested by officers who were conducting routine patrols in the town of Lydenburg, also known as Mashishing.

She was carrying an unknown number of human placentas in a plastic bag when she was picked up, according to the police.

The woman was "charged accordingly", police said, adding that they could not rule out the possibility of additional charges as the investigation continues.

She is expected back in court next month for a bail application.

The police did not say what the placentas were allegedly going to be used for but some believe eating the body tissue can boost breast milk production and even prevent post-natal depression, although there is no scientific evidence.

In South Africa, some killings and mutilations have been linked to the use of human body parts in traditional rituals.

Earlier this month, a Mozambican traditional healer appeared in court after he was found in possession of human body parts in the city of Tshwane.

Investigators linked the body parts to the brutal murder of a young woman who was killed in 2023 and her body parts removed.

British couple freed after months in Taliban prison



Peter Reynolds, 80, and his wife Barbie, 76, who have lived in the country for nearly two decades, were on their way home when they were stopped on 1 February.

The couple were freed through Qatari mediation. A Qatari official said they would fly to Qatar for medical checks before travelling on to the UK, despite having a long-term home in Afghanistan's Bamiyan province.

The Taliban said the pair had broken Afghan laws and were released after judicial proceedings - but has never disclosed the reason for their detention.

Peter and Barbie Reynolds married in Kabul in 1970 and spent the past 18 years running a charitable training programme that had been approved by local Taliban officials when the armed group reclaimed power in 2021.

They have been described by family as having a lifelong love of Afghanistan, typified by their decision to remain there after the authoritarian regime seized control in August 2021, when many other Westerners left.

Their release follows months of public lobbying by their family, who have described the harrowing conditions of their detention.

The couple's son, Jonathan Reynolds, told the BBC in July that his father had been suffering serious convulsion and his mother was "numb" from anaemia and malnutrition.

"My dad was chained to murderers and criminals," he said at the time, adding that they had at one point been held in a basement for six weeks without sunlight.

Sarah Entwistle, their daughter, previously said her father had suffered a mini-stroke, while the UN warned that without medical care the couple were at risk of irreparable harm.

Just six days ago, an American woman who was detained with them and subsequently released told the BBC they had been "literally dying" in prison and that "time is running out".

Faye Hall, who was let go two months into her detention, highlighted that the elderly couple's health had deteriorated rapidly while in prison.

A Qatari official told the BBC that the couple were moved from Kabul's central prison to a larger facility with better conditions during the final stage of negotiations over their release.

The pair have a lifelong love of Afghanistan, family say

The official also said the Qatari embassy in Kabul had provided them with medication, access to a doctor and means of communicating with their family while in prison.

Taliban officials maintained they received adequate medical care in prison and their human rights were respected.

The UK does not recognise the Taliban government and closed its embassy in Kabul when the group returned to power.

Crisis looms in Niger community over legality of appointments in Kagara Emirate

SAKA BOLAJI MINNA

Chieftaincy title crisis looming in Niger state as community leaders within the Kagara Emirate have officially submitted a petition the state Governor Mohammed Umar Bago, urging him to suspend the new district creation and appointments in Kagara Emirate.

The community leaders represented by Bako Haruna Tegina and Yahaya Mohammed Tegina (SANFADAN), believe that such measures are necessary to avert injustice, legal crises, and communal strife.

The petition, signed by their counsel, Chris Osuagwu Esq. (Head of Practice), made available to newsmen in Minna outlined procedural and legal deficiencies that undermine the legitimacy of the newly created districts.

A key issue highlighted is the absence of official gazettes, which renders the appointments legally questionable.

This petition is also addressed to Security operatives and other relevant stakeholders.

It argues that the restructuring process violates established traditions and lacks proper consultation, which was historically exemplified by the late Emir, Alhaji Salihu Tanko.

Concerns are raised about the potential for boundary disputes due to the lack of delineated jurisdictional boundaries for the newly appointed heads.

A particularly contentious issue is the transfer of the sitting District Head of Kagara, whose position has been taken over by a relative of the current Emir, raising questions about favoritism and the integrity of the appointment process.

Furthermore, the petition emphasizes violations of gazetted succession laws.

A majority of the newly appointed district heads belong to the Gunna Royal Lineage, despite established eligibility criteria that favor the Tegina Royal Lineage.

According to the petition a Historical context has provided, noting that Tegina has been recognized as the custodian of the Kagara area since the mid-19th century.

The petitioners argue that these recent changes threaten to distort the historical narrative and leadership structure of the Emirate.

The petitioners are urging the relevant authorities to reconsider these appointments, ensure compliance with legal standards, and uphold the traditions that have historically governed the Kagara Emirate.

Community leaders and residents remain hopeful for a fair resolution that honors the heritage and historical significance of the Kagara Emirate.

The full petition, along with supporting annexures detailing historical and legal claims, is expected to be presented to both local and state government in the coming days.

The petition calls on authorities to produce all relevant circulars, approvals, and Emirate Council minutes relied upon for the restructuring exercise and to ensure the rightful and qualified heirs to the throne are placed in every district and village area.

‘Concerned Zaar Patriots’ asks police to investigate Sheikh Salisu over hate speech

BY LUKA YELMI, BAUCHI

Concerned Zaar Patriots (CZP) have petitioned the Nigeria Police Force, demanding for the immediate investigation of an Islamic scholar, one Sheikh Salisu AA Imam Bauchi, over hate speech against the zaar/Sayawa ethnic Nationality.

The petition, signed and made available to newsmen on Thursday in Bauchi by Hon. Ishaya Dangana was addressed to the Inspector General of Police (IGP) and dated 11th September, 2025.

In the petition, the concerned Zaar Patriots accused Sheikh Salisu AA Immam Bauchi of using the cyber space to broadcast hate speech, Incitement and Criminal Insults Against the Zaar (Sayawa) Ethnic Nationality.

According to the CZP, the Zaar (Sayawa) ethnic nationality are peace-loving, Law-abiding and Progressive -Oriented citizens of Nigeria, hence, the action of the Islamic cleric against them violated Extant Criminal Laws of the country.

Hon Dangana who explained that the Concerned Zaar Patriots (CZP) comprises of a group of Nigerians indigenous to Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro Local Government Areas of Bauchi State, noted that the petition was part of efforts towards discharging their constitutional obligations as citizens,

"We hereby submit this petition against one Sheikh Salisu AA Imam Bauchi, a religious cleric and public commentator based in Bauchi State, for engaging in hate speech, ethnic incitement, and cyber-harassment, etc, contrary to the provisions of the cybercrimes (Prohibition, prevention, etc.) Act, 2015, particularly Sections 24 and 26, and other applicable criminal laws", the petition read in parts.

Blackout as power outage hits Kaduna town, military zones

IDIBIA GABRIEL, KADUNA

Widespread blackout has been recorded in Kaduna State and environs as power outage was recorded in military zones.

Areas earlier affected includes Jaji, NTA-Jaji, Igabi village, Military Cantonment and environs by the outage. The power outage later extended to the entire Kaduna town on 18th September, according to many consumers.

A statement earlier circulated in Kaduna and signed by Abdulazeez Abdullahi Head, Corporate Communications, dated 14th September 2025, the electricity distribution company apologize for the outage In parts of Kaduna

"We sincerely apologize to our esteemed customers in Jaji, NTA-Jaji, Igabi village, Military Cantonment and environs for the outage currently being experienced", it stated.

According to the statement 'The outage is due to technical issues at Jaji Injection Substation", adding, "Our technical team is already on site and working to restore supply as quickly as possible. We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience".

Similarly, a statement issued and signed by the management, dated 19th September 2025, stated that "The outage currently being experienced is due to a collapsed 132kV transmission tower.

The statement added that "this has affected supply to the Kaduna Town Transmission Station", also adding that "TCN team is already working assdiously with relevant stakeholders to ensure that normal supply is restored as soon as possible".

"We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused and appreciate your patience and understanding", the statement added.



L–R: Alh Garba Musa, former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Kano State; Mallam Auwal Miko, Head teacher, Hausawa Model Primary School; Wole Adeniyi, CE, Stanbic IBTC Bank; Alhaji Ahmad Ibrahim Muhammad Sekure, Chairman, Tarauni Local Government; Bridget Oyefeso–Odusami, Head, Brand and Marketing, Stanbic IBTC Holdings and some students at the handover ceremony of Hausawa Model Primary School kano forming part of the Stanbic IBTC's Adopt–A–School initiative.

WOPIN established to ease burden of womanhood in societies, communities - Dr. Maryam

IDIBIA GABRIEL, KADUNA

The National President of Women for Peace in Nigeria (WOPIN), Dr. Maryam C. Abdullahi has reiterated that the organization was established on September 18th 1998, with a clear mission to ease the burden of womanhood in societies and communities Nigeria

She however explained that over the years, WOPIN, a NGO saddled with the responsible for championing the course of women, metamorphoses into a global alliance of individuals and organizations with conflict management and transformation skills, while also advocating for religious tolerance, respect for our diverse ethnicity and human dignity.

The President made the remarks Wednesday in a speech at the occasion of the 27th anniversary of WOPIN and the Humanitarian Awards by the 21 century pan African royalty worldwide in London held Merit House, Abuja Nigeria.

She said they've gathered on the Wednesday, to mark a significant milestone - celebrating 27th remarkable years of fostering peace and harmony in Nigeria, adding that their journey is characterized by dedicated partnerships and the collective efforts of our 15, 638 strong members.

"Our membership comprises a vibrant community - 3,324 youths who bring energy and innovation; 382 man who contribute leadership and strength and notably, our women make up the majority of 11,932 members, underscoring their pivotal role in our peace building endeavors.

"Over 27 years, we have pursued our mission with unwavering commitment, It is about the mothers who share their last meals so that someone else will not go to bed hungry and young girls who study by the candle light because she believes education will light up her future.

"We faced challenges and we celebrated triumphs. Through partnerships and community engagement our peace building work in Nigeria has touched lives, promoted dialogue, and supported communities.

"We have witnessed the impact of engaging youths in peace processes, the power of interfaith understanding and the resilience of Nigerians in adversity, with our membership base, we have extended our reach, empowered voices and contributed to conflict resolution and social cohesion efforts", she narrated.

Highlights of WOPIN work , she said, include empowering youths for peace advocacy, building bridges between communities, supporting initiatives for tolerance and coexistence and collaborating with local leaders for peace.

She also stated that as they reflect on their performance over the past 27 years, they have made strides in resolving conflicts and have reconciled families because we believe peace starts from the home.

"We have organized family programs and we are proud to say that over 300 families are back together because of our interventions. We believe peace starts from home" she added.

In Education, WOPIN has sponsored students through their scholarship program, adding, "We appreciate Finpat Primary and Secondary School and others, we would also like to acknowledge the support of Late First Lady Stella Obasanjo, she was a beacon of hope".

"Under health care we championed the HIV/AIDS Campaign, mobilizing people living positive and they were supported by the Kaduna State Government then. Our care and support program for orphans, sponsored by UNICEF, was also a huge success.

"As we reflect on our journey, we acknowledge the resilience of our team, the support of partners and the trust of communities we have served", she reiterated.

The event was witnessed by national and international dignitaries including Ambassadors, Peace Diplomats, stakeholders, philanthropic volunteers and beneficiaries.

She also extended sincere appreciation to the chairman of the 21st Century Pan African Royalties Worldwide, London, alongside esteemed team members from Ghana his Royal Majesty Nana King professor Barthsy Ojoi Enebiene RGJP, AGPP,- Aba'Obazi 4 NJJ Ashangbor Obakweman 2 of Greater Accra Ghana, Kenya, Burkina Faso and our Royal Fathers-I greet you all and I appreciate each one of you.

According to her, their dedication has been instrumental, "looking ahead, we recommit to our vision to deepen our impact, innovate our approaches and expand our reach".

Earlier, she said "When I was growing up, my dreams were simple, to help when I could, to give what I had and to make a difference in the lives of the needy around me.

"I recall watching women who worked from sunrise to sunset, carrying baskets on their heads and hopes in their hearts. They are not only mothers to their children but pillars of their communities", she noted.

Ebola scare: Abuja hospital explains

BY ADA DIKE

The management of Nisa Premier Hospital in Abuja has disclosed that the suspected viral haemorrhagic fever case tested negative.

Explaining what transpired, the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Nisa Medical Group, Dr. Ibrahim Wada, said the patient, a 32-year-old man, was isolated immediately after showing some symptoms associated with fever, bleeding, and so on, on Friday.



Recall that the World Health Organization describes viral haemorrhagic fevers (VHFs) as a group of illnesses caused by viruses that damage blood vessels and can result in severe bleeding. Some VHFs may present with milder symptoms, such as body aches and fatigue. Examples include Ebola, dengue, Marburg, and yellow fever, which are most commonly found in parts of Africa, Asia, and South America.

Wada further said that the hospital immediately notified the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC), which conducted tests to determine whether the case was linked to viral haemorrhagic fevers such as Lassa fever, Ebola, Dengue or Marburg.

In his words: "I have just confirmed that the test result turned out negative. The index case came in yesterday, and with the symptoms presented, NCDC was immediately contacted and the patient isolated. I can confirm that the result of the test carried out by NCDC has come out negative."

In continuing , he said both the hospital management and the NCDC Director-General were expected to release official statements later yesterday to provide further updates to the public.

PlatinumPost reports that the patient, an estate developer identified by the initials O.I., had a 10-day history of fever that did not respond to treatment, along with nosebleeds, vomiting blood, and passing bloody stool.

Preliminary information from the FCT Chief Epidemiologist indicates that the man recently traveled to Rwanda for tourism. He reportedly began experiencing symptoms while in Rwanda, where a physician recommended testing for Lassa fever.

He returned to Nigeria on Thursday via Rwanda Air and proceeded directly to Nisa Premier Hospital. Medical records show that he had visited multiple hospitals in Rwanda over the past three weeks and received antibiotics without improvement.

Following his admission, the FCT Rapid Response Team was activated to investigate the situation, and relevant public health authorities were notified. Samples were collected for laboratory confirmation at the designated national reference centre.

Meanwhile, hospital management has been instructed to maintain strict infection prevention and control measures to prevent any potential transmission. Health authorities have urged residents to stay calm, assuring the public that surveillance and control measures remain in place.

World Patient Safety: Lagos govt reiterates commitment to child safety



During the 2025 World Patient Safety Day (WPSD), the Lagos State Government restated its commitment towards ensuring safe and quality healthcare for children.

Organised by the Health Facilities Monitoring and Accreditation Agency (HEFAMAA), the event was held on Wednesday at NECA House, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos.

With the theme: "Safe Care for Every Newborn and Every Child": the Special Adviser to the Governor on Health, Dr. Olukemi Ogunyemi, while giving his speech, said patient safety begins from pregnancy and continues through childbirth and beyond.

She urged health workers, parents, and community leaders to act as ambassadors of safety, stressing that "every child has the right to safe and quality care." She added that the state remains committed, under the THEMES Plus Agenda, to providing affordable healthcare for all.

In his goodwill message, a member of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Hon. Lawal Aina Musibau, reaffirmed legislative support for stronger laws and oversight in the health sector. He described health workers as "the foundation of public trust" and urged stakeholders to make patient safety a daily practice.

On her part, the Executive Secretary of HEFAMAA, Dr. Abiola Idowu emphasised that children are not "little adults" and must be handled with special attention. She cautioned against unsafe practices such as misdiagnoses and delays in care, urging parents to prioritise antenatal care and vaccinations.

Also speaking, the Chairman of HEFAMAA, Dr. Yemisi Solanke described children as "totally dependent and highly vulnerable." She called for stronger protection against neglect, abuse, and unsafe practices both within hospitals and in homes.

The celebration brought together health professionals, policymakers, and community stakeholders to renew their commitment to child safety and improved healthcare delivery in Lagos State.

Resident doctors in FCT suspend strike



The Association of Resident Doctors in the Federal Capital Territory Administration (ARD-FCTA) has called of its indefinite strike.

This was announced by the president of the association, Dr George Ebong, who confirmed the suspension of the industrial action on Friday, September 19, 2025.

The decision to suspend the strike, according to Ebony, was a result of interventions from the Senate.

He announced that the resident doctors will return to work on Monday, September, despite the fact that none of the doctors' demands have been met so far.

"We are suspending the strike to begin work at 8 a.m. Monday morning," Ebong said.

The resident doctors embarked on a warning strike on Monday, September 15, to press home their demands after months of unresolved negotiations with the FCTA.

The doctors are demanding the payment of salary arrears ranging from one to six months, owed to members employed since 2023.

They also want the immediate recruitment of new staff, settlement of the 2025 Medical Residency Training Fund, and payment of arrears arising from the 25–35 per cent upward review of the Consolidated Medical Salary Structure, among others. on a warning strike on Monday, September 15, to press home their demands after months of unresolved negotiations with the FCTA.

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Lagos Health Commissioner calls on NGOs to unite, tackle sickle cell disease

In order to maintain stronger control of sickle cell diseases, the Lagos State Government has convened a harmonised meeting of foundations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the sector. The session, which took place on September 16, 2025, at the Conference Room of the Lagos State Ministry of Health, brought together over 25 groups under the Chairmanship of the Honourable Commissioner for Health, Prof. Akin Abayomi.

Prof. Abayomi, in his opening remarks, emphasised the urgent need for coordinated action to tackle what he described as one of the most pressing public health challenges in Lagos and Nigeria. He noted that while the number of associations has increased to about 25 in Lagos, scattered efforts without alignment risk-limiting real impact.

The Commissioner observed that one in four Nigerians carries the sickle cell gene, with two to three per cent living with the full-blown disease. He explained that the persistence of the gene had historic roots linked to malaria but stressed that with Lagos already winning the fight against malaria, deliberate steps must now be taken to reduce the sickle cell burden.

To this end, he announced plans to establish haematology daycare centres across all local governments where patients can receive immediate, specialised care during crises. He recalled that the State built 10 oxygen triage centres during COVID-19, some of which could be converted into facilities for sickle cell management.

Prof. Abayomi further stated that the government is keen on reducing the genetic burden through informed counselling for couples while promoting advances in research and treatment. He pointed out that Lagos has opportunities to extend insurance coverage to sickle cell patients through the State Health Scheme, ensuring access to life-saving interventions such as hydroxyurea.

On a forward-looking note, the Commissioner pledged that the soon-to-be-completed Massey Specialist Children's Hospital will be developed into a hub for sickle cell research and advanced care, including hydroxyurea therapy, gene therapy, and stem cell transplantation. He stressed the importance of developing a coalition strategy document with clear targets and timelines for collaborative implementation.

In her intervention, Chairperson of the Coalition and CEO of CrimsonBow Sickle Cell Initiative, Ms. Timi Edwin, described the high number of births with sickle cell annually as unacceptable. She appealed for equity in access to healthcare, stressing that hydroxyurea, though a proven therapy, remains scarce and expensive for many patients.

She thanked the State Government for plans to establish sickle cell clinics but urged stronger collaboration on funding, including co-writing grants and engaging the private sector through corporate social responsibility investments. According to her, sickle cell is not only a health challenge but a development and human dignity issue linked with poverty and productivity losses.

Edwin also promised that the coalition would remain accountable, submitting reports and engaging with the State regularly. She emphasised the importance of partnerships, especially with schools, hospitals, and pharmaceutical firms, to expand genotype testing, early detection, and affordable treatment options.

Dr Abosede Wellington, the Lagos State Sickle Cell Disorder Control Programme Coordinator, underscored the scale of the burden, citing Nigeria's 40 million carriers and 150,000 new cases annually, making it the global epicentre of the disease. She warned that SCD contributes to 9% of under-five deaths in sub-Saharan Africa, with Lagos bearing a significant share.

She highlighted the State's strategic pillars of advocacy, awareness, screening, treatment, and research. Since 2021, newborn screening has expanded to 75 health facilities, with over 7,600 babies screened and more than 280 positive cases referred for care, averting severe outcomes for families.

NLNG invests in innovation to raise future-ready workforce – GM

Nigeria LNG Limited (NLNG) has intensified investment in upskilling and retention strategies to nurture the next generation of professionals for the global energy industry.

Dr Sophia Horsfall, NLNG's General Manager, External Relations and Sustainable Development, made the remark during a panel session at the concluded Gastech Exhibition and Conference in Milan, Italy.

The session was themed "Nurturing the Workforce of Tomorrow through Upskilling and Retention Strategies."

Horsfall said the global energy industry faced a "talent paradox," with the International Energy Agency projecting 14 million new jobs in low-carbon and renewable energy by 2030.

According to her, the World Economic Forum also estimates that 60 per cent of the workforce would require reskilling to remain relevant in future job markets.

"This demonstrates a huge talent gap, highlighting the need to nurture the next generation of professionals with skills for jobs that do not even exist today," she said.

She said the challenge was equally an opportunity for Nigeria, considering its youthful population and growing energy sector.

She said that NLNG had been committed to bridging the talent gap in areas such as digital competencies, data analytics, energy management in the renewable space, low-carbon solutions, and leadership in sustainability.

Horsfall said NLNG had designed its graduate trainee and young professionals' programmes to bridge such skill gaps and attract motivated talent.

She explained that young professionals sought more than employment, desiring purpose, hybrid work flexibility, and opportunities for creativity and innovation.

"These are embedded in NLNG's value proposition. We ensure they can build flexible careers, moving between technical and leadership roles depending on their interests," she added.

Horsfall said NLNG engaged new recruits through competitive selection processes and familiarisation sessions with senior leaders and colleagues across different organisational levels.

Nigeria leads African countries to sign petroleum regulatory charter

Nigeria has signed a charter to establish the African Petroleum Regulators Forum (AFRIPERF) to promote investment and harmonisation of Petroleum regulations.

The landmark signing, chaired by Mr Gbenga Komolafe, Commission Chief Executive, Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), held on Thursday, on the sidelines of the 31st Africa Oil Week (AOW) in Accra, Ghana.

According to a statement by Eniola Akinkuotu, Head, Media and Strategic Communications, NUPRC, regulators from eight African countries formally endorsed the AFRIPERF Charter, while seven others present pledged to join after consultations.

Those that signed the charter included Nigeria, Ghana, Somalia, Gambia, Madagascar, Sudan, Guinea and Togo.

Komolafe who doubles as the Interim Chairman of the forum, described the 4th AFRIPERF Meeting and Charter Signing as a decisive step towards building a harmonised and sustainable petroleum industry in Africa.

He said that as the world navigated complex transitions toward cleaner, more sustainable energy systems, Africa must ensure that its vast hydrocarbon resources are managed with innovation, responsibility and foresight.

"From our initial announcement at the 8th SAIPEC to our inauguration during the NOG 2024 event and the careful drafting of the AFRIPERF Charter, each milestone has brought us closer to this historic day.

"By activating our Executive Committee, Technical Committee and Secretariat, we are establishing functional pillars to drive AFRIPERF forward," he said.

He said that the Executive Committee would serve as the principal oversight body guiding the implementation of AFRIPERF's objectives, while its membership is for heads of Africa's oil and gas regulatory bodies.

"The Technical Committee will be activated based on thematic or sectoral priorities arising from the Executive Committee or broader membership.

"Its membership will be drawn from subject matter experts from member countries and partners to handle matters regarding specific regulatory areas and industry issues," he said.

Komolafe said that the secretariat committee would comprise member countries, while nominations would be called for and presented to the executive committee for ratification.

According to him, AFRIPERF provides regulators with the mechanism to harmonise policies, address shared challenges and ensure that African perspectives are not only heard but respected on the global stage.

Seplat unveils $3bn 5-year growth plan



Seplat Energy Plc has unveiled a five-year roadmap to boost production capacity by 50 per cent between 2026 and 2030.

Chief Executive Officer, Roger Brown, disclosed this in a statement on Friday, following the firm's successful acquisition of Mobil Producing Nigeria Unlimited (MPNU).

He said the roadmap would be anchored on $2.5 to $3 billion capital investment over five years, beginning in 2026.

The investment will fund 120 to 150 new wells and up to three major gas projects, aimed at strengthening Nigeria's energy and power supply.

Brown said Seplat's strategy was supported by a significantly larger resource base, confirmed by a new independent Competent Person's Report (CPR).

The report revealed proven and probable reserves above one billion barrels of oil equivalent, an 18 per cent increase from previous estimates.

It also showed total reserves and resources rose nearly 90 per cent to 2.3 billion barrels of oil equivalent, providing long-term growth and energy security.

Brown said the roadmap would materially grow production, increase cashflow, and drive enhanced shareholder returns, while supporting Nigeria's economic future.

He described Nigeria as a land of opportunity with strong population growth and economic vibrancy, positioning Seplat as a key energy player.

Brown noted the plans reflected confidence in the Nigerian economy, stressing Seplat's commitment as a reliable partner to government and investors.

As part of its strategy, Seplat is in talks with the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Ltd. (NNPC) on selling a 10 per cent joint venture interest.

This would align NNPC's stake at 70 per cent, reinforcing the partnership.

Brown also confirmed a revised dividend policy, committing 40 to 50 per cent of free cash flow to investors.

He said the policy included a base dividend of at least $120 million annually, with a 10 per cent rise in the third-quarter dividend for 2025.

He further disclosed plans to cut operating costs to $10 per barrel of oil equivalent by 2030, strengthening Seplat's position as a low-cost operator.

FG says Nigeria's marine and blue economy offer boundless investment opportunities

The Federal Government of Nigeria says the nation's marine and blue economy offers vast, untapped investment opportunities, positioning the country as a strategic destination for foreign investors seeking sustainable growth.

Mr Adegboyega Oyetola, Minister of Marine and Blue Economy said this on Friday in a statement signed by his Media Adviser, Dr Bolaji Akinola.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that Oyetola is being represented in London International Shipping Week (LISW) 2025, by Dr Dayo Mobereola, Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA).

Oyetola said that Nigeria's maritime sector had the potentials to drive economic growth, create jobs and position the nation as a regional maritime hub.

He urged African investors and other maritime investors and stakeholders to seize the vast opportunities to harness the sector's immense opportunities.

"We urge investors to look beyond short-term gains and embrace the long-term benefits of investing in Nigeria's fast-evolving maritime landscape.

"Our oceans and inland waterways are our life-blood, our highways to prosperity and the very arteries that will fuel the African Continental Free Trade Area.

"Nigeria's significant progress in maritime security, the success of the Deep Blue Project has eliminated piracy in Nigerian waters and contributed to a sharp decline in incidents across the Gulf of Guinea.

"Nigeria has recorded three consecutive years without piracy attacks in its territorial waters, a feat that has earned commendations from the International Maritime Bureau.

"This is proof that Nigeria is a safe destination for maritime investments," he said.

Oyetola said that Nigeria's growing port infrastructure with the landmark Lekki Deep Sea Port stood as a symbol of public-private partnership success.

According to him, the state-of-the-art facilities and capacity berth the world's largest vessels and Lekki Port is expected to serve as a vital trans-shipment hub for landlocked African nations.

The minister said that the government's ambitious reforms were all geared towards positioning Nigeria as the maritime hub of West and Central Africa.



He said that government understood seas security was non-negotiable and remained committed to sustaining its security gains through technology-driven surveillance, strong legal frameworks and regional collaboration.

This, he said, would scale-up trans-shipment operations for countries such as Chad, Niger and Burkina Faso, positioning Nigeria as the maritime hub of the sub-region.

Oyetola called for support for Nigeria's candidature for election into Category C of the IMO Council for the 2026–2027 Biennium.

"Our campaign is not just about a seat for Nigeria; it is about securing a stronger voice for the entire African continent," he said.

Oyetola called for collaborations with in the African maritime sector for secured, sustainable, and seamlessly integrated maritime industry.

Olukoyede Charges South-South Youths against Fraudulent Practices

The Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Mr. Ola Olukoyede, has called on youths in the South-South region to resist the lure of internet fraud and other financial crimes, describing fraud as a deadly trap that destroys lives and future.

He gave this charge in Port Harcourt, Rivers State on Monday, September 15, 2025 at an event organized by the Coalition of Nigerian Youth on Security and Safety Affairs (CONYSSA).

Speaking on the theme, "Uniting South-South Youths in the Fight Against Cultism, Pipeline Vandalism, Internet Fraud, Money Laundering, Drug Abuse, Human Trafficking and Economic Sabotage," Olukoyede , who spoke through Head, Advance Fee Fraud Section, Port Harcourt Zonal Directorate of the EFCC, Chief Superintendent of the EFCC, CSE Coker Oyegunle, warned that while fraud may appear to offer "easy money," it ultimately leads to shame, imprisonment, and lost opportunities.

"Fraud is not success; it is a trap. Easy come, easy go. Many who follow the path of 'yahoo-yahoo' always end up losing their freedom, reputation, and future. The law is catching up with them and digital footprints never disappear. Don't destroy your tomorrow with shortcuts today," he said.

The EFCC boss highlighted that internet fraud, money laundering, and economic sabotage cost Nigeria billions of naira annually, undermining national growth and depriving citizens of infrastructure, jobs, and opportunities. Beyond the economic damage, he pointed out that the crimes erode Nigeria's international image and subject innocent Nigerians to stricter visa restrictions abroad.

The EFCC's boss urged the youth to channel their talents into productive ventures such as digital innovation, entrepreneurship, agriculture, and creative industries, all of which offer sustainable opportunities without the risks of crime.

He also reminded the audience that Nigeria's strength lies in its young population: "Youths are the engine of our nation. If you choose fraud, you are choosing to destroy your tomorrow. But if you choose creativity, innovation and honesty, you are building a Nigeria that will compete with the best in the world", he said.

The Chairman reaffirmed the Commission's readiness to continue its sensitization, enforcement, and collaboration with communities to combat fraud and related crimes, while calling on all stakeholders, especially young people to be partners in building a nation defined by integrity and prosperity.

In his remark, representative of the Chairman, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, Assistant Commander General, Narcotics, Mathew Ewah, warned that drug abuse remains one of the most dangerous threats to Nigerian youths.

"Drug abuse is a social problem. Sadly, youths are the majority abusing drugs in Nigeria, and this is worrisome. It turns many into social misfits, affecting their families, communities, and ultimately the country," he said. He stressed that prevention is the most effective weapon in the war against drug abuse, adding that the youth stage of life is a "make or mar period" that must be carefully guarded.

Speaking on 'Uniting the Youths in South-South against Pipeline Vandalism', Assistant Superintendent of Corps, Kabiru Zakari who represented the Commander General, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, NSCDC addressed the dangers of pipeline vandalism and its devastating effects on communities.

"Oil spillage from vandalism leads to serious health issues, destroys creeks and farmlands, and weakens agriculture in the South-South. Youths must stop being tools of vandalism and instead serve as community surveillance officers who protect, not destroy, our resources", he said.

Earlier, in his opening remarks, the Director General of CONYSSA, Ade Mario Emmanuel, emphasized the role of young people in shaping Nigeria's future and the need to support security agencies that are genuinely committed to ending insecurity.

He called on all youths to unite in the fight against pipeline vandalism, cultism, and economic sabotage, stressing that "all of us must get into the fight for a greater country."



NBA, EFCC Pledge Stronger Partnership in Anti-corruption Fight



The Nigerian Bar Association, NBA, and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, is to forge a stronger bond in the fight against corruption.

This was agreed on Tuesday, September 16, 2025 when the chairman of the Ilorin Branch of NBA, Barrister Sulyman Kosemani led other members of the executive on a courtesy visit to the Ilorin Zonal Director of the EFCC, Daniel Isei.

Kosemani, who commended the existing synergy between the EFCC and legal practitioners in Kwara State, however, observed the need for a deeper collaboration. He urged the Commission to intensify its searchlight on politically exposed persons, PEPs, particularly public office holders towards ensuring accountability in the management of state funds, especially with the enhanced monthly financial allocations to the state following the fuel subsidy removal.

The NBA chairman further called for increased involvement of lawyers in EFCC activities, noting that such collaboration would foster a seamless and more productive relationship.

Isei in his response, expressed delight for the visit, describing lawyers as EFCC's indispensable allies in the anti-corruption fight.

"Lawyers and law enforcement agents cannot do without each other. We can achieve more together through synergy," he said.

He however, cautioned the lawyers against undue interference in the Commission's investigations and urged them to support the EFCC with credible intelligence, particularly in high profile cases. He reminded the legal practitioners of their duty as ministers in the temple of justice, advising them to provide sound counsel to their clients and refrain from filing frivolous applications aimed at frustrating trials.

"As far as we are concerned, our gates are open to lawyers and other stakeholders for collaboration. We remain committed to professionalism and integrity in the discharge of our duties," he said.

Eschew Workplace Corrupt Practices, Olukoyede Tells Public Servants



The Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Ola Olukoyede has charged public servants in the country to steer clear of workplace corrupt practices and be guided by ethical conduct in the discharge of their duties.

He gave the admonition on Tuesday, September 16, 2025 during the induction training, organised for new employees of the National Hydroelectric Power Producing Areas Development Commission (N- HYPPADEC) in Kaduna.

Speaking through Chief Superintendent of the EFCC, CSE Nana Fatima Abubakar of the Public Affairs Department of the Kaduna Zonal Directorate of the EFCC, Olukoyede expressed delight for forums that provide opportunities for the Commission sensitizing members of the public and educating them on the activities of the Commission.

In a paper titled "Overview of the EFCC Activities, Sensitisation on Financial Crimes, Conduct and Importance of Ethical Behaviour," the EFCC boss enumerated what constituted ethical behaviours in a workplace and ways to sustain them. He further gave a rundown of the Commission's mandate, structure and different ways it collaborates with stakeholders in the fight against corruption, stressing that compliance to rules and regulations at all times was imperative for all employees for any organisation to succeed.

He further reminded the participants to see their employment in the N- HYPPADEC as a call to serve, requiring them to give their best and to shun activities that will negatively affect the organisation. He urged them to report acts of corruption within their work place and environments to the Commission through the Eagle Eye App, the official digital fraud reporting App of the EFCC.

The training was aimed at acquainting the fresh N-HYPPADEC employees with negative attitudinal and behavioural patterns in the line of their duties.

In another development, the EFCC, and the National Emergency Management Agency, NEMA, have resolved to forge a stronger inter-agency ties pursuant to their mandates.

The agreement was reached when Sani Alhaji Lokoja, Zonal Director Northwest, NEMA paid a familiarisation visit to the acting Zonal Director, Kaduna Zonal Directorate of the EFCC, Bawa Usman Kaltungo.

Lokoja, who expressed delight with the remarkable impacts of the EFCC's anti-corruption fight noted the need for well-meaning Nigerians to support the fight against corruption for the progress of the country and the citizens. "The EFCC and NEMA have come a long way in terms of collaboration in the line of their duties," he said, adding that NEMA has not taken the robust relationship for granted, but rather wishes to enhance it with collaborations with the Commission. He seized the opportunity to shed light on his agency's responsibilities and how the EFCC can assist it make greater achievements in its mandates.

While appreciating Lokoja and his entourage for the visit, Kaltungo commended NEMA for its drive for collaboration with the EFCC and the agency's service to the society. He noted that the EFCC was not an island unto itself and welcomes every collaboration with stakeholders that will be beneficial to the people and to both agencies of the government.

He reiterated that the fight against corruption was a collective responsibility and urged NEMA to ensure transparency and accountability in the course of discharging its responsibilities, especially as it pertains to public safety.

I don't want to get pregnant for the wrong man- Vee

Ex-Big Brother Naija housemate Victoria Iye known as Vee, says; she is determined not to fall into the hands of the wrong man by getting pregnant for the person and becoming a baby mama

According to her, dating; especially in Lagos is difficult and the man can talk down on you despite being the mother of his child.

Vee explained that though she might be stubborn and hot headed, but she wouldn't want to make a mistake when it comes to choosing the right partner.

The Nollywood actress said this while speaking in a recent video broadcast she posted on the social media.

Vee has this to say, "It is my mission in life to avoid the wrong man getting me pregnant. And it's not to say I'm better than the women that have been in that position.

"It's simply because I know myself, I know what I'm like and I try to avoid certain situations that would put me in a state of psychosis. I'm passionate about not getting messed up and maybe that is what stops me from finding unapologetic love.

"I'm stubborn. I'm hard-headed. But I'm not stupid. I need to make sure that when it comes to choosing a life partner, I try my best to get it right. You can't know someone 100 per cent, but you can try your best.

" People, experience is the best teacher, not in my world. Especially when there's the internet where people are sharing their experiences. I don't need to experience something to know that it's not going to work for me."



My sexuality attracts both male and female, says BBN Isabella

The Big Brother Housemates seems to be throwing up surprises with some of their personal revelations. Isabella, one of the housemates in BBA season 10 has said that she attracts both male and female with her sexuality.

The beautiful reality star revealed this while denying the insinuation by another housemate that she has body odour.

Isabella argued that if she had body odour like some of the housemates claimed, she wouldn't have been attracting romantic partners across genders.

"They can't say what is going to affect me. God forbid. They wished. If I wasn't meeting guys, it's a different thing. I get both genders that eat my p*ssy at any time I want. So, what they are saying here doesn't move or shake me," she boasted.

Few days ago, another housemate, Joanna, disclosed to Mide that she once approached Isabella to tell her that she has body odour and should tackle it, but she (Isabella) claimed that it was only when she smoked. However, Joanna insisted that it was all the time.

Joanna's advice did not go down well with Isabella, who has been throwing tantrums at her since then.



I'm unfreezing my eggs so I can have more kids -Tiwa Savage

Award winning Nigerian singer Tiwa Savage, says, she wants to have more male children. Tiwa who has a son from her previous marriage said she no longer wants to freeze her eggs as she wants to consider the possibility of having more children.

The mother of one said this in a recent interview with US podcaster, Joe Budden.

The curvy diva, expressed her strong desire for male children and revealed how she had previously undergone egg freezing to preserve her chances of having more children.

"I want more children, boys. I have actually done egg freezing. I am just preparing. Like I said, I am not young. I am thinking about my age and want to get my eggs while they are still very healthy," she said.

Meanwhile the suave singer, says; she once had a male colleague who wanted to have something serious with her but wanted it hidden to the public, but he flirted around with other girls.



According to her, the male colleague who she failed to name was seriously interested in her but, he insisted that they keep the relationship away from public scrutiny. Meanwhile the same person will go out of his way to mingle, chat and rub shoulders with other ladies while giving her that look that what he was doing is just to cover up.

She said, "No, it's a disrespect. I'm a public figure and he is as well. Oh my God, I hope he doesn't. So he did this thing where he's just like, I don't want us to go public because I don't want people to know and all that kind of stuff. So I'm like, okay, cool. Then it was like, okay, when we go out, I might be talking to other people, but I'm just doing it so people don't suspect. And I was like, okay, but how far are you going with this? He got that one off, he had it good. Yeah, and we might be in the same event, and he's… Working the room. Yeah, probably talking, rubbing, and I'm there, and he's still looking at me like, I'm just doing it. And I can't say nothing. I mean, you can't. And it's in front of me", she said.

Although the singer did not name the male colleague, but a lot of fans who reacted to the interview believe she was referring to singer Wizkid whom the ex-husband had accused of dating her.

No more dating men I'm richer than -Nkechi Blessing



Beautiful Nollywood actress Nkechi Blessing Sunday, says; she is done dating men that she is richer than. She revealed that she is more financially stable than the men she has dated in her previous relationships and have always taken care of them but wouldn't want to continue with this trend again.

The actress said this in a recent episode of her podcast, where she shared her experiences in her failed relationship. Remember that the curvy actress not o long ago, parted ways with another entertainer, Eseoghene Obire known as Xxssive, whom she started dating since 2021 after her failed relationship with Ekiti State born politician, Opeyemi Falega.

The actress noted that she has dated three different men and this has remained the same but she has decided to put a stop to it.

"I've never dated someone who has more money than I do. I've dated down three times, and I'm not doing that anymore".

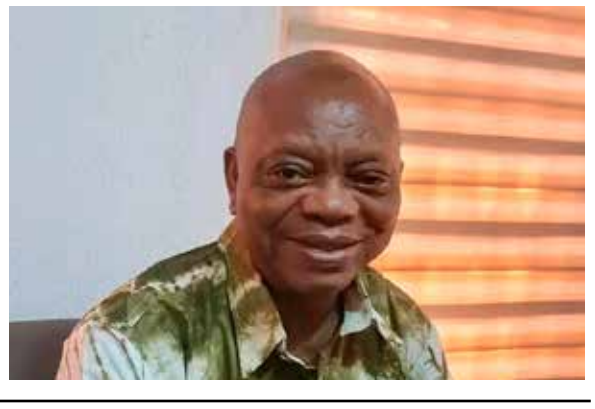
A couple of months ago, NBS, as she is fondly called, revealed her new lover whom she described as her 'joy and odogwu'. She further revealed that though she has promised not to expose her man, he is too handsome to be kept under wrap. Nkechi noted that the unnamed lover us now the one sponsoring her. She promised to love him for the rest of her life

MCSN opens branch in Edo to entrench services in zone

The Musical Copyright Society Nigeria Ltd/Gte (MCSN), has commenced operations at its Benin City office to cover Edo and Delta States. The office situated at No.8 Amede Street, off Giwa Amu road, GRA, commenced operations penultimate week after a successful recruitment exercise.

The office is to take care of the licensing needs of users of musical works and sound recordings in Edo and Delta states by bringing the services closer to them.

A management team from its Lagos office is in the state to give the newly recruited staffs a comprehensive training in copyright administration to equip them with the tools they need to interact and licence users of music like hotels, lounges, restaurants, supermarkets, cinema halls, banking halls, factories, aircrafts, public transportation systems, buses, taxis, television and radio broadcast stations, and night clubs in the cities of Benin, Asaba and environs.





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BEHIND EKHEWAN BARRACK

Diri Receives NULGE's Best Governor Award As Bayelsa Clears N12bn Pension Backlog





The Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) has honoured Governor of Bayelsa State, Senator Douye Diri, as the Best Governor on Local Government Reforms in Nigeria.

NULGE President, Comrade Aliyu Kankara, presented the award to the governor in Yenagoa during a conference on "Promoting Local Government Workers' Welfare: The Bayelsa Model."

Comrade Kankara said Governor Diri's achievements include transforming the local government system in the state through the introduction of fiscal policy reforms that repositioned the third tier of government for better service delivery, staff welfare, regular promotions and financial benefits.

The NULGE president said implementation of N80,000 minimum wage for council workers and an additional 25 and 30 per cent salary increase as well as the government's support to councils in the payment of primary schools teachers salary were some of the heartwarming testimonies of the union members.

He described as unprecedented the governor's timely payment of pensions and gratuities to local government retirees, saying Bayelsa was the first state in the country to pay retirement entitlements immediately after service.

He said: "The Governor of Bayelsa State has excelled where many other state governors have failed in human capital development by prioritising the welfare of workers in the state, particularly those at the grassroots level.

"From available information, Governor Diri's administration has paid over N20 billion as arrears of gratuity to retired workers in Bayelsa State since he was sworn in in 2020."

National President of the Medical and Health Workers Union of Nigeria (MHWUN), Dr. Kabir Sani, also appreciated the governor for improving the lives of local government workers in the state, including those from his union.

Governor Douye Diri, in his remarks, said regular payment of salaries to workers and gratuity to retirees were part of the reasons he was elected and should not be celebrated.

He revealed that he was initially accused of attempting to score cheap political points for doing the right thing in offsetting the backlog of gratuities, which dated back to 2007.

Governor Diri said the challenges he met on assuming office necessitated the reforms as several of the councils had huge financial deficits and relied on the state government for bailouts.

He said his vision for government at all levels was to secure the livelihood of the people, enhance food availability and generate more revenue.

He restated his directive to council chairmen to embark on farming in areas of comparative advantage in order to boost food supply in the state.

His words: "The moment you retire at 60 or 65 years, you become a senior citizen and you are entitled to your gratuity. In other climes, it is taken for granted. Therefore we should not celebrate it.

"Initially, some persons queried it when I started immediately paying gratuities. They said previous administrations did not pay.

"I reminded such critics that my father was a teacher, a headmaster. If not for the opportunity of a child like me, he would have died without his pensions and gratuity.

"Having that at the back of my mind, one of the priorities I had was to ensure that the backlog of gratuities were cleared. I recall a particular month we had a windfall in our allocation, I directed the payment of N7 billion for gratuity and pensions."

He commended his deputy, Senator Lawrence Ewhrudjakpo, for effective supervision of the councils and for ensuring a proper implementation of the reforms.

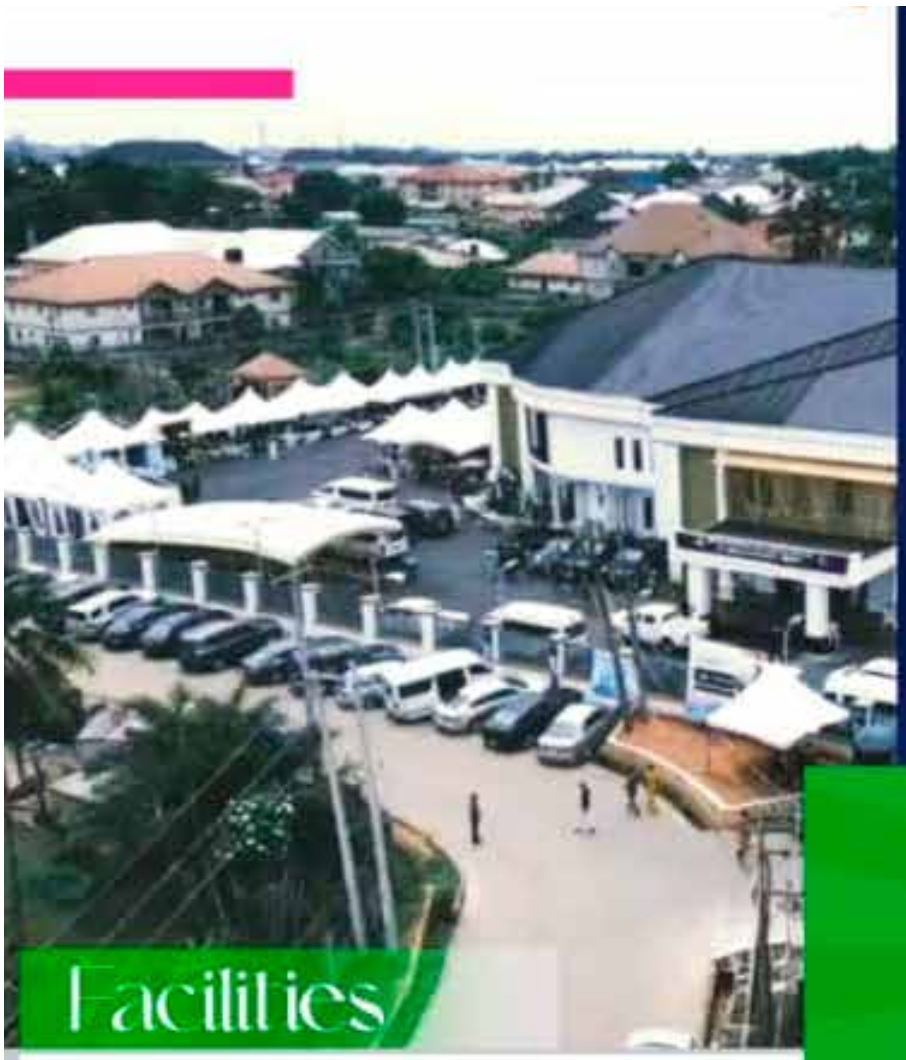
In a welcome address, the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Chief Thompson Amule, said before the Diri administration, only four councils managed to regularly pay salaries while the others were insolvent and had months of outstanding salary arrears, pensions, gratuity and death benefits.

Amule also stated that workers promotion was stagnated for more than five years but that the present administration swiftly introduced fiscal reforms to engender financial security in the system.

Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, the chairman of Kolokuma/Opokuma council, Mr. Lelei Tariye, said the local government system in the state was working because the government adhered strictly to autonomy for the councils even before the Supreme Court judgement.

Highpoint of the event was the symbolic presentation of N12 billion cheques to over 1000 retirees across the eight local government areas.

Daniel Alabrah
Chief Press Secretary
September 19, 2025



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Life-changing secrets about BBN House -Tracy

Tracy Ekwe, one of the housemates in the Big Brother Naija Season 10 currently on-going, got evicted last Sunday alongside Denari. She shares her experience in the House in this interview with ORJI ONYEKWERE.

What's one thing you are glad the cameras did not capture and one thing you wish the cameras had captured?

Okay, one thing I'm glad the camera did not capture is the toilet scenes because a lot of us had deep conversations there. But you know the kind, like capture people using the toilet. What I wish they captured was captured. I think they captured everything because obviously everybody cannot be in front of the cameras at the same time.

What are your immediate plans and long-term goals now that you are out of the house?

My immediate plan is to go straight to content creation, try my hands in acting, do some skits like lifestyle and content creation. See if I could go into modeling.

My long-term goal is to establish myself and become like a household name. For example, if you change to a platform in a known name like in the Nigerian entertainment industry.

Coming out of the house, you've seen and heard the conversations people have had about you outside the house and in the house. So what resonates with you most? What pissed you off?

Okay, for me, I've not really seen anything per se. So, I haven't really seen any conversation per se of people having things to say about me.

I've not really seen, I've not even really searched out for any reviews about myself outside the house. I've not really followed people's comments before coming for this platform.

Which housemate do you think stands a chance of emerging the winner?

Uh well, okay, for me, coming out and what I've seen, I have three people in mind because you can't really tell. So, to me, it's between um I mean see, Faith and Khoin.

You emerged as the first head of house this season. So what was the feeling like?

Well, it was by my own merit. Thanks have to go to my fans. They tried their best but I was up for eviction back-to-back to back-to-back. And then for emerging the first head of house this season, it felt really good because in this season there was Head of House as a challenger. That's why I wanted Head of House.

I thought about what it could cause thinking about the challenge because I didn't aim to be the HOH for the week.

I want to challenge and I felt so good because I'm amazing and I felt so proud of myself. But I didn't see myself winning it. So that was a very proud moment for me. Yeah.

You said you wanted out. I remember hearing you say, you were tired of the house, the energy and everything.

When I said out, I didn't mean out of the house. I wanted something that like what John and Blue Boy went through, like stepping out of the house for two days. I'm sure that helped them. Like I just step out, catch my breath and come back. Not like leave the house completely because being in that house can be a lot.

So, I just wanted like one hour of silence to just get myself back and then come back into the house.

So yeah, that was what it was.



Was there any particular incident that triggered that moment for you?

No, it was everything. It was basically everything and I think that last week, the team I was in, they were not like serious with the way they were handling things. And so it just kind of frustrated me.

Then the things going on in the house, I mean taking all the spoons and forks. Then if you want to eat, you have to be on a queue because there's only one fork and one spoon in the house. So everything happening was just um irritating me. I just wanted like time out and then come back.

Now that you guys are out of the house, what's next? What should we be expecting?

We want that and we are going to work on that. We've to reach out to shows and we want that too. For me personally, one thing is to establish myself as a brand.

Try content, lifestyle content. Lifestyle content, yeah. Like cooking content, some like outfits, some books, you know like everything centered around me, yeah.

if you have to choose between going into content creation full time like you mentioned and pursuing your professional career, which would you pick like right now?

Content creation. Content creation. Yeah, right now, yes.

But for future, no. I will still, after getting that degree, this stress, after this trip, I'll know. You know, I'm still going to do my masters and I should pursue that. But right now, I'm focused on content creation, to build myself as a brand.

Do you think that strategy that you went in with to the house worked for you?

I didn't go with a strategy. I went in as I am. I wanted to be myself because I wanted fans that could relate to me and resonate with me. So, I just had to be who I wanted to be and they did. I think that being myself was like great and everything and it got me to the seventh week and I'm really grateful.

Okay, nice.

What's that thing that happened in the house that you only found out after you left?

There are lots of situations where the cameras didn't capture from the beginning because maybe the camera was on something else. So, by the time they realized something was happening, they didn't capture the beginning of such incident.

So I realized that there are lots of misconceptions, lots of stories because people don't know how it started.

I feel like they should stop pointing fingers. The housemates should come out and say their part, not everything was shown because the cameras can't be at the same place. Maybe, by the time the camera pans to me now, I'm pushing Denari, but they didn't show what Denari did to me before I pushed him.

And you guys, the fans are already like, "Oh, Tracy, Tracy, Tracy, I'm pushing Denari." So, yes, I noticed a lot of things seem like the camera didn't capture from the beginning. So there's a lot of misconceptions going online.

Was there anything going on between you and Kuture in the house?

It's all just friendship. So, just Kuture being Kuture. There's nothing. There was nothing going on between me and Kuture. Just friendship.

You said, you were already tired in the house. Do you think this influenced how you played the game the week before your exist?

Um, yeah, I think being tired affected my decisions. It also affected me not showing my emotions in whatever was going in the house.

What's that one thing that you took out of the Big Brother experience?

For me, uh, the house definitely, like you said, taught me tolerance. There are a lot of things that maybe you wouldn't tolerate outside. If they just start with the video camera, we should just move. Or you just say them like, "Please leave me alone."

But you cannot do that. You could simply say, "Leave me alone," and that's all that you got to say.

It taught me tolerance. It taught me perseverance and resilience, you know.

There were a lot of times where I was not winning. Like there was nothing for the first week, second week, third week.

I didn't win anything. And I wasn't winning anything, and it was really bad. I felt really bad, like it was only me at some point.

For me, I didn't win anything. But then suddenly I started winning. I think I won three in a row. I just won, won, won three.

And I was like, "Wow, what if I give up, become lazy, and stop giving my best in the arena games?

So, it taught me resilience. And it also taught me perseverance because of Doris because she didn't win anything.

But she kept going. It's not easy for somebody that you don't win anything, not winning even one arena game.

Yeah, she didn't win any arena games, but she didn't say, "Okay, I didn't win any arena games, so I'm not performing because they didn't win any arena games. She kept trying. She kept doing the chores.

And I was like, "Wow," because if it's me outside, I tried once, I'll probably like, "Okay, I cannot," you know. But she kept, you know, she kept going. So, this house taught me tolerance. It taught me resilience. It taught me perseverance, how to persevere. Basically, these are the things the house taught me. It taught me all these things. Perseverance, yeah, tolerance and uh uh resilience.

Do you think that you got what you wanted in the house, aside the money obviously?

I didn't go into the house expecting to win the money. I didn't want the platform opportunity. Opportunity to see me and obviously the brands that might reach out or the people that might like me after the whole thing. So, I didn't go into this show expecting to win the money. Some people absolutely came into that show with that mentality, and that's right too. That's good for them.

But absolutely not. Everybody came in saying, "I'm going to go and win that thing."

So some people wanted the platform. Some people wanted to just stay long enough to be seen and noticed by millions of people around the world. And I achieved absolutely that.

I showed enough. I showed a lot. My only regret was not showing fast enough, not showing early enough, you know.

I think the first week was a bit slow for me because it was so much for me. I was trying to crawl into my shell, like trying to understand the whole bunch of characters I have met in the house.

But the second week, third week, fourth week, the second week too was a bit hard, but it was better than the first week. But third week, fourth week, fifth, sixth, seventh week, everybody wanted me on their team. I just started doing my thing.

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Ondo: House Leader felicitates Aiyedatiwa on Supreme Court victory

BY STEPHEN GBADA–MOSI

The Majority Leader and member representing Ose constituency in the Ondo State House of Assembly, Hon. Chief Olatunji Oshati (Maxima), has congratulated the state governor, Lucky Orimisan Aiyedatiwa, on his triumph at the Supreme Court.

Director of Maxima Media Team, Ade Akingbade, in a statement at the weekend, said Maxima describes Ayedatiwa's victory "and the attendant widespread jubilation that greeted it," as a validation of the mandate that people of Ondo State freely gave Mr. Governor at the poll.

"He also said it was an attestation to the groundswell of goodwill Mr. Governor enjoys in the state," he said.

Hon. Oshati, expressed his happiness and excitement that "Mr. Governor is poised to delivering on his promises to the people of the state— good governance and delivering democratic dividends.

"He expressed unparalleled optimism that Mr. Governor is on his way to achieving all that.

"He also called on the people of the state to continue to show support for Mr. Governor, assuring that the wellbeing and welfare of the people topped the agenda of the governor."

Aniagwu defends Delta Civil Service dress code

BY NOSA AKENZUA

Delta State Commissioner for Works (Rural Roads) and Public Information, Mr. Charles Aniagwu, has defended the state government's reinforcement of civil service dress code, insisting that the policy is rooted in existing rules and aimed at sustaining professionalism in the public service.

Aniagwu, who spoke on "Morning Express", a flagship programme on ADBN Television on Thursday, explained that the policy was not new but a reminder of long-standing civil service regulations that mandate decency and corporate appearance for public officers while on duty.

He stressed that civil servants are bound by the Nigerian Constitution, state laws, and most importantly, the Delta State Civil Service Rules, which clearly spell out standards of conduct and dress code.

"In Chapter One, particularly Code 01001, the rules apply to every civil servant in Delta State, while Code 04314 on page 42 specifically requires that civil servants must be decently dressed whenever they are in the office or representing the state government," he stated.

According to him, the regulation is no different from what obtains in the private sector where organizations like banks insist on corporate identity and decency in appearance.

"When people applied for jobs, they came dressed properly, not in rags. So why would they suddenly change after securing employment? Just as banks and other corporate institutions enforce standards, the civil service must also reflect decency and discipline," Aniagwu argued.

On concerns about wardrobe allowances, Aniagwu dismissed claims that the directive would impose financial strain, noting that civil servants already spend significantly on personal events.

"Our brothers and sisters attend weddings, parties, and other functions where they dress elegantly. If they can afford that, then the workplace, which pays their bills, also deserves that level of decency," he maintained.

The commissioner recalled that the dress code had been emphasized as far back as the Chief James Ibori administration, and later reinforced under Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan.

He said the present government under Governor Sheriff Oborevwori is only ensuring compliance, not introducing a new policy.

Reacting to the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) protest over non-consultation, Aniagwu emphasized that the Head of Service, as the number one civil servant in the state, is legally empowered to issue such directives and had in fact engaged permanent secretaries and key stakeholders on effective implementation.

"Our civil servants are valued partners. The governor believes strongly in harmony in the service because they are the engine room of government.

"This circular is not punitive, it is simply a reminder of what has always been in place. It is about projecting a decent image of the state and instilling the discipline expected in a regimental service," he said.

Aniagwu further clarified that the policy does not intrude into personal lives, stressing that civil servants are free to wear what they please outside the workplace.

"If you are going to swim, you dress for the pool. If you are going to play basketball, you wear sports gear. But when you come to the office, you must dress in line with the rules because you are representing the state government," he insisted.

Reserved Seats Bill: Pursuit for inclusive governance not tokenism - Deputy Speaker



BY MARK ABA

Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives, Rep Benjamin Kalu, has said the bill, seeking to create reserved seats for women in the National and State Houses of Assembly is not an act of tokenism, but a pursuit to increase women's political representation for a more inclusive governance and equitable society.

Kalu is also, Chairman, House Committee on Constitution Review stated this in his remarks at a special dialogue series on the reserved seats bill, hosted by Emerge Women Development Initiative, tagged; 'SheThePeople.'

Represented by his Chief of Staff, Sam Hart, the Deputy Speaker noted that the bill is proof to a collective commitment to encourage women inclusion in governance.

He said that the event themed: 'Deepening the Conversation, Accelerating Women's Representation in Governance,' calls for reflection on the journey embarked upon, and determination to ensure that women's voices are not only heard, but amplified in the halls of governance.

To accelerate progress, the Deputy Speaker called for candid conversations, more advocacy to dismantle systemic barriers that hinder women's full participation.

He commended women who have broken barriers and impacted the society, reaffirming the commitment of the parliament to continue the work they started, to advocate vigorously for policies that will see women not as tokens, but as partners in governance.

Kalu said: "I bring you warm compliments from the People's House; the House of Representatives, and the Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution. This event is not just a moment in time, but a movement toward justice, equality, and empowerment.

"The theme compels us to reflect on the journey we have embarked upon, a journey marked by courage, resilience, and determination to ensure that women's voices are not only heard but amplified in the halls of power. The Reserved Seats Bill, HB 1349, sponsored by myself and cosponsored by some members of the House is a legislative effort that seeks to carve out a dedicated space for women in our governance structures.

"As Chairman of the Constitution Review Committee, I believe it is essential to examine the provisions of our Constitution and ensure that they promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Hence, we have considered this bill that would create reserved seats for women in the National and State Houses of Assembly, promote inclusive Governance, enhance women's political representation and address gender disparities in our governance framework.

"This bill is not just a piece of legislation neither an act of tokenism; it is a proof to our collective commitment to change the narrative and to disrupt the status quo that has long sidelined women from decision-making tables.

"We must examine the electoral laws, party politics, and societal norms that hinder women's representation. We therefore must work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable political environment that encourages women to participate and thrive. As we deep dive into these discussions today, let us remember that the struggle for women's representation is not merely a fight for gender balance but a pursuit of a more inclusive and equitable society.

"It is a call to harness the untapped potential of half of our population who have the insight, compassion, and perspective to lead with empathy and vision. Thank you for your dedication, your passion, and your unflinching belief in the power of women to transform our world. Together, let us continue to deepen the conversation, accelerate representation, and create a legacy of equality and empowerment for generations to come."

Earlier in her opening remarks, the Founding Director of Emerge Women Development Initiative and Convener of SheThePeople Dialogue, Dr. Mary Ikoku noted that the dialogue aims to foster high-level conversations around women's political participation and empowerment in Nigeria.

Senator Karimi sympathises with victims of banditry in Kogi

IDRIS AHMED



Senator, Sunday Karimi, representing Kogi West has encouraged the people of Yagba West Local Government Area to unite against the callous terrorists' activities in synergy with security agencies.

The lawmaker was in the area to commiserate with the families of those who lost their lives during the incessant attacks by bandits.

Last week, Yagba local government area was thrown into mourning, following the murder of five security operatives, three policemen and two vigilantes, leading to mass protests by the people of the area. .

The Senator who sympathized with the families of the victims and the entire community. admonished the youths to remain law-abiding and vigilant, emphasizing on the need

for synergy and a holistic society approach to curb the rising insecurity.

He prayed for the restoration of peace in Nigeria, noting that the federal and state governments have continued to strive to secure the lives of the populace.

The lawmaker equally proceeded to the Nigerian Police Divisional office in Egbe, where he commiserated with the officers over the loss of their colleagues. encouraged them to remain strong and patriotic and donated N1m each to the widows and families of each of the three policemen who lost their lives in the gunmen attack.

The Senator was also at the homes of the slain vigilantes in Egbe, whose names were given as Dekunle Adodo and Kayode Joshua, where he prayed with their families, offering words of encouragement as he shared in their pains, donated undisclosed amounts to the families to alleviate their pain and assured them of his support forthwith.

He visited the home of Sunday Ajawe, one of the constituents who was attacked recently by the terrorists, and also made donations.

While addressing the youths in the local government area at the palace of the Elegbe of Egbe, Senator Karimi, reiterated his plea for peace, vigilance, and patriotism, admonishing his constituents to stop the "pull-down syndrome" and cooperate to develop the senatorial district.

According to the Senator, the unfortunate incident happened when he travelled abroad, but had monitored the developments and made critical contacts with relevant stakeholders and agencies to see that peace and normalcy returns.

NDLEA hands over 450,000 seized Pregabalin capsules to NAFDAC in Kano

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Kano State Strategic Command, on Thursday handed over 450,000 Pregabalin capsules it intercepted to the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) for further investigation.

Mr Abubakar Idris-Ahmad, Assistant Commander General of Narcotics (ACGN) and Kano State Commander of NDLEA, disclosed this while addressing newsmen during the handover ceremony in Kano.He said the consignment, concealed in a van and packed in 60 cartons, was intercepted by an NDLEA patrol team on the Kano–Hadejia Road.

According to him, the items were seized after no legitimate ownership or documentation was presented for the drugs.

Idris-Ahmad explained that the transfer was in line with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between NDLEA and NAFDAC on Nov. 24, 2024, which provides for closer collaboration in curbing the circulation of unregistered pharmaceuticals.

He reaffirmed the agency's commitment to strengthening inter-agency cooperation under the leadership of the NDLEA Chairman, retired Brig.-Gen. Buba Marwa.Receiving the seized drugs, the NAFDAC State Coordinator, Mr Kassim Idrissa-Ibrahim, who represented the Director-General of NAFDAC, Prof. Christiana Adeyeye, commended NDLEA for the seizure.

Adeyeye, described the handover as a demonstration of strong collaboration between the two agencies in safeguarding public health.

"This handover represents more than just a transfer of evidence; it symbolises the strength of our collective effort to protect Nigerians from harmful, unregistered, and potentially dangerous pharmaceutical products," she said.

The NAFDAC boss said the swift action of NDLEA had prevented the harmful substances from reaching unsuspecting citizens, adding that such synergy was vital in the fight against drug abuse and misuse.

NDLEA vows crackdown on drug barons, cannabis cultivators in Ondo

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Ondo State Command, has reaffirmed its resolve to take a tough stance against drug barons and cannabis cultivators sabotaging the fight against illicit drugs in the state.

The Assistant State Commander in charge of Operations and Training, Michael Apiri, issued the warning on Tuesday in Akure while receiving 10 bags of cannabis otherwise known as "Indian hemp" seized by the state government.

Apiri cautioned drug trafficking cartels to either abandon their criminal enterprises or be prepared to face the full weight of the law.

"We would not sit idly by while criminal elements exploit our communities and endanger the future of our youths. This war is total and uncompromising," he said.

Describing the menace of illicit drugs as a global challenge that requires holistic and technical solutions, he noted that many of those involved are highly placed and prominent in society.

Apiri stressed the need for synergy among relevant agencies and stakeholders, saying no single body could win the battle alone.

He commended the state government for handing over the confiscated items to the appropriate agency in line with the law, noting that the NDLEA is empowered to keep seized drugs for investigations and later destroy them publicly.

Handing over the seized cannabis, the Commissioner for Agriculture and Forestry, Leye Akinola disclosed that the 10 bags were confiscated from planters operating illegally in the Akure forest reserve.

Akinola said the seizure was made by a special task force set up by Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa's administration to clamp down on drug peddlers and protect the forest reserves from destruction.

He raised concern over the alarming rate at which planters destroy economic trees for cannabis cultivation, calling for stronger collaboration between the ministry and the NDLEA.

"The government is willing to work with any organization to stop these illegal activities and protect the forests for the betterment of mankind as created by nature," he said.

Akinola vowed that the state government would continue to take all lawful steps to safeguard the forests from encroachers.



Police Investigate Cause Of Death Of NDLEA's Cross River Commander In Hotel RoomHotel Room



The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has annnced the sudden death of its Cross River State Commander, CN Ogbonna Maurice Uzoma.

The report of his death was brought to the attention of the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of the Agency, Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (rtd) in Maiduguri, Borno state where he was attending a retreat for Heads of Agencies, organized by the Federal Ministry of Justice.

In a statement by Femi Babafemi, the Commission's Director, Media and Publicity, the late Commander was recently appointed and posted to take over leadership of the Cross River State Command of the Agency. He resumed on 18th August 2025 and took a temporary accommodation in a hotel in Calabar pending when he settles into a befitting accommodation.

CN Ogbonna has been up and doing at his new Command and was billed to lead his officers on some scheduled engagements at 10am on Thursday 18th September 2025 but when his officers didn't hear from him by 9am, they went to his hotel room in company of the hotel staff while several knocks at his door and calls to his telephone line went unanswered.

Attempts by the hotel staff to open or force the door open from outside failed, after which one of the hotel attendants had to go through the ceiling aperture to enter the room and open the door from inside, where they found the Commander's lifeless body. The Police Command in the state was promptly alerted after which the Commissioner of Police personally visited the scene while the police continue with investigation of the cause of death.

NIDCOM commends NDLEA, NSA, others on securing release of three Nigerians held in Saudi Arabia over drug allegations



Chairman/CEO Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa has commended the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the Office of the National Security Adviser (NSA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Nigerian Consulate in Jeddah for their collaborative efforts that led to the release of three Nigerians earlier detained in Saudi Arabia over alleged drug trafficking.

In a statement on Thursday Hon Dabiri-Erewa expressed relief that the

three Nigerians freed after four weeks in custody are Mrs Maryam Hussain Abdullahi, Mr Abdullahi Bahijja Aminu and Mr Abdulhamid Saddieq, were found innocent and discharged after weeks of detention.

According to the NiDCOM Boss, the successful resolution of the case is yet another testament to the fact that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration of Renewed Hope Agenda, will not relent in ensuring that no Nigerian anywhere in world suffers punishment for a crime they did not commit. while urging Nigerians to obey laws of host countries wherever they find themselves.

She recalled similar cases in which Zainab Aliyu and Ibrahim Ibrahim were released in Saudi Arabia a few years ago after being wrongfully accused of drug-related offences, stressing that the Nigerian Government will always stand firm to protect its citizens abroad.

She appealed to travelers to listen to the warnings by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to always cross check their luggage tags before checking-in their luggage.

Hon Dabiri-Erewa in the statement signed by Mr Gabriel Odu of the Media, Public Relations and Protocols Unit,

also appreciated the Saudi authorities for their cooperation in reviewing the case.

however, The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has re-arraigned a former Minister of Power and Steel, Dr. Olu Agunloye, before the Federal High Court sitting in Apo, Abuja, on an amended seven-count charge bordering on corruption and fraudulent contract award linked to the controversial $6 billion Mambilla Hydroelectric Power Project.

Agunloye appeared before Justice Jude Onwuegbuzie on Thursday, where he was accused of illegally awarding the multibillion-dollar contract for the 3,960-megawatt Mambilla power station to Sunrise Power and Transmission Company Limited in 2003, despite a contrary directive by the Federal Executive Council.

According to the EFCC, Agunloye, then serving as minister, knowingly disregarded a presidential directive when he wrote to Sunrise Power on May 2, 2003, conveying government approval for the massive hydroelectric project.

The anti-graft agency said his action contravened Section 123 of the Penal Code, which criminalizes disobedience of lawful directives issued by constituted authority.

The amended charge also alleged that Agunloye, in collaboration with Leno Adesanya, the Chairman of Sunrise Power (who is currently at large), presented a false document to the Federal Government on May 22, 2003, purporting to be a genuine agreement for the construction of the power station under a Build, Operate and Transfer arrangement.

The EFCC contended that the fraudulent action was intended to bind the Nigerian government to a contract with Sunrise Power without due process, an offence contrary to Section 366 and punishable under Section 364 of the Penal Code.

When the charges were read in court, the former minister pleaded not guilty to all counts.

Following his plea, prosecuting counsel M.K. Hussein requested a date for the continuation of the testimony of the third prosecution witness already in the box.

Justice Onwuegbuzie adjourned the matter to October 9, 2025, for continuation of trial.

Basketball: First Bank stun holders MFM 47-45 to reach final



The 2025 Zenith Bank/ NBBF Women's semi-final produced drama on Friday as First Bank of Lagos edged holders MFM Basketball Club 47-45 in a thrilling contest.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports the clash lived up to expectations, featuring two of Lagos' best-funded sides under the guidance of experienced coaches.

Both teams are fierce city rivals and have consistently produced top talents who represented Nigeria at international basketball championships over the years.

First Bank, long absent from the final of a competition they once dominated as "Old Takers", played with determination to reclaim their lost glory.

MFM, dominant in the past three editions as "New Takers", could not match the firepower displayed by their determined city rivals in this encounter.

The defeat means MFM will now settle for the third-place playoff after bowing to First Bank by the narrowest of margins.

NAN reports that MFM struck first, taking the opening two quarters 10-8 and 13-10 after a hard-fought battle.

First Bank adjusted tactics in the third quarter, applying greater pressure in attack while strengthening defence, a strategy that paid dividends.

MFM faltered, missing several free throws in the third quarter and conceding 18-15, allowing First Bank to edge back into the contest.

The "Old Takers" sealed victory in the final quarter with an 11-7 run, closing out a memorable 47-45 triumph.

In the other semifinal, Dolphins Basketball Club of Lagos, unbeaten in the group stage, faced Royal Aces of Abuja, newcomers making their mark.

Dolphins used experience and teamwork to overpower the hard-fighting Royal Aces 66-44, in spite of a closely contested encounter in the early stages.

Royal Aces eventually ran out of steam in the final quarter, enabling Dolphins to capitalise and secure a convincing victory.

NAN reports that fans were thrilled by the quality of women's basketball on display throughout the championship.

With their victory, Dolphins set up a final showdown with First Bank, a side determined to reclaim the trophy they once dominated.

Both teams are unbeaten this season, having topped their groups without blemish, making the final a true clash of the titans.

The championship decider promises intense action as two past champions fight for supremacy and bragging rights in the 2025 women's basketball finale.

World Athletics: Drama as Nigeria's Nathaniel loses bronze after initial upgrade

Ezekiel Nathaniel of Team Nigeria narrowly missed a historic bronze medal at the 2025 World Athletics Championships in Tokyo following a dramatic reversal.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that Nathaniel initially placed fourth in the men's 400m hurdles final, setting a new national record of 47.11 seconds.

His fortunes changed briefly when American Rai Benjamin, who won in 46.52 seconds, was disqualified. Nathaniel was promoted to third place.

As a result, Brazil's Alson Dos Santos moved from second to first, while Qatar's Abderrahman Samba was upgraded to silver.

However, the celebration was short-lived.



The U.S. Track and Field Federation (USATF) appealed Benjamin's disqualification. The appeal was upheld by the meet referee.

Benjamin was reinstated as champion, with Dos Santos returning to second and Samba to third. Nathaniel was pushed back to fourth.

Benjamin was initially disqualified for hitting the final hurdle in Lane 6, which displaced Nathaniel's last hurdle.

In spite of missing the podium, Nathaniel broke his own national record of 47.31 seconds, set in August.

He also became the second Nigerian to reach the 400m hurdles final at the World Championships, after Henry Amike in 1987.

Like Amike, Nathaniel also finished fourth.

Nathaniel had previously fallen short at the 2022 Oregon and 2023 Budapest editions, where he exited in the semi-finals.

His 2025 season includes winning the NCAA title, breaking two national records, and consistently running low 47-second times.

NAN reports that Team Nigeria concluded the Tokyo World Athletics Championships with one medal, won by Tobi Amusan.

This marks an improvement from the 2023 Budapest Championships, where Nigeria failed to win any medal.

Life harder for my dad than footballers –Maresca

Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca has dismissed sympathy for Raheem Sterling and Axel Disasi, saying his father has more of a "hard life" as a fisherman than his club's so-called 'bomb squad' players.

The Italian's comments followed Chelsea's talks with the Professional Footballers' Association about the ongoing exclusion of Sterling and Disasi from Maresca's first-team squad.

When asked about the pair training separately from his team, Maresca said: "I've been in Raheem's and Axel's situation as a player.

"For sure, I know it is not the best feeling for a player. For different reasons, the situation is the situation at the moment, but I know the club is giving them the situation to work in the right way."

Asked if the situation is mentally challenging for the duo, the 45-year-old added: "My father is 75 years old and for 50 years he's been a fisherman, working from two o'clock in the morning till 10 o'clock in the morning.

"This is a hard life - not the way a player works."

The PFA is in contact with the Blues to ensure that Sterling and Disasi have the platform to train to an optimum level despite not being involved with the senior team.

World football's governing body Fifa has strict regulations over players who are isolated from squads in circumstances that could constitute 'abusive conduct' by the club, which may entitle an individual to terminate his contract citing 'just cause'.

Maresca added: "When no solution is found, you give the player all the tools to train and do anything, but if you are not in the squad, you are not in the squad.

"It's not about Chelsea, it is about any club in the world."

Sterling, 30, who was expected to leave Chelsea this summer, has just under two years left on his £325,000-per-week deal.

Several overseas clubs, including Juventus, Napoli and Bayer Leverkusen, showed interest in Sterling, but he preferred to stay in London to remain close to his family.

Arsenal opted against signing their loanee from last season, while Fulham signed alternative options for their wide positions.

Meanwhile, Disasi, whose contract expires in 2029, sought a loan move to his former club Monaco, but they did not make a formal offer.

In the meantime, loan moves to Bournemouth, Sunderland and West Ham were rejected by the France international and collapsed by the transfer deadline earlier this month.

Maresca celebrated winning the Conference League with his father, Pasquale

Garnacho 'ready to start' at Old Trafford

Maresca says winger Alejandro Garnacho is "ready to start" when the Blues play his former club Manchester United on Saturday.

The 21-year-old has made two substitute appearances since joining Chelsea in a £40m transfer in August.

Before leaving, Garnacho was told to find a new club by United head coach Ruben Amorim at the end of last season and ordered to train at different times to the rest of the squad.

He had questioned Amorim's decision not to start him in the 1-0 Europa League final defeat by Tottenham.

Asked about the prospect of the Argentine attacker being booed at Old Trafford, Maresca said: "I don't know. The same happened to Marc Cucurella against Bayern Munich, which is not easy, but as a player you have to learn to endure these kinds of things."

Cucurella was targeted by Bayern supporters on Wednesday, with that thought to have stemmed from a handball against Germany by the Spain defender at Euro 2024 that went unpunished.



Why Everton have derby belief despite Anfield nightmares

Anfield. For Everton, this is a ground where hopes of success are routinely quashed. And it's the same for their manager David Moyes.

Everton have yet to win at Liverpool's home ground in front of a crowd in the 21st Century. Their only triumph there in the past 25 years came during the Covid pandemic in 2021 under the stewardship of Carlo Ancelotti.

Moyes has failed in all of his 22 attempts, with a number of clubs, to win a game at Anfield.

On Saturday, Everton visit a Liverpool side who are Premier League champions, are enjoying a perfect start to their season, and have British record signing Alexander Isak set to make his top-flight debut for them.

But are the Reds more vulnerable than their form suggests? Arne Slot's side have let a two-goal lead slip on three occasions this season, albeit recovering to win each time, while Everton have enjoyed a strong start of their own following a summer of unprecedented recruitment.

"Liverpool have shown at different times where they have been very good but other times when they have shown some vulnerability when they have conceded goals," said Moyes.

"We will have to try and take advantage of those moments. We played them last year at Anfield and lost to an offside goal and we want to try and run them close again and maybe this time things will go in our favour."

Before this weekend's meeting of the Merseyside rivals, BBC Sport examines the task facing Moyes and his men.

Moyes' Everton at the biggest clubs

Moyes has overseen 22 matches at Anfield over his career, drawing seven and losing 15. He has travelled with Everton 13 times, losing on six occasions.

It is a record reflective of Moyes' managerial struggles away to the biggest sides. He has endured the four longest runs of a manager of one club visiting the same side without ever winning in the Premier League – with similarly awful records away to Chelsea, Manchester United and Arsenal.

So why could that record change at the home of the reigning champions on Saturday?

Moyes' most commonly used formation at Anfield has been 4-2-3-1 - which is the same tactical set-up which has been used so effectively this season.

The biggest difference has been Everton's summer of big signings - nine players have been brought in at a record net spend of £97m.

The Toffees now have the requisite weapons with which to hurt their city rivals – particularly in the guise of new arrivals Jack Grealish, who leads the Premier League assists chart with four, and Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall, who is already averaging more chances per game than any Everton player since the start of last season.

"So often we take the still relatively short trip, in hope rather than expectation, with the apparent curse that encases our one-time home still very much alive," said Mike Richards, from The Unholy Trinity Everton podcast, referring to the fact that Anfield was the club's home from 1884 to 1892.

"However, this Everton feels far removed from many of those sides that have gone before them.

"There's a belief this Everton attack can ask questions of most, if not all sides in the league."

Will Everton attack?

Everton have played on the front foot in wins against Brighton and Wolves this season, while they were unfortunate to draw with Aston Villa last weekend after wasting a host of golden chances.

Having ranked 18th for goals from open play in the Premier League in 2024-25, scoring just 25, the Toffees have attacked with aplomb this season, with Iliman Ndiaye also starring in a new right-sided role.

Tyler Dibling, Everton's biggest signing of the summer at an initial £40m, could also feature.

But will the shackles truly come off away to a side who have scored 14 goals in six games in all competitions and can call on the services of nearly £300m worth of attacking talent signed this summer?

Isak, Florian Wirtz and Hugo Ekitike are all in contention to start this weekend.

History suggests that Moyes tends to be more pragmatic away to the biggest sides. In Everton's most recent 10 visits to Anfield under the Scotsman, spread over the past 20 years, they have scored a total of just five goals, converting only 6.7% of their chances.

However Moyes chooses to set up his side come Saturday, these are statistics that must improve if Everton are to secure an elusive derby win.

"We've looked for a moment of magic or piece of individual brilliance at Anfield on so many occasions, and on so many occasions we simply fell short in that department," Richards said.

"Defeat has so often felt inevitable after falling behind, but now that's not the case."

Are Liverpool more vulnerable this season?

For all of Liverpool's domination of this fixture on home soil, derbies on Merseyside tend to be tight, wherever they're played.

On the past eight occasions that Everton and Moyes have visited their neighbours, there have been four draws, and three games settled by a single goal.

Not even Pope could persuade me to change - Amorim



Manchester United head coach Ruben Amorim says not even the Pope could persuade him to change his controversial formation.

Another turbulent week at the club following the Manchester derby defeat at Etihad Stadium has included a visit from minority shareholder Sir Jim Ratcliffe, who flew into the Carrington training ground on Thursday in his helicopter.

United officials have said the visit was 'pre-planned' rather than any sort of emergency summit.

Amorim certainly adopted a light-hearted tone when he was asked to explain what had been discussed: "He was offering me a new contract," laughed the former Sporting boss, whose side have managed just one win from four Premier League games this season and been knocked out of the EFL Cup by League Two Grimsby.

He even managed a joke when the questioning turned around the more serious matter of whether Ratcliffe had suggested he may wish to change the 3-4-2-1 formation Amorim is stubbornly refusing to alter, despite widespread criticism.

"No, no, no," he said. "No one. Not even the Pope will change...

"This is my job. This is my responsibility. This is my life. So, I will not change that."

He feels if he bows to pressure it will undermine him in the eyes of his players.

"If I'm a player and I have a coach that, with a lot of pressure and [people] all around the world, are saying 'you need to change the system', says 'I'm going to change', they will look at me in a different way.

"Everything is important when you think about the impact that a decision is going to have on the team.

"I'm doing things my way. I hope to have the time to change but it will be an evolution."

Speaking before Chelsea's visit to Old Trafford, Amorim says he understands the urgent need to win games.

While United officials have rejected the idea he has the three games until next month's international break to save his job, Amorim knows the matches against Chelsea, Brentford and newly-promoted Sunderland have the potential to change the narrative around him.

The return from injury of £62.5m forward Matheus Cunha is likely to see skipper Bruno Fernandes again start in a deeper midfield role against Chelsea.

Fernandes' failure to track Phil Foden's run into the United penalty area in the lead-up to the opening goal against City - following a similar error that allowed Emile Smith Rowe to equalise for Fulham at Craven Cottage last month - has been cited as evidence for why the 31-year-old should be moved higher up the pitch.

Not for the first time, Amorim explained why he feels Fernandes can be more effective in the centre of his midfield.

"I want Bruno to have more possession to try to control the game," he said.

"Maybe he doesn't have the same freedom to get inside the box but he is getting there and he can do his shots.

"Sometimes we miss Bruno in front a little bit but if Cunha is there we have an extra player.

"I'm just trying to balance the team and imagine the game and I see Bruno well.

"He's frustrated because he is not winning and sometimes he likes to go further. But he has a job to do."

Meanwhile, director of football Jason Wilcox has given a rare interview in which he has discussed the "challenges" he has encountered at the club since he joined in April 2024.

Speaking at the Association of Former Manchester United Players on Thursday night in a Q&A shared by Man Utd The Religion Youtube channel, the 54-year-old said he "thought the club was in a much better place than it was" and "the whole structure of Manchester United needed to change".

"I pray we get the opportunity to turn it around. I really feel it is not 'will we win again?' but 'when we'll win again'," he added.

Has the schedule put Man City at a disadvantage against Arsenal?

Manchester City have negotiated a testing week with distinction so far, but their tricky spell comes to a head on Sunday with a tough trip to Premier League title rivals Arsenal.

Pep Guardiola's side travel to the Emirates having beaten Manchester United last weekend before beginning their Champions League campaign with victory over 10-man Napoli.

But City will be kicking off against Mikel Arteta's side barely 66 hours after the referee blew for full-time in their European contest, giving them only two full days to recover and work tactically on the game.

"We are going to [go] hiking in the mountains," joked Guardiola. "We are going to do that these two days."

He added: "I don't know, Friday recovery. The players have a lot of injuries but rest, rest, rest and [recover] the energy for Sunday."

In January, Guardiola said English teams are at a disadvantage in Europe because of Premier League scheduling as they always put "the toughest schedules for the European teams in the important stages".

But on this occasion, the Spaniard refused to be drawn into a discussion about whether City had spoken to the Premier League or Uefa about the scheduling, saying: "Don't go for that side, it is not necessary."

Arsenal began their Champions League campaign with victory at Athletic Club on Tuesday, a match that kicked off at 17:45 BST while City's match against Antonio Conte's Napoli kicked off at 20:00 on the Thursday.

This gives the Gunners two extra full days of extra rest and preparation for a vital game.

However, the data for a short turnaround makes for surprising reading.

Looking at the past five seasons, both City and Arsenal actually perform better two days after playing in Europe, compared to four days after.

For City in particular, the lack of recovery time and preparation between a Champions League game and Premier League one appears to work in their favour.

With only two days' rest, their past 15 league results stretching back to October 2020 shows - remarkably - they have not lost a single game, winning 11 and drawing the other four.

Physiotherapist Ben Warburton, brother of Wales rugby union legend Sam, says players who have more metres to cover, such as central midfielders, tend to sustain calf injuries while pacy full-backs and wingers, who are doing more sprints, will suffer hamstring problems.

"It is shown in studies that you need 48 - if not 72 hours - to recover from high intensity exercise," Warburton told BBC Sport. "So when you play say on Tuesday and then Saturday, you just don't have time to get quality gym work in.

"It's so important, especially in football with the amount of sprint metres they do and the amount of volume they cover, that players have strong and durable muscles. But of course, you can't really work in the gym if you're playing twice a week.

"When you're playing with less preparation time, you don't get the quality work you need to get in the gym needed to make muscles conditioned enough for all the high intensity work and hence you get soft tissue injuries.

"If you're playing that much football in a week and you're going to train maybe once or twice as well, then unless you're really well conditioned you're not going to be able to repetitively run at those volumes of speeds because the body is just not able to tolerate it."

Arsenal have finished runners-up in the league in each of the past three seasons and have spent nearly £1bn on new signings under Arteta, including £250m this summer, in a bid to go one further.

Arteta worked as a coach under Guardiola for three years before being appointed Arsenal manager in 2019.

"Hopefully this season we can make a little bit more [of a] challenge because Mikel is an extraordinary manager," said Guardiola.

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