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Newspaper

June 29, 2024 / Vol. 2 No. 33

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FROM THE ARCHIVE

I write what I like says the following amongst others- what is a character of a defeated race

Nigeria: Expert Warns Of Unsustainable Debt Levels, Looming Economic Disaster

Offices Are Transient And A Continuing Processes



Mercy Of God Saved Me From Suicide In South Africa - SA PFN President

Offices Are Transient And A Continuing Processes

It is service to the people, government offices are usually held in trust on behalf of the citizen but they are supposed to favour their cronies to undermine others to benefit immediate families even on oath.

The oath taken has never worked out globally. The signs of eradicating infractions will always be there for the reason that no office holder has never been convinced that there will be repercussions if there is a violation of oath.

There have been strong suggestions for the option of engaging traditional gods to replace the current oath taken method. It is believed that this will reduce financial misappropriation during or after service.

Those in office always preach transparency, accountability and due process. It is laughable when the same persons are arrested by the anti-grafts agencies because of numerous petitions when they leave office.

The victims have always been convinced that the content of such a petition are lies with facts that are contestable being an allegation not until when the facts are placed for the accuse to make an argument out of the facts and usually legal counsel in gotten that may inform the investigators for an opinion to either dismiss off the matter and the option to charge the matter to court for legal interpretation with final ruling with access to so contest the matter uptill the apex court which will be the finality.

The security and anti graft agencies are national assets that must be jealously protected to constantly place every citizen on check as an oversight function to ensure strict compliances for us to achieve a virile nation that will give assurance of a better future for the generation unborn. Those who where saddles with the responsibilities of holding public offices yesterday are culpable of bugging procedure that has deprived the society to be paid living wages today which was no fault of ours. Instead they are sme people that are rejecting the request for the common citizen to benefit the basic needs of



life that is not limited to affordable housing, education, health, job opportunity, electricity, assessable roads, safety of life and proper-

ties and life to exist as a proud citizen of this great nation that has all it takes to be flourish if things are properly handled jeuelostly.

The enemy of the state are those that has perpetuated themselves to consolidate on criminalities as a norm.

Nigeria: Expert Warns Of Unsustainable Debt Levels, Looming Economic Disaster

TEMITOPE ADEBAYO

Concerns have been raised about Nigeria's debt repayment exceeding recurrent and capital expenditure, despite a significant infrastructure gap and bloated recurrent spending in the 2024 budget.

This is even as Nigeria's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has also hit an all-time low of under US\$1 billion.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of The CFG Advisory, disclosed these while speaking on the topic, "Nigeria's Fiscal Environment in an Era of Monetary Policy Tightening" at the July 2024 edition of the Finance Correspondents Association of Nigeria (FICAN) bi-monthly forum in Lagos.

According to Adebajo, Nigeria's current debt burden of \$130 billion is being serviced

by 95 per cent of revenues, with debt repayment now exceeding both recurrent and capital expenditure.

He, therefore, warned that Nigeria's debt levels are clearly unsustainable, and the country risks defaulting like Ghana, Zambia, and Ethiopia if it doesn't restructure its debt and implement economic reforms.

For instance, Nigeria's public debt stock rose from N97.34 trillion in December 2023 to N121.67 trillion in March 2024, according to the Debt Management Office (DMO).

"Nigeria's debt levels are now clearly unsustainable. Add to this US\$10 billion from the 2024 budget deficit, and the question begs: is Nigeria heading for the default direction of Ghana, Zambia, and Ethiopia? The discussion on restructuring both domestic and external

debt must commence alongside the ongoing economic reforms and revenue drive to avoid Paris and London Club imposition," he warned.

He added that with a significant infrastructure deficit and growth challenges, Nigeria is set to become the third-largest economy in Africa, behind South Africa and Egypt.

Explaining the current state of Nigeria's economic indicators, Adebajo regretted that the economy is still in stagflation, with ongoing reforms aiming to achieve a sustainable growth trajectory.

He noted that the introduction of the Nigerian Autonomous Foreign Exchange Market (NAFEM) and the removal of fuel subsidies has seen the FAAC account increase by 130 per cent from May to November 2023 to over N1 trillion.

"FDI is at an all-time low of under US\$1 billion; power transmission and distribution infrastructure are still very poor, impacting industry and economic growth; the macroeconomic situation has declined over the last 7 years with a loss of US\$180-200 billion in GDP, currently at US\$390 billion.

"GDP growth of 3 per cent is not sustainable for our population of 200 million; Nigeria requires 8-10 per cent GDP growth for sustainability; 135 million Nigerians are in the poverty trap, with 40 per cent unemployment and very low job creation and industrial productivity. Dwindling reserves and increasing credit default swap premiums have resulted in Caa1 junk bond rating status for our international credit ratings," the finance and econom-

ic expert stated.

He believes that while the fundamentals of the Nigerian economy remain sound, poor economic leadership in the past has failed to realize potential and grow the economy.

But, "with a new and highly rated economic management team in place, expectations are high. The success or failure of our business projections and the economy will depend on their commitment and sincerity to implement and deliver on their reform policies. The goal is to drive our economy out of stagflation and attain sustainable GDP growth targets," he emphasized.

Proffering solutions to the country's economic challenges, the CFG Advisory boss stated that Nigeria should negotiate with creditors to restructure and extend the

maturities of debt, allowing for more manageable repayments and reduced interest rates.

Nigeria, he said, should implement fiscal discipline by reducing non-essential government spending, eliminating wasteful subsidies, and improving the efficiency of public services.

"Expand the tax base, improve tax collection, and introduce new sources of revenue, such as value-added tax (VAT) and property taxes. Improve transparency and accountability in government spending to build public trust and attract foreign investment. The central bank should continue to employ tight monetary policy to combat inflation, which is often associated with stagflation.

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Mercy Of God Saved Me From Suicide In South Africa - SA PFN President

Med onomo christopher ojomoh: JLN Reporters. **Bishop Frank Idemudia Ogagba** is the PFN President in South Africa. The Johannesburg base Man of God hails from the Royal Family of Uromi Kingdom in Edo State, Nigeria. In this exclusive interview with On'omo Ojomoh, the MOG bears his mind on people orientation for upliftment and knowing the Almighty God. Excerpt

Shall we meet you please !

Well, am Bishop Frank Idemudia Ogagba. Am the PFN President in South Africa, based in Johannesburg. I got saved from the verge of committing suicide and called to the Ministry. And since then, we have been preaching, married and blessed with four children. I came for my father's final burial ceremony, I decided to buy a land and something at home in order to bring investment home too.

Why did you intend to commit suicide?

Well, I was tired of life and I felt the best thing for me was to take my life. On the bide of doing it Jesus showed up in the kitchen and told me if you kill yourself, you'll spend the rest of your life in hell. He opened my eyes and I saw millions of good people in hell, I started crying that it's not a good place for me. Then a scripture I read while I was in class three years ago came flashing back in my mind. It says in John chapter three from verses 11-13, that as many as received Jesus, he gave them the right and power to become sons of God.

They are born of the spirit and not flesh, not by the will of man but God. So I decided to ask Jesus to come into my heart, forgive me all my sins to be my Lord and saviour. So the Jesus I was seeing stepped into my heart and had unspeakable joy till today. I was filled with strange powers, I never experienced that before.

And I started praying from that 8 o'clock in the evening till 8 o'clock in the morning, I never prayed such prolonged prayer before. Then I knew salvation has come and the Lord told me, go and preach the gospel to the whole world. I mean the encounter of taking my Life brought me to the limelight of knowing Jesus and getting saved and since then, I had been on that journey.

Sir, this killing of Nigerians in South Africa is alarming but are Nigerians so bad like that! what have you to say about this unfortunate situations?

Nigerians are actually not too bad. But you know Nigerians are goal getters, when they get to a country and can't find employment, they create their own work. And by creating their own work, some had gone into drugs. And those that are doing drug business are so terrible that, with those few numbers of people, it looks like the whole Nigerians there are bad. We have doctors, we have lecturers and all manners of Nigerians in South Africa but for those few bad eggs including other nationalities do drugs hidden, like the Chinese, Indians amongst others but Nigerians were on the streets, hawking it as if they are selling pepper, you can see why, that is usually the problem.

As a Religious Chieftain today



in God's Vineyard, what salvation doctrines have you been able to impact to the minds of the people especially Africans in your host to refrain from all sort of criminalities. ?

First of all I have a testimony, a life long testimony, I share it everywhere I go. We have been able to change a lot of our people and even South Africans. A lot of them are pastors now, a lot of them are good citizens because God sent us there. A lot of them are now in America and all over the world preaching the gospel. Some of them are doctors and lawyers but when God changes you, he

uses you to change more people and the little advice you give to the people Will change their life. Back home here in Nigeria, the system is porous especially in our homestead here Esanland and Uromi in Particular, right here today, there's this scourge of kidnapping, ritual killings and all sorts.

What's your take and advice to the people of Uromi and Esanland ?

I watched what happened recently, it's an ongoing thing. But I felt if leaders in the land who believes in righteousness can speaks against the ills in the society. And also be willing to provide opportunities for the people that have nothing doing, there's

just nothing you can do about it. Imagine, the whole nation, Nigeria is suffering the same thing. But what do we do, we have to trust God, we keep praying for our people, keep believing God and God will raise up men and women who can teach others how to fish instead of giving people fish.

There are a lot of young people out there that we need to empower, empowering them on how to do what they should do to generate real income. But if no help that's not it, they'll follow the minority of people in doing the evil things.

What's your message to the people of Esanland on the issue of reli-

gionist and knowing God better ?

Well that is why we are here. I doing what I've been doing in South Africa since 1992. I want to do the same thing in Uromi that's why I waited till now. My father's burial ceremony was on the 18th of May and still around to get a place where we can use as a school, train some people in various life endeavour. Train to change the mind set of people and help in the best way we can, change one person at a time. We cannot be able to change the whole world but start with one.

Thank you very much sir.

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE INTER-RELIGIOUS WORLD CONFERENCE ORGANISED BY THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE CROSS AND STAR, CHRIST UNIVERSAL GENERAL FELLOWSHIP (CUGF) HELD AT NATIONAL MERIT HOUSE, MAITAMA, ABUJA, NIGERIA 26th JUNE, 2024

With the theme "In Brotherhood We Stand", the Inter-Religious World Conference was held on the 26th of June, 2024, at the National Merit House, Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria. The conference was organized by the Christ Universal General Fellowship of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star.

The event was graced by representatives from various notable organizations including the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council, Inter-religious Affairs United Nations - POLAR Nigeria, Universal Peace Federation, Al-Bayan Inter-Faith Centre, Abuja, Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution, Baha'i Faith Nigeria, and academia from the University of Calabar, Nassarawa State University, and Ahmadu Bello University. Additionally, representatives from various Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and media were in attendance.

The conference featured goodwill messages, and insightful presentations by distinguished speakers:

- PCS Ogar Osim, Managing Director, BCS StarCross TV, delivered the keynote address titled "In Brotherhood We Stand: The Dynamic Effects of Spiritual Unity."
- Mr. Simon Ingamala Anchu presented on "The Role of Ecumenism in Uniting the Fabrics of Disunity and Religious Intolerance in the Nation."
- Dr. George Ikpote, National Secretary, Universal Peace Federation Nigeria, discussed "Unexplored Frontiers: Exploring the Boundaries of Interfaith Cooperation."
- Mrs. Dadi Hogan, National Secretary, offered insights on "Unity in Diversity: The Christian Perspective."
- Prof. Stella Osim, HOD Religious and Cultural Studies, University of Calabar, Cross River, elaborated on "Unity in Diversity: The Christian Perspective."
- Prof. Ahmed Bello Dogarawa spoke on "The Role of Religion in Fostering National Unity and Peaceful Co-existence."
- Dr. Aminu Mu'Allimu Kambari presented on "Unity in Diversity: The Islamic Perspective."

The conference provided a platform for diverse religious and cultural voices to share their perspectives on unity and interfaith cooperation in fostering national unity and peaceful coexistence. At the end of the deliberations, the following communiqué was issued:

1. Nigeria and indeed the world should go beyond religious tolerance to religious cooperation that is centered on solving practical societal problems such as hunger, terrorism, educational backwardness and economic stagnation.
2. That the solutions to Nigeria's problem cannot be found elsewhere but by looking inwards by returning to, and standing together in Brotherhood - in the practical oneness and unity of all God's creation under the leadership of God Almighty.
3. That Brotherhood is the totality of all God's creation including man, animals, birds and fishes. Therefore, in extension of universal love, man and all faith and tribes should protect and preserve all creatures of God not to consume them.
4. The Conference applauds the President Tinubu led Government in Nigeria for re-invocation of the old National Anthem "Nigeria we hail thee.. In Brotherhood we Stand". Thus urged the Government of Nigeria to put practical measures in unity, love and peace building in Nigeria.
5. The essence of diversity of religion, regions and tribes in Nigeria is for us to benefit from each other not compete or fight one another.
6. Conference acknowledges the urgency of creating a culture of National Unity and Peaceful co-existence using interfaith dialogue that is that recognizes unique diverse benefits in each faith and religion.
- Sports should be pursued is one of the best unifying factor that should be explored in driving the brotherhood of God's creation. And Sport should be a stone-window for global evangelism.
7. Sports should also be an option for integration and peace building after war, fostering education and sustainable development.
8. We have to reflect the unity of purpose in our communities and society to affirm in brotherhood we stand. The brotherhood is in relationship with our daily lives with neighbors, work and endeavors.

The Christ Universal General Fellowship of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star expresses its gratitude to all participants and speakers for their valuable contributions to the success of the conference. The Fellowship remains committed to promoting inter-religious dialogue and cooperation for a harmonious and united Nigeria.

Signed

Niger Delta Marginalisation: Urhobo Leaders Take Case To Nass



HARUNA SALAMI,
ABUJA

Leaders of Urhobo Nation have taken the case of alleged marginalization of the people to their representatives in the National Assembly and other agencies of the Federal Government.

Leading a delegation of about 20 leaders from Delta central, Chief (Dr) Obiuevbi Ominimini presented a compilation of Urhobo Oil and Gas facilities to Senators and Honourable members representing Urhobo ethnic nationality at the National Assembly on Thursday.

According to him, Urhobo Ethnic Nationality in Delta Central Senatorial District, Agbarha Warri Kingdom, Okere Urhobo Kingdom of Warri South LGA, Iduophori and Odorubu communities in Delta South Local Govt Area contributes so much to the coffers and economy of Nigeria through the production of oil and gas without significant development commensurate to our contribution.

"What is even disheartening scenario is that the peaceful nation of the Urhobo people and the pure commitment and loyalty to the Nigeria state

NMDPRA, WRPCL, PHRCL, KRPL, PPMC, NGMC, NGMC, etc do not have Urhobos in any enviable office. Instead, casualization has become the portion of our people, which he rejected in Jesus name.

"One of the injustices done to the Urhobo Nation is the unlawful counting and ceding of Urhobo oil and gas facilities to Edo state at Mosogar and Idjerhe (Jesse) Kingdoms and the unlawful transfer of Ukpokiti Community's facilities in Agbarha Warri Kngdom to Omadino in Itsekiri", which he said were "unacceptable" and "should be corrected". What is due to Idjerhe and Mosogar in the Amaladi communities and Agbarha Warri must be given to them.

"Urhobo remains the highest producer of oil and gas in Delta state as Delta state remains the highest producer in Nigeria. Delta produces more than 34% of the crude oil and gas in Nigeria. What Urhobo produces is far more than some states yet we have extremely too little in return from NDDC and Ministry of Niger Delta in terms of projects and programmes in comparison to states and those who produce far less than us. This is very unfair and unjust to the Urhobo Nation. Ministry of Niger Delta has two skill acquisition centres in Delta South Senatorial District, one in Delta North and Zero in Delta Central. This is another evil against us.

The delegation also complained of the 13% derivation coming to the Delta state government where 50% of the 13% meant for Desopadec for the development of the oil producing communities.

Ominimini said the sharing formula of the 50% accruable to Desopadec has been politicized against Urhobo Nation that produces the highest. We are reduced to 21% instead of about 40% of this fund in line with the real production quantum, adding that the call for the state government to call on the appropriate government authority to give the real figure of each of the communities in Delta state has fallen on deaf ears.

and projects has been taken for granted", adding it won't deter them.

He said in the verified compilation, one can see the enormous contribution of Urhobo Nation through these active oil and gas producing wells of over 350, 15 flow stations and over 20 gas flare sites, but unfortunately "One can now see very clearly the reason why the lifespan of the Urhobo people at home is been shortened and crippled with a lot of diseases emanating from the polluted air and ecosystem".

In spite of these injustices, Association of the Urhobo Oil and Gas Ethnic Nationality (UROGAN) is involved in the advocacy in all the oil bearing communities of Urhobo while canvassing for proper development of the people and the communities of our Ethnic Nation.

Chief Ominimini also complained of lack of a commensurate positive impact from the Amnesty office, adding that his people are not considered as part of it. "This is bad as our sons who disarm in the amnesty phase 2 and 3 are treated like slaves compared to their counterparts from other ethnic nationalities.

"At NNPC and in all the oil strategic business units, NPDC, NUPRC, NPIMS,

NOSA AKENZUA,
ASABA

Delta State government has called on multi-national companies, Non-governmental organisations, philanthropists and well to do Deltans both at home and in the diaspora to contribute their quota in fast-tracking sustainable development in all parts of the state.

Governor Sheriff Oborevwori made the call while inaugurating a block of six classrooms each in four secondary schools at Ogwashi-Uku in Aniocha South Local Government Area of the state which were renovated by members of Ogwashi-Uku Association, USA Inc.

The four schools that benefited from the Association's gesture were Adaigbo Mixed Secondary School, Comprehensive Secondary School, Saint Roses Girls Grammar School and Nshiagu College all in Ogwashi-Uku.

Rt. Hon. Oborevwori who commended sons and daughters of Ogwashi-Uku based in the United States of America for their laudable gesture, called on well spirited individuals to follow their footsteps as government alone could not address the entire needs of the people.

The governor who was represented by the Secretary to the State Government, Dr. Kingsley Emu, said several road projects have been initiated by the present administration, pointing out that the MORE Agenda of his administration was aimed at advancing development in the state.

He said the state has 489 secondary schools, 51,000 employees, 12,900 local government employees as well as other commitments, hence the need for reliable partnership.

"I am so happy that you are not just building physical infrastructure, you are also equipping them. So, we would like to thank you for this gesture.

"The reward for hard work is more work. So, we expect that many more would be done in the other areas.

"They should do things that they will be remembered for. This association, Ogwashi-Uku Development Union, USA, will be remembered for something very good.

"Other communities should borrow a leave from the association as

Oborevwori Tasks Wealthy Deltans, Organisations On Developing State

what they have done is something worth emulating.

"As you can see, some critical infrastructure are being executed here in Ogwashi-Uku. You couldn't have driven past Ibusa all the way to Ogwashi-Uku on that bye-pass, that is a lot of access road, that is an inlet into Ogwashi-Uku. If you don't do that, how are you going to have access," he added.

Meanwhile, the governor charged various communities in the state to protect all government projects in their domains from vandals, even as he solicited the support of all in ensuring that peace reigned in all parts of the state.

Earlier in his address on the Association, Dr. Henrietta Udensi, underscored the importance of education in societal growth and development, adding that it was the best legacy parents could bequeath their children.

She noted that education was the best investment for sustainable development, pointing out that education would continue to receive the attention of all stakeholders both at the local, state and federal levels in Nigeria, just as she disclosed that it was for this reason that the Ogwashi-Uku Association USA INC decided to embark on the execution of the projects.

Executive Assistant to the governor on Community Development, Mr. Emakpor Odogwu and other speakers at the ceremony described the projects as laudable and charged students and management of the benefiting schools to put the renovated classrooms blocks into good use.

In their separate remarks, principals of the four secondary schools who expressed profound appreciation to members of Ogwashi-Uku Association in the United States of America, assured them that they would make good use of the school facilities in addition to protecting them from vandals.

Tenure Of 6 Fct Area Councils Expires June 2026, INEC Clarifies

TUNDE OPALANA,
ABUJA

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) said the current six chairmen and 62 councillors in the six area councils under the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) stay in office till June 2026.

This is against the anxiety and insinuation that tenure of elected officials of the six area councils expires this year.

Chairman of the INEC, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu made the clarification at a meeting with the leadership of the Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) at the commission's headquarters in Abuja on Friday.

National Chairman of IPAC, Alhaji Yusuf Dantalle was accompanied to the meeting by members of his executive as well as leadership of the FCT chapter of IPAC.

Dantalle in his brief opening remark said IPAC requested for the meeting to clear doubts, misgivings and insinuations surrounding the tenure of elected officials of the FCT area councils.

In his speech, the INEC chairman categorically stated that the current area council officials are entitled to a four years tenure as specified by the



2022 Electoral Act.

The chairman said the Commission has been insinuated with inquiries from some law firms, an individual, a political party and one FCT Chairmanship Aspirants' Forum relating to the tenure of the Area Councils and a demand for the Commission to release the Timetable and Schedule of Activities for the Area Council elections.

He said such inquiries are based on the provision of the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) which was the subsisting law at the time elections to the Area Councils were held on Saturday 12th February 2022.

Making the clarification, Prof. Yakubu said "the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) provides for a three-year tenure for Chairmen and Councillors

which, in their opinion, expires next year.

"However, Nigerians are aware that the National Assembly has since repealed and re-enacted the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) as the Electoral Act 2022. In particular, in the exercise of its powers as the law-making body for the FCT, the National Assembly extended the tenure of the Area Councils from three to four years, thereby aligning it with executive and legislative elections nationwide. This is one of the important provisions of the Electoral Act 2022.

"The Act came into force on Friday 25th February 2022, two weeks after the last Area Council elections in the FCT. By the time the elected Chairmen and Councillors were sworn-in

four months later on 14th June 2022, they took their oath of allegiance and oath of office on the basis of the new electoral Act (i.e. the Electoral Act 2022) which provides for a four-year tenure. Consequently, their tenure therefore expires in June 2026."

He further explained that for the avoidance of doubt, tenure is not defined by the date of election but the date of the oath of office for executive elections or the date of inauguration for legislative houses.

"For the executive, the tenure belongs to the elected individual while for legislators, the tenure belongs to the Legislature. A President/Vice President-elect, Governor/Deputy Governor-elect, Senator-elect, Member-elect, Chairman-elect or Councillor-elect cannot exercise the powers of office and draw from the remunerations attached to it until such a person is sworn-in or the legislative house is inaugurated.

"To further illustrate this position, the Commission has since released the Timetable for the 2024 Edo and Ondo State Governorship elections. This does not mean that whoever wins the election in Edo State in September or in Ondo State in November will im-

mediately assume office.

"This will only take place after the administration of the oath of office upon the expiration of the tenure of the incumbent holders of the offices. Elections are only held earlier in order to avoid vacuum. That is why the Constitution empowers the Commission to hold elections not earlier than 150 days and not later than 30 days before the end of tenure of incumbent holders of elective offices.

"In the case of the FCT, Section 108(1) of the Electoral Act 2022 under which the current Chairmen and Councillors were sworn-in on 14th June 2022 is clear and therefore unambiguous:

"(1) An Area Council shall stand dissolved at the expiration of 4 years commencing from the date - (a) when the Chairman took the oath of office; or (b) when the legislative arm of the Council was inaugurated whichever is earlier."

"Again, there are several judicial authorities, including the judgement of the Supreme Court, that tenure begins from the date of oath of office and not the date of election. The Law Firms that have written INEC on behalf of their clients ought to have drawn their attention to both the law and judicial pronouncements on the matter.

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Nigerian Artist, Bamidele Holds Exhibition At Alliance Française Lagos



Absa Africa is proud to announce that the exhibition “The Melodious Struggle of Souls and Consciousness” by multi-disciplinary and self-taught multifaceted Nigerian artist Raji Bamidele is finally coming home.

The exhibition forms part of the Absa L’Atelier, in collaboration with the South African National Association with the Visual Arts (SANAVA).

Raji is the 2019 Absa L’Atelier Ambassador. He aims to take local art enthusiasts on an immersive journey into the profound depths of human existence – some of which may be familiar to many – with his latest solo exhibition.

Bamidele draws inspiration from the Yoruba people and their belief system. The Yoruba people, which are a West African ethnic group who inhabit parts of Nigeria, Benin, and Togo, believe that the soul, consciousness, and spirit are intricately interconnected fac-

ets of the human experience. His artwork encapsulates the concept that the soul embodies the mind, which reflects the heart, and the heart extends the soul and spirit. This interconnectedness forms the basis for a deeper understanding of oneself and the world.

Dr. Paul Bayliss, Absa’s Senior Specialist: Art and Museum Curator, highlights the vital role played by the arts to society and support for the industry is pivotal, especially for young Africans. “The arts sector in Africa is increasingly becoming an important economic sector, not only for the potential it holds for opportunities for young people, but for its ability to shape narrative for the future of the continent. The UNDP recognises the need to support the arts for their potential to lift many Africans out of poverty and to help transform how the global community sees the continent”, said Bayliss.

Teni Proposes Marriage To Mayorkun

Famous Nigerian singer Teniola Apata, aka Teni the Entertainer has openly declared her interest in fellow musician Mayorkun, after the picture of Mayorkun posing with Davido and Chioma’ went viral.

The viral photo of Mayorkun posing with Davido and Chioma was shared on Instagram.

Reacting to the picture, Teni took to the comment session to reveal her interest. She wrote: “Na me go still marry Mayor”.

In the video shared by the singer, she disclosed that she would love to end up with Mayorkun very soon. According to her, the singer has no say in their union, as it will be done forcefully if he dares to oppose, she said jokingly.

Teni also shared her reason for choosing Mayorkun over Burna Boy.

In response to Teni’s light-hearted marriage proposal, Mayorkun humorously replied, “Teni you no kill me”.

Wealthy Men Are Making Nigerian Actors Appear Lazy Before Actresses - KOK Laments

Veteran Nollywood actor, Kanayo O.Kanayo, has complained about the way wealthy men spend lavishly on their female colleagues, thereby making the men look like they are lazy and not hard working.

Kanayo made this revelation in the recent episode of ‘The Honest Bunch’ podcast co-hosted by Ezugwu Chukwudi aka Husband Material, and Deity Cole.

“Nigerian rich men, most of them spend money on our

girls to the extent that it impoverishes us. You call a girl, she’s your girlfriend, she says she wants to do a production and demands N100 million to N150 million and you give her. But if na me wey be KOK, you’ll say ‘go and work hard, my friend’.

“Let’s look into this issue because have you seen any lady ask for financial help for any medical expenses? It’s only the men. We are an endangered species, that’s what I am saying,” he lamented.

How I Wooed, Proposed Marriage To My Husband - Omotara Johnson

STORIES BY ORJIONYE-KWERE

Content creator and influencer, Omotara Lawrence, has opened up on how she did the extra ordinary by going out of her way to woo and propose to her husband, Alabi. She revealed that her meeting with her husband was ‘love at first sight’ and she was the first to ask him out through the social media.

Omotara made this revelation in a podcast interview with ‘The Cable’. She said the

first thing that caught her attention was her husband’s voice; thereafter she started dropping messages for him on his social media handle professing her love for him.

Though he ignored the messages for a while, he finally responded.

Omotara pointed out that she started professing love to Lawrence by dropping comments on his page like “Will you marry me”

She said, “I toast (woo) him first. I am a very genuine person. I like to say my version of

the story. We actually started on TikTok.

“I saw him first on TikTok. He claimed to be my fan on Twitter. And I did not even know there was someone like that. When I saw him on TikTok, I was like ‘I want this boy’. I told God that I want this boy. For good three or four months, he was forming for me.

“It was my friend that sent me his video on TikTok. And when I saw the video, I was just like, no way. His voice was very attractive. So this is this person. I went to the comment and

dropped some comments but he did not reply. I said as good as I am, you did not reply.

“So I kept on doing that. Whenever I see his video, I would drop comments. I think the first comment I made was will you marry me, yes or yes? He did not reply. Until one time he just dropped laughing emojis.”

Alabi, on his part said he intentionally ignored Omotara’s comments until she asked for help concerning a laptop. Eventually the couple got married in 2022.

Christians celebrating Davido's wedding are hypocrites - Gold Eberechi

Nollywood actress Merit Gold Eberechi, has lambasted Christians that have been ecstatic about the ground breaking traditional wedding ceremony between singer David Adeleke and his longtime girlfriend and mother of his children Chioma’ Adeleke (nee Avril Rowland).

The actress said many Christians are celebrating the couple’s wedding despite previously having three children (one died) outside wedlock. She said this act is absolute hypocrisy on the part of the Christians, who have shut their eyes to the truth just because the singer is wealthy.

Eberechi made this observation through her Instagram handle where she drew the attention of the netizens on the loud hypocrisy by Christians that have thrown their weight behind the couple’s wedding.

She noted that the same Christians are the ones who wouldn’t hesitate to criticize anybody in their congregation for fornicating.

Her words, “Christians will celebrate David’s wedding even after giving birth to 3 children, but crucify the ones in their congregation who for-



nicate and want to.

In life, just make MONEY before you make MISTAKE.”

It would be recalled that in 2019, the couple welcomed their first child, Ifeanyi, who unfortunately died in 2022 due to domestic accident. However, in the later part of 2023, Chioma gave birth to a set of twins.

The wedding ceremony which set the social media ablaze is bound to be the talk of the town for a long

time. Held at Harbour Point in the Victoria Island area of Lagos State, on Tuesday June 25, 2024, the wedding attracted high profile government officials, prominent politicians and business leaders as well as celebrities from the entertainment industry.

In another development, Comedian Adedayo Martin popularly known as Dee one has criticised Chioma’s father for holding the traditional

wedding of his daughter in Lagos, instead of Imo State, her state of origin.

Deeone accused the family of favoring riches over tradition, insinuating that they have violated the Igbo’ culture by this act. According to him, the Igbo’ tradition requires a bride’s traditional wedding to be held in her birthplace.

He said that if Davido were not rich, Chioma’s family would have strictly adhered to their traditions.

Harassment: Lagos Police Calls Laide Bakare ‘A Liar’

The Nigerian Police, Lagos State command; has cautioned Nollywood actress Laide Bakare, to be careful of her utterances and the way she lied against officers. You will recall that the actress who is now the Senior Special Assistant to the Osun State Governor on Entertainment, Arts, Culture and Tourism had an exchange of words. She accused the police of dragging her out of her car and driving away with her daughter inside the car.

The actress took to her social media handle to complain how she was harassed by men of the Nigerian Police.

She wrote, “For the first time, I experienced the brutal way Nigerians are being treated along that axis.



“I cannot imagine how someone with a brain and sanity will drive someone’s car away with a minor in it.

“A lot is happening in this

country that needs to be attended to. My daughter was left terrified because of the incident.

“The police targeted only

big cars and vulnerable people to exploit and rob. Just because they needed our ATM card to take out N70,000,” the actress alleged..

However, the Lagos State Police Command Spokesman Benjamin Hundeyin, through his X handle denied the accusation of harassment leveled against his men by the actress. He said the actress was stopped for violating the traffic rule but she chose to create a scene.

“You were stopped for contravening traffic laws by driving on the BRT lane.

“You chose to create a scene. You chose to remain out of your vehicle when it was being taken to the LAMATA office.





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Biden Concedes Debate Fumbles But Declares He Will Defend Democracy

President Joe Biden is trying to quell Democratic anxieties over his unsteady showing in his debate with ex-President Donald Trump. Biden appeared to acknowledge the criticism on Friday saying "I don't debate as well as I used to."

President Joe Biden worked forcefully Friday to quell Democratic anxieties over his unsteady showing in his debate with former President Donald Trump, as elected members of his party closed ranks around him in an effort to shut down talk of replacing him atop the ticket.

Biden's halting delivery and meandering comments, particularly early in the debate, fueled concerns from even members of his own party that at age 81 he's not up for the task of leading the country for another four years. It created a crisis moment for Biden's campaign and his presidency, as members of his party flirted with potential replacements, and donors and supporters couldn't contain their concern about his showing against Trump.

Biden appeared to acknowledge the criticism during a rally in Raleigh, North Carolina, saying "I don't debate as well as I used to." But he added, "I know how to do this job. I know how to get things done." Speaking for 18 minutes, Biden appeared far more animated than he had the night before as he excoriated Trump for his "lies" and for waging a campaign aimed at "revenge and retribution."

"The choice in this election is simple," Biden said. "Donald Trump will destroy our democracy. I will defend it."

He added, alluding to his candidacy, "When you get knocked down, you get back up."

First lady Jill Biden, at a Friday evening fundraiser in New York City, said her husband told her after the debate, "I don't know what happened. I didn't feel that great." But she seconded the president in stressing that he tells the truth and he bounces back from adversity.

Even before the debate, Biden's age had been a liability with voters, and Thursday night's faceoff appeared to reinforce the public's deep-seated concerns before perhaps the largest audience he will garner in the four months until Election Day.

Privately, his campaign worked to tamp down concerns and keep donors and surrogates on board. Democratic lawmakers on Friday ac-

knowledgeed Biden's poor showing, but tried to stop talk of replacing him as their standard-bearer, and instead shift the focus to Trump's attacks and falsehoods.

"Well, the president didn't have a good night, but neither did Donald Trump with lie after lie and his dark vision for America," North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper told The Associated Press on Friday, hours before he introduced the president in Raleigh. "We cannot send Donald Trump back to the White House. He's an existential threat to our nation."

Former President Barack Obama backed up his former vice president, posting on X that "Bad debate nights happen." Alluding to his own poor showing in the first debate of his reelection campaign in 2012, Obama continued, "Trust me, I know. But this election is still a choice between someone who has fought for ordinary folks his entire life and someone who only cares about himself."

He added: "Last night didn't change that, and it's why so much is at stake in November."

House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries answered with a flat "no" when asked Friday if Biden should step aside.

Rep. Ritchie Torres, D-N.Y., allowed he "had to take a few more antidepressants than usual" after Biden's debate showing.

But he added that "a Donald Trump presidency would cause me far greater discomfort than a Joe Biden debate performance."

Biden's campaign billed the Raleigh event as the largest yet rally of his reelection bid in the state Trump carried by the narrowest margin in 2020. He then traveled to New York for a weekend of big-dollar fundraisers that his campaign now needs more than ever.

Biden's campaign announced that it raised \$14 million on debate day and the morning after, while Trump's campaign said it raised more than \$8 million from the start of the debate through the end of the night.

Vice President Kamala Harris, whom the Biden campaign sent out to defend his performance, tried to reassure Biden supporters at a rally in Las Vegas on Friday, saying, "This race will not be decided by one night in June."

"This race will be decided by you. By us," she said. "Who sits in the White House next year will be determined by what we together do in these next 130 days."

Biden campaign communications director Michael Tyler said there had been no internal conversations "whatsoever" about Biden stepping aside, though he, too, acknowledged that the president had a "bad night" on stage.

Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo., said he could hardly sleep because of the number of telephone calls he got after Biden performed "horribly" in the debate.

"People were just concerned. And I told everybody being concerned is healthy, overreacting is dangerous," Cleaver said.

Rep. James Clyburn, a South Carolina Democrat whose support in that state helped Biden secure the Democratic nomination four years ago, said he would likely speak to Biden later Friday and his message would be simple: "Stay the course."

Biden and his team have long wagered that voters would look past their concerns about his age and unpopularity when confronted at the ballot box with a choice between the president and Trump. Despite their concerns about Biden's performance, they took solace in Trump doing little to expand his own appeal to voters on Thursday.

Polls from CNN and 538/Ipsos conducted soon after the debate found that most debate-watchers thought Trump outperformed Biden. But the two men's favorability ratings remained largely unchanged, just as they did in the aftermath of Trump's conviction.

Democrats seized on Trump's equivocations on whether he would accept the will of voters this time around, his refusal to condemn the rioters who stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, trying to overturn his 2020 loss to Biden, and his embrace of the conservative-leaning Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v. Wade that had legalized abortion nationwide.

But Biden fumbled on abortion rights, one of the most important issues for Democrats in this year's election. He was unable to explain Roe v. Wade, the landmark Supreme Court ruling that

legalized abortion nationwide. A conservative Supreme Court with three justices nominated by Trump overturned Roe two years ago.

As elected Democrats united behind Biden publicly, donors and party operatives shared panicked text messages and phone calls Thursday night and into Friday expressing their concern that Biden's performance was so bad that he may be unelectable this fall.

Among the few public Democratic voices calling on Biden to step aside was congressional candidate Nancy Boyda in Kansas, who broke with most in her party and called on Biden to suspend his campaign and retire at the end of his current term.

But there were no immediate signs of organized efforts among donors, his campaign leadership or the Democratic National Committee to convince the president to step aside, according to interviews with several people who spoke on the condition of anonymity to share sensitive conversations.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat frequently mentioned as a 2028 contender and speculated about as a potential replacement for Biden, released a statement backing him on Friday.

"The difference between Joe Biden's vision for making sure everyone in America has a fair shot and Donald Trump's dangerous, self-serving plans will only get sharper as we head toward November," she said.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom also dismissed questions on whether he would consider stepping in for Biden, telling reporters, "I will never turn my back on him."

Under current Democratic Party rules, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to replace Biden as the party's nominee without his cooperation or without party officials being willing to rewrite the rules at the August national convention.

Trump was set to hold a rally Friday afternoon in Chesapeake, Virginia, a onetime battleground that has shifted toward Democrats in recent years but that his aides believe can flip toward the Republicans in November. [AP]



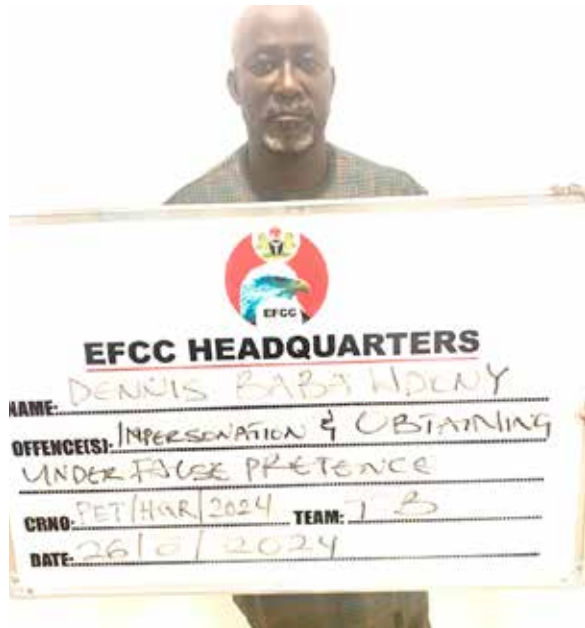
EFCC Arrests Fake Military Officers for Impersonating CDS

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Wednesday, June 26, 2024 arrested Dennis Baba Wdony, Wycliffe Midala and Samuel Kayode Melaye for allegedly parading themselves as military officers and using the office of the Chief of Defence Staff to defraud unsuspecting members of the public through fake contract awards.

Investigations showed that the suspects operate a three-man syndicate which advertise fake bids for contracts in the office of the Chief of Defence Staff.

Their arrest followed multiple petitions received by the Commission in respect of their fraudulent activities. In one of the petitions, a victim claimed a loss of N21 million to their antics.

They will be charged to court upon conclusion of investigations.



Abuja Land Racket: EFCC Arraigns Two for Forgery



The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Wednesday, June 26, 2024, arraigned the duo of Zahradeen Muhammed Bello and Abdullahi Abdullahi before Justice H. Muazu of the Federal Capital Territory, High Court, Abuja for fraud.

They were arraigned on seven-count charges, bordering on theft of official documents, forgery and conversion of case files belonging to the Department of Land Administration (FCT), Abuja, and Abuja Geographical Information System (AGIS).

Count one reads: "That you, Zahradeen Mohammed Bello and Abdullahi Abdullahi sometime between March 2023 and June 2024, within the jurisdiction of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, with intent to defraud did conspire between yourselves to do an unlawful act to wit: theft of official documents from the Department of Land Administration (FCT), Abuja, and Abuja Geographical Information System (AGIS) and you thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 96 (1)(a) of the Penal Code and Punishable under Section of the Penal Code Cap 532 LFN, Abuja, 1990."

Count four reads: "That you, Zahradeen Mohammed Bello and Abdullahi Abdullahi sometime between March 2023 and June 2024, in Abuja, within the jurisdiction of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, did with the intent to defraud fraudulently steal plain letter headed papers with the inscription of Coat of Arms, property of Abuja Geographic Information System, with serial number 022347, found in your possession without the consent of (AGIS) and you thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 286 (1) of the Penal Code and Punishable under Section 287 of the same code Cap 532 (Laws of the Federation of Nigeria) FCT, Abuja, 1990."

Both pleaded "not guilty" when the charges were read to them, following which prosecution counsel, F. O. Diband asked the court for a trial date and for adjournment. Defence counsel, Tamunotonye Ekundayo, prayed for a short adjournment so that she could formally apply for the defendants' bail.

Justice Muazu thereafter, adjourned the matter till June 28, 2024, for the filing of the defendants' bail applications and October 2, 2024 for commencement of trial. He remanded them in the custody of the EFCC.

How We Supplied Obiano Cash From State's Security Votes - Witnesses

The trial of Willie Obiano, former governor of Anambra State, continued on Wednesday, June 26, 2024 before Justice Inyang Ekwo of the Federal High Court, Abuja with two prosecution witnesses disclosing how they supplied Obiano cash in both naira and dollars through his proxies.

Ugochukwu Chinedu, Prosecution Witness, PW3, and a former banker between November 2, 2008 to March 26, 2023, who was the account manager of the Anambra State Government accounts, including the state's Security Vote account, told the court that he usually delivered raw cash in both Naira and US dollars to Obiano in line with the instructions given to him by Willie Nwokoye and Theophilus Meize, Obiano's former principal secretary and accountant at the state Government's House, respectively, who were signatories to the Security Votes account.

"I usually processed



transactions with the principal secretary, either daily or weekly, mostly using the instruments of cheques. I will go to his office on Fridays to balance the account. All the transactions I carried out were usually based on the instructions given to him by the account holders," he said.

In the same vein, Hayatu Hassan, a businessman and Prosecution Witness 4, (PW4), who operates five Bureau de Change companies, namely: Seltris BDC Limited, Seltris Limited, Commaught International Services Limited, Holdall Limited, and Norricelea Limited disclosed that he made a total sum of N222,371,000 (Two Hundred and Twenty-two Million, Three Hundred and Seventy-one Thousand) available in dollar equivalent to the Government of Anambra State under Obiano.

"I sold the dollars to Ayuba Tanko, another BDC operator. As soon as the transaction was done, I handed over the dollars to Ayuba Tanko. I didn't know it was from the Anambra State Government," he said.

EFCC Arrests 27 Suspected Internet Fraudsters in Benin City

Operatives of the Benin Zonal Directorate of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Wednesday June 26, 2024 arrested 27 suspected internet fraudsters at different locations within Benin City.

The suspects were arrested following actionable intelli-

gence on their suspected involvement in computer-related fraud.

Items recovered from them include the sum of N590,000, nine exotic cars, laptops and phones

The suspects will be charged to court as soon as investigations are concluded.



Olukoyede Orders Arrest of Officers Involved in Unprofessional Conduct

The Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Mr. Ola Olukoyede has ordered the arrest of two officers of the Commission allegedly involved in the manhandling of a female staff of Regional Hotel, Ojo, Lagos.

The officers were sighted in a viral video assaulting the staff of the hotel in an early morning sting operation in Lagos. The operation yielded a sizable

number of suspects who are still being profiled.

The EFCC's boss has also ordered detailed investigations of the operation carried out at the hotel and assured that appropriate disciplinary measures would be taken against any of the officers found to be culpable.

Olukoyede assures the general public that the EFCC would continue to ply its job professionally and with profound respect for the rule of law.

Court Jails Two for Impersonation in Kaduna

Justice R.M. Aikawa of the Federal High Court, sitting in Kaduna has convicted and sentenced the duo of Onah Henry Chinonso (a.k.a Sandra Morales) and Puklong Michael Longhom (a.k.a Robertech) to prison for internet fraud.

The convicts were prosecuted by the Kaduna Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC on separate one-count charges, bordering on criminal impersonation on social media.

Chinonso's charge reads: "That you, Onah Henry Chinonso (a.k.a Sandra Morales), male, sometimes in May, 2024 in Jos, Plateau State, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, fraudulently impersonated one Sandra Morales (a female American, residing in Miami, United States) on 'Facebook' (an online social media application), with intent to gain advantage for yourself and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 22(2)

(b)(i) of the Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention etc) Act, 2015 and punishable under Section 22(2)(b)(iv) of the same Act."

The count charge for Longhom reads: "That you Puklong Michael Longhom (a.k.a Robertech) sometime in May, 2024 in Jos, Plateau State, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, fraudulently impersonated one Robertech (a Tech expert) on social media platform (Instagram Application) with intent to gain advantage for yourself and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 22(2)(b)(i) of the Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention etc) Act, 2015 and punishable under Section 22(2)(b)(iv) of the same Act."

Both pleaded "guilty" to their charges when they were read to them, prompting prosecution counsel, Musa Usman Gadaka, who appeared with Mariya Nasaude Usman and Fatima Ustaz Usman to urge the court to convict and sentence them accordingly.

Kwara Courts Jail Ten for Internet Fraud



The Ilorin Zonal Directorate of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, has secured the conviction and sentence of ten fraudsters to various jail terms. They were all jailed for internet fraud.

On Monday, June 24, 2024, Justice Evelyn Anyadike of the Federal High Court sitting in Ilorin convicted and sentenced five persons to various jail terms.

The convicts are Sodiq Shehu; Ayinla Abdulwaheed Ayomide; Abdulkareem Omotosho; Ekundayo Stephen Samuel and Ayinla Sofiu Abayomi

The charge against Ayomide reads:

That you, Ayinla Abdulwaheed Ayomide whilst a PICKER between January 2022 and August 2023 at Ilorin within the jurisdiction of this Honourable

Court did take possession of the sum of N5,373,000.00 (Five Million, Three Hundred and Seventy Three Thousand Naira Only) transferred into your Zenith Bank account number: 2400818519 and FCMB Bank Account No: 4883945011 and which sum you knew directly represented the proceeds of crime of some persons, viz; Oluwatobi Babajide John, Akeem Adediji, Adeleke Adediji, etc and thereby committed an offence contrary to and punishable under Section 17(a) & (b) of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act, 2004"

The defendants pleaded guilty to their respective charges when they were read to them, following which Prosecution counsel, Innocent Mbachie, prayed the court to convict and sentence them.

Consequently, Justice Anyadike sentenced Shehu to four months imprisonment with an option of fine of N200,000 (Two Hundred Thousand Naira Only) on each counts

Similarly, Ayomide, Omotosho, Samuel and Abayomi were sentenced to 12 months imprisonment each with varying option of fine between N200,000 and N300,000.

The court also ordered that all the phones, laptops that were used by the convicts to perpetrate the crime and various sums of money brought by them as restitution be forfeited to the Federal Government.

In a similar fashion, Justices Adebayo Yusuf and Mahmud Abdugafar of the Kwara State High Court, and Justice Evelyn Anyadike of the Federal High Court in Ilorin at separate sittings on Tuesday, June 26, 2024,

convicted another set of five suspected internet fraudsters to various jail terms.

They are Evugbemu Emoeffe Emmanuel, Osi Ayomide Shitu, Alade Abiodun, Adegoke Gbolahan and Shehu Abdugafar Bukola.

The charges against Evugbemu Emoeffe Emmanuel reads:

"That you, Evugbemu Emoeffe Emmanuel (Alias: Lilian Trejo) sometime between November 2023 and April 2024 at Ilorin, within the judicial division of the High Court, did cheat by personation when you pretended to be one Lilian Trejo vide your Facebook messenger account and induced one Carl Perez to part with the sum of \$1,300 (One Thousand, Three Hundred US Dollars) through Cash App and Gift cards thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 321 of the Penal Code Law and Punishable under Section 324 of the same law"

They pleaded guilty to their charges when they were read to them, following which EFCC Counsel, Innocent Mbachie, Andrew Akoja and Mustapha Kaigama prayed the court to convict and sentence them accordingly.

The Justices, in their separate judgment, convicted and sentenced them to various jail terms.

Justice Yusuf sentenced Emmanuel to six months imprisonment without an option of fine and ordered that the sum of \$1,3300 (One Thousand, Three Hundred and Thirty US Dollars), which was recovered from him as well as his phone and laptop be forfeited to the Federal Government.

Alleged N80.2bn Fraud: EFCC Raises Contempt Charges against Yahaya Bello's Counsel

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has raised contempt charges against two defence counsel in the N80.2billion alleged money laundering charges against a former governor of Kogi State, Mr. Yahaya Bello.

Bello is facing prosecution alongside his nephew, Ali Bello, Dauda Suleiman and Abdulsalam Hudu on 19-count charges bordering on money laundering to the tune of N80,246,470,089.88k (Eighty Billion, Two Hundred and Forty Six Million, Four Hundred and Seventy Thousand, Eighty-Nine Naira and Eighty-eight kobo).

At the resumed hearing of the matter on Thursday, June 27, 2024, EFCC's lead counsel, Kemi Pinhero, SAN, prayed the court to exercise disciplinary actions against Abdulwahab Mohammed, SAN and Adeola Adedipe, SAN for reneging on their undertaking to produce the former governor for arraignment.

"My application is to invite

them and show cause why my Lordship will not deal with them for professional misconduct. My Lord, since Adedipe is here, my Lord should deal with him to remove him from the inner bar and deal with him summarily in the dock. It is a serious responsibility.

Our rules of professional conduct 2023, rule 32 sub 33 states that, 'a lawyer who fails to comply with any undertaking by him either personally or to his client, aside from being in contempt of court, is prima facie guilty of professional misconduct', he said. He prayed the court to hold the two counsel for contempt to serve as a lesson to other lawyers

Mohammed and Adedipe had at different times taken an undertaking to produce the suspect in court without any success.

At Thursday's proceedings, Adedipe informed the court of a letter allegedly written to the Chief Judge of the Federal High Court requesting the matter to

be transferred to the Lokoja Judicial Division, stressing that there was need for the matter to have a territorial jurisdiction.

"My Lord, a letter has been written on behalf of the defendant to the Honourable Chief judge of the Federal High Court requesting in substance that this matter be administratively transferred to the Federal High Court Lokoja judicial division, because there is need to have territorial jurisdiction, and the letter was received by the Chief Judge office", he said.

However, Pinhero insisted that the matter of the day was for the defence to tell the court why their client refused to appear in court, after making an undertaking at different instances to produce him.

"My Lord has ordered Abiola Adedipe SAN and Abdulwahab Mohammed SAN the opportunity to produce the defendant for arraignment today, but he has chosen to avoid responding to that. That undertaking was made

by him on the 13th of June, the letter to the Chief Judge was dated and delivered on the 10th, and delivered 13th of June, 2024, so the letter pre-dated the undertaking", he said.

Pinhero submitted that the letter to the Chief Judge was already in court, and was aware of the letter before making an undertaking. "My Lord, the letter to the Chief Judge does not discharge the undertaking made in this judicial proceeding, nor does the Chief Judge discharge the proceedings. That letter does not discharge the undertaking", he said. He stressed that Justice Emeka Nwite still retained the power of the proceedings and no contrary claim should be entertained by him. He prayed the court to exercise disciplinary actions against Mohammed and Adedipe for reneging on their undertaking to produce the former governor for arraignment.

Inspiring Confidence In The BVAS And Electronic Transmission Of Election Results: Seven Urgent Actions For INEC - Samson Itodo

Africa's biggest election will hold in February 2023 in Nigeria. It's the seventh successive general election in Nigeria's 23 years of unbroken democratic expedition. With ten million new voters added to the voters' roll, an estimated 95 million registered voters will vote in 176,846 polling units distributed across 774 local government areas. A total of 12,163 candidates sponsored by 18 political parties are on the ballot for election into 109 senatorial districts, 360 federal constituencies, 993 state constituencies, 28 governorship positions, and the Office of the President. The election is conducted against the backdrop of a new electoral law and innovations introduced by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to enhance electoral integrity and inspire public confidence in the electoral process. In the final analysis, the effective implementation, or lack thereof, of these new electoral technologies will play a significant role in assessing the integrity of the 2023 general elections.

The Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) and INEC Election Result Viewing Portal (IReV) are two technological innovations celebrated for enhancing the transparency of election results and boosting public trust in electoral outcomes in recent elections. INEC asserts that these technologies are addressing the ten most pervasive weaknesses in Nigeria's election result management process, which include falsification of votes at polling units, falsification of number of accredited voters, collation of false results, mutilation of results and computational errors, swapping of results sheets, forging of results sheets, snatching, and destruction of results sheets, obtaining declaration and return involuntarily, making declaration and return while result collation is still in progress and poor record-keeping.

Both tools perform mutually reinforcing and critical functions in elections. The BVAS is a technological device used to identify and accredit voters' fingerprints and facial recognition before voting. The device is also used for capturing images of the polling unit result sheet (Form EC8A) and uploading the image of the result sheet online. IReV is an online portal where polling unit-level results are uploaded directly from the polling unit, transmitted, and published for the public. At the front end of the online portal, members of the public can create personal accounts with which they can gain access to all uploaded results stored as PDF files. This accessibility of polling unit-level results increases transparency and public trust in the process.

Despite improving public confidence in electoral outcomes, the introduction of BVAS and IReV is anathema to political actors determined to subvert the people's will at all costs. It is, therefore, not surprising to learn of alleged attempts to torpedo INEC plans to safeguard the integrity of the election using the BVAS and IReV. A case in point is the litigation instituted in the Imo State High court seeking a restraining order against INEC to suspend the deployment of the BVAS for the general election.

Across the world, the introduction of electoral technologies has attracted contestations and controversies driven mainly by its propensity to enhance election credibility and undermine public trust in elections, especially when electoral technologies are compromised. Most importantly, electoral technologies ensure efficiency in election administration and limit human interference with the electoral process. As these technologies evolve, attempts to compromise them heighten. Elections can be stolen, and voter choices upturned by compromised election



officials with a click of a button. Tech tools may also be subjected to disruptive cyber-attacks. These issues amplify the essence of greater transparency by election management bodies to increase public trust and confidence in electoral technologies. Therefore, to increase the trust quotient in the BVAS and IReV, INEC should implement the following actions as a matter of urgency:

1. **BVAS Software Optimization:** Efficiency in the delivery of electoral services builds public trust. The BVAS software should be modified and upgraded to improve voter accreditation and picture quality. Its IOS should be upgraded to introduce a feature that enables the camera to detect or capture/focus on the object of interest, such as the entire result sheet. In addition, a PDF compression script should be integrated into the portal to ease downloads of election results.

2. **Electronically transmit and publish voter accreditation data on the IReV:** In addition to the transmission of polling unit-level results, INEC should electronically transmit and publish the number of accredited voters on the results viewing portal. The BVAS stores the number of accredited voters; however, the stored data is not transmitted electronically or published on the IReV portal. Electronically transmitting the number of accredited voters is in accordance with Section 64(4)(5)(6) of the Electoral Act 2022, which provides that the number of accredited voters recorded and transmitted directly from the polling unit shall be considered in the collation and announcement of results.

3. **Upload and transmit the ward collation results (Form EC8B) on the IReV:** To deepen the transparency of the collation process, the Form EC8B, Ward collation result sheet should be uploaded on the IReV portal at the close of collation at the ward level. This serves as oversight on ward collation, which is the weakest link in the election results value chain. Uploading the collated results sheet will facilitate monitoring and tracking of the results collation process by citizens and stakeholders.

4. **Increase the processing power of the IReV:** According to INEC, the IReV has been deployed in 105 elections involving 16,694,461 registered voters since it was first introduced

in the 2020 Nasarawa Central bye-election. In these elections, 32,935 results sheets (Form EC8A) were uploaded from polling units in rural and urban areas, including polling units in communities affected by insecurity. For the 2023 Presidential and National Assembly election, 530,538 results sheets (Form EC8A) will be uploaded on the IReV portal. It will be the first time the portal is processing this volume of results data. Therefore, INEC should increase its servers' bandwidth, RAM size, and storage capacity to improve the processing power of the IReV portal and ensure public access to results uploaded on the portal. The BVAS and IReV should be configured to manage multiple requests due to the huge traffic on election day.

5. **Timely conduct of penetration tests and mock exercises:** In Kenya, the electoral commission is under a mandatory duty to test, verify and deploy technology at least sixty days before a general election. Nigeria's Electoral Act has no similar provision. Notwithstanding, INEC has conducted simulation exercises for the BVAS in the past. While the 105 elections may be considered mock exercises for the BVAS and IReV, the high volume of information exchange, data processing, and transmission involved in the general election is incomparable to those elections. This is why penetration tests and mock exercises are required to assess the robustness, efficiency, security, and capacity of INEC servers and devices before their eventual deployment for the general election. Pre-deployment tests should be based on an extensive and representative methodology that integrates stakeholder consultation and public participation. Sharing the outputs of the test/exercises will enlist public support for the BVAS and IReV, just as creating opportunities for independent verification and audits of electoral technologies will be pivotal to inspiring public confidence. While there has been no successful cyber-attack to date on the BVAS and IReV, the public will require assurances of the durability, reliability, and robustness of INEC's tech defense system.

6. **Adopt a new approach to the training of election officials on electoral technology:** Based on the recent deployment of the BVAS and IReV, there is a relationship between the

quality of the election staff and management of the device and the quality of results sheets uploaded on the results viewing portal. In a recent Election Results Analysis Dashboard (ERAD) report, poorly captured images of results sheets and incorrect or incomplete forms were uploaded on the IReV. INEC should make significant investment in the training of polling unit officials, with a special focus on result transmission, ballot paper accounting as well as the capturing of polling unit results using the BVAS. All poll officials with the responsibility of handling the BVAS should undergo practical simulation sessions using the BVAS before election day. Expectedly, this policy action will address the capacity deficits.

7. **Introduce official forms for reporting the cancellation of results at the polling unit:** Currently, polling officials upload handwritten letters on sheets of paper to report cases of cancellations of results at the polling units. To ensure consistency, clarity, and transparency, INEC should introduce a form like Form E40G for reporting the cancellation of results at the polling unit to avoid upload of documents not relevant to the IReV or handwritten letters.

Conclusion

In elections, perception is everything. Introducing the BVAS and IReV into the framework for election results management has transformed the public perception of the accuracy and credibility of election results. It is one of the most significant innovations and reforms to Nigeria's electoral process. Therefore, INEC, civil society, and citizens' insistence on using BVAS and IReV for the 2023 elections are justified. The urgent policy actions outlined above will ensure the BVAS and IReV performs optimally when scaled up for the general election.

In 2023, Nigerians want to go to polls with the assurance that the BVAS and IReV will protect their vote. I believe it will.

Samson Itodo is an elections, democracy and public policy enthusiast. Itodo serves as the Executive Director of Yiaga Africa and the Convener of the Not Too Young To Run movement. He is a member of the Board of the Kofi Annan Foundation and Board of Advisers of International IDEA. Please send comments and feedback to sitodo@yiaga.org. He tweets @DSamsonItodo.



The death of our friend **ALHAJI AMINU BELO** was shocking and sudden to all of us, we didn't see it coming and we have all accepted his passing as the will of God. Late **ALHAJI AMINU** was a friend indeed especially when you are in need. It is on this note we are calling on all his associate, friends and sympathizers to join in the 40days prayer and a night of tribute to our departed friend coming up on the 8th of July 2024. You are therefore encouraged to support this cause and his family with your free will donation/ contributions generously to the following account details.....

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Federal Gov't Begins Negotiation With ASUU To Avert Strike

The Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) have commenced negotiations to avert the pending industrial action threatened by the university union.

LEADERSHIP understands that the Federal Government delegation, at the closed-door meeting on Wednesday was led by the Minister of Education, Prof. Tahir Mamman.

Mamman was quoted to have said the meeting would provide an opportunity for both parties to deliberate on issues also affecting the university system.

The ASUU President, Emmanuel Osodeke, who led the union's delegation, told newsmen that the meeting was to deliberate on lingering issues affecting the universities and avoid the planned strike action.

"There are a lot of issues that are outstanding within the system and we believe that before now, they would have been taken care of.

"The issues would have been resolved in line with the promise made by President Bola Tinubu and there would not be a strike in the university system.

"We hope that this meeting will be able to resolve some of these issues so that we can move forward as a country as well as our university system," he said.

It would be recalled that ASUU has in recent days, accused the government of failing to fulfil agreements reached with the union and threatened to go on strike once the ultimatum given to the government to uphold its end of the bargain expires.

Nigerian Army Pulls Out 10 officers

Ten officers of the Nigerian Army Armoured Corps (NAAC) were retired on Thursday after completing the mandatory years of service.

The pulling-out ceremony was the highlight of events organised by NAAC Headquarters in Bauchi, including the commissioning of its new headquarters complex by Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lieutenant General Taoreed Lagbaja, on Wednesday.

Among those retired were six Major Generals: Maj Gen Nsor Okpa Ojiji (Reviewing Officer), Maj Gen MH Magaji, Maj Gen GB Audu, Maj Gen M Danmadami, Maj Gen JG Mohammed, and Maj Gen UI Moh'd.

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Four Brigadier Generals were also retired: Brig Gen A Israel, Brig Gen BA Moh'd, Brig Gen D Abdulsalam, and Brig Gen SP Akpan.

Speaking after the Special Parade preceding the ceremony, Reviewing Officer Maj Gen Nsor Okpa Ojiji expressed gratitude to the Army for maintaining the tradition, urging that it should continue.

Speaking on the NAAC's past challenges, he noted significant improvements in accommodation and facilities, commending the efforts of the commander, officers, soldiers, and their families.

Ojiji also acknowledged the COAS for consistently providing resources to support the improvements.

However, he disclosed ongoing challenges, particularly inadequate equipment.

Portable Brags – "Don't Compare Musicians Income To That Of Footballers, Because I'm Richer Than Osimhen"

Popular Nigerian singer Portable has revealed why he thinks he is richer than Nigerian and Napoli FC striker Victor Osimhen, while also stating how the Nigerian football star failed to spend money at singer Davido's wedding. In a video that was posted on the official Instagram page of Portablebae, he made it known that people should stop comparing the income of musicians to that of professional footballers, saying that he is richer than Victor Osimhen. In his statement, he said, "Victor Osimhen did not spend dollars at Davido's wedding, he just came to eat and watch what was happening at the wedding. 'It's not that I'm bragging about my wealth, but if I were there at



the wedding, I would have spent a lot of money the

way I used to. "Don't compare musicians income to

that of footballers, because I'm richer than Osimhen."

Rivers Crisis: Give Me A Chance – Patience Jonathan



Amid the crisis rocking Rivers State, a former First Lady, Patience Jonathan, has finally reacted to the ongoing catastrophe.

Amid the crisis rocking Rivers, a former First Lady, Patience Jonathan, has urged the two warring parties in the oil-rich

state to give peace a chance.

The former First Lady made the request at the 60th anniversary of the Nigeria Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) international colloquium in Abuja on Thursday.

Speaking on the theme, 'Public Relations, Value Re-ori-

entation and Economic Transformation', the former first lady urged the warring parties to allow the present administration of Rivers State to run smoothly without interference.

Background of the crisis Rivers has been embroiled in a crisis following the fallout

of former Governor Nyesom Wike and Governor Siminalayi Fubara.

After leaving office in May 2023, Wike was later appointed FCT Minister by President Bola Tinubu-led All Progressives Congress, APC, government.

Last year, Fubara survived an impeachment move by lawmakers loyal to Wike. The oil-rich state has made headlines in recent months owing to the crisis.

Fubara and the Rivers State House of Assembly have been having a running battle with the pro-Wike lawmakers overriding the governor on some crucial bills in the state.

On Tuesday, a substance believed to be dynamite went off near the Presidential Hotel axis of the Aba Expressway in Port Harcourt causing panic in the area. The state government later said it had arrested the suspect who detonated the explosive.

Police parade alleged Kaduna-Abuja train attack mastermind, recover 48 AK-47s

The police have arrested several criminals terrorising citizens along the Kaduna-Abuja road axis from January 2024 to date, including those who masterminded the attack on Greenfield University and that of Southern Kaduna, where a seminary and the church were burnt to ashes.

Parading the suspects during his visit to Kaduna Police Command on Thursday, Nigeria Police Force Public Relations Officer, ACP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, said the arrest of the mastermind followed painstaking efforts to

bring the perpetrators of the dastardly act to book.

He said, "Under the directive of the Inspector General of Police, a helicopter has been deployed to serve as an escort for trains using the route, providing aerial support for the ground troops from the armed forces, police, and other security agencies deployed along the corridor, as well as a proactive measure to prevent attacks and act as a first responder in the event of any untoward incidents."

"This proactive measure has proven instrumental in enhancing security along

the corridor, ultimately safeguarding the lives and property of commuters and residents of the adjoining communities along the route."

"During this period, our proactive measures and relentless pursuit of criminal elements have resulted in remarkable outcomes, including the arrest of 81 armed robbery suspects, 40 kidnap suspects, 73 murder/homicide suspects, 36 rape suspects, 22 suspects involved in cult-related crimes, and 28 suspects engaged in other criminal activities," he said.

He said on February 29, 2024, "vigilant operatives of the Kaduna Command Monitoring Unit conducted a well-coordinated operation at the residence of a suspected kidnapper, one Adamu Abdulwahab, in Ganga Uku Village, Mararaban Jos, which resulted in the apprehension of the suspect and recovery of crucial exhibits, including 1 fabricated cartridge revolver rifle, 1 fabricated pistol, 2 Dane guns, 6 live cartridges, 1 discharged GPRG ammunition, 7 discharged cartridges, 2 SIM cards, 2 TECNO handsets, and 1 bloodstained cut-

lass. He explained that they have "successfully recovered 16 firearms of various types, along with 226 ammunitions of diverse calibers. Additionally, our operations have led to the retrieval of 28 stolen vehicles, over 200 harmful weapons, and 600 bags of fertilizer."

"A total of three million, three hundred and fifty thousand Naira (N3,350,000) only, previously paid as ransom to kidnappers, has been successfully recovered, while our swift and coordinated efforts have resulted in the safe rescue

of 158 kidnapped victims, all of whom have been reunited with their families unharmed."

"These achievements include the arrest of Mande, leader of the kidnapping syndicate. On January 12, 2024, police operatives attached to the anti-kidnapping unit of Kaduna State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), based on credible information, swooped in and arrested one Ibrahim Abdullahi, aka MANDE, at the Abuja-Kaduna Road flyover by Rido Junction.

“Dangote Daughter Own Pass Your Own By Far” – Nigerians Counter Davido For Saying Nobody In Nigerian Can Have A Wedding Like His Own

Popular Nigerian singer Davido has come under fire after he announced at his wedding ceremony that no one can surpass the glitz and glamour his wedding had. The singer who officially tied the knot with his long-time partner was so certain that no wedding ceremony could surpass his own in Nigeria. The way the singer talked with excessive pride didn't sit well with many Nigerians as they immediately dug out footage from Dangote's daughter's wedding and compared it with his.

Exposed!! Popular Abuja doctor revealed how men can naturally and permanently cure poor erection, quick ejaculation, small and shameful *** without side effects. Even if you are hypertensive or diabetic . Stop the use of hard drugs for sex!! It kills! Although both events were the talk of the town and had public figures in attendance, netizens argued that that of the billionaire's daughter surpassed his own hands down. To prove their point they placed images of both events side by side and compared them in terms of the VIP that attended each wedding, the interior decoration of the event spaces, and other details.

@Rebel_YSL: So he couldn't win Grammy, he decided to compete in Best in wedding (Naija chapter)



@Kennynuga: Is it a competition. You married your most preferred Baby-Mama and here you are shouting “nobody fit do ham” very bad example for our

youths
@Yeahmicee: Does he ever do anything genuinely for his own happiness? He's always trying to prove a point, Ed-

ucated Portable
@jiggycorade: Just see why I no like this guy. He too dey brag. And later then go say Wizkid get pride. Mtcheew!

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Nigerian Student Who Abandoned Studies To Join Russia Military Operations In Ukraine Pleads For Citizenship

A Nigerian national, Adam Mohammad Bakur Mohammad Ibrahim, 24, has been seeking Russian citizenship since May 2024. He joined the Skif Cossack battalion in November 2023, where he was given the call sign 'Vanka' and participated in special military operations (SVO) as a member of the unit.

In December 2023, Russian media featured a story on Vanka, a Nigerian national who had captured a Ukrainian soldier, as seen in a video posted online, RT reports.

After completing his six-month contract, Adam returned to Voronezh, where he had previously studied at the Academy of Sports. He hoped to resume his studies and obtain Russian citizenship, but faced obstacles in acquiring a Russian passport.

Seeking assistance, Ibrahim reached out to RT. His journey in Russia began in September 2023, when he enrolled in the Voronezh State Academy of Sports. Two months later, in November 2023, he took a leave of absence from his studies to join the special military operation (SVO), with the academy's consent.

"In November 2023, I wanted to volunteer for the Northern Military District," Adam told RT. "I went because I wanted to stay in Russia after studying and become a citizen of this country."

As a non-Russian citizen, Adam was unable to enter into a contract directly with the Ministry of Defense. However, there is a legal workaround for foreign nationals who wish to support Russia's military efforts: they can sign an agreement with an organization authorized to carry out tasks assigned to the Russian Armed Forces in the Northern Military District.

Adam enlisted in the Skif Cossack battalion, which is part of the Terek Cossack brigade, and was given the call sign 'Vanka' during his service.

Adam signed the agreement on November 11, 2023, and was initially assigned as a shooter.

However, he quickly demonstrated his versatility and acquired an additional skillset as a UAV operator while on the front lines. During his deployment, Adam participated in combat missions



in the Soledar direction, earning a reputation as an exemplary warrior, as noted by the chief of staff of the Skif DRO in his official description of Adam's service.

The document reads, "During his participation in the special operation for the denazification and demilitarization of Ukraine and being in the Adam Mohammad Bakur detachment, Mohammad Ibrahim with the call sign Vanka, in the position of a shooter, established himself as a responsible, courageous, conscientious, strong-willed, disciplined warrior.

"In the performance of his patriotic duty, he performed combat missions, despite the conditions directly associated with the risk of life. During the period of a special military operation on the territory of Ukraine for the specified period, as part of the 35th separate volunteer detachment "Skif" repeatedly participated in hostilities in direct con-

tact with the enemy on the front line of defense of the detachment. He enjoys well-deserved authority and respect within the team."

When Adam's contract with Skif expired on May 4, 2024, he returned to Voronezh, planning to resume his studies and expecting to do so as a newly minted citizen of the Russian Federation, having hoped to have his citizenship application processed during his time away fighting.

While Adam was serving on the front lines, President of the Russian Federation's Decree No. 10, dated January 4, 2024, came into effect.

The decree stipulates the conditions for foreign citizens, like Adam, who have signed a military service contract with the Russian Armed Forces or affiliated military formations, and their family members, to be admitted to Russian citizenship.

According to the presidential decree, Adam is eligible for simplified Russian citizenship, allowing

him to bypass the usual naturalization process and gain citizenship through a more expedited route.

Despite being eligible for simplified citizenship under the presidential decree, Adam's efforts to obtain Russian citizenship have been met with failure so far.

The young man alleges that he sought assistance at the Voronezh EMC, but was left without guidance or support. Meanwhile, returning to his home country of Nigeria has become a risky proposition for Adam, as he faces potential imprisonment for mercenary activities.

Adam said, "I stayed on the front line for six months, my contract expired on May 4.

"Now I have a problem with obtaining citizenship. For now I am in Voronezh and continue to study at VGAS. At home they could arrest me, they could give me 20 years in prison."

Detention Of Nigerian Cleric In Benin Republic Sparks Protest In Abuja



Some Nigerians have staged a peaceful protest at the Embassy of Benin Republic in Abuja, demanding the release of a Nigerian cleric, Pastor Benjamin Egbaji, who has been in prolonged detention in Benin Republic without trial.

According to the protesters, Egbaji, a native of Cross River State, who oversees a church, Église De Miracle Et Action Du Saint Esprit, in Benin Republic, has been in deten-

tion for over a year after he was accused of rape by Pede Victoire, a citizen of the Republic of Benin.

The protesters wielding various placards with different inscriptions condemned what they described as mistreatment of Nigerians in Benin Republic amid the growing frustration of Nigerians over this ill-treatment, adding that Egbaji even while in the hospital was still shackled with chains.

Speaking to journalists at the Embassy,

dors for Social Transformation and Orientation Initiatives, Ayobamidele Kehinde, noted that Pastor Egbaji has been languishing in Benin Republic's detention for over a year without trial.

Kehinde said the attacks against Nigerians, especially those of Igbo extraction in the French-speaking country, have assumed the xenophobic proportions even as he lamented that the Nigerian government has not

intervene in this matter.

He said, "The accusations against Pastor Benjamin were made by Pede Victoire, who claimed that he raped her daughter, Ahouandjinou Dona Sarah, when she was just 13 years old.

"However, this claim was never formally reported, and no evidence has been presented to substantiate these allegations.

"Attempts to secure bail for Pastor Benjamin Egbaji have been unsuccessful due to the lack of action from the Nigerian Government."

Kehinde said Egbaji has made enormous contribution to the economy of Benin Republic over the past 30 years, and made personal sacrifices including suffering tragedies such as deaths of his wife and adopted daughter, stressing that he does not deserve such treatment.

He denounced the lack of support from the Nigerian government, stating, "We cannot claim to be members of ECOWAS and suffer like this. We have intel that the judge is under pressure to sentence Benjamin to ten years imprisonment. Visit their prisons and see how Nigerians are languishing there."

After submitting a petition to the Embassy, Barrister Joseph B. Ayi, told reporters that a medical report indicated that Egbaji, who is hypertensive, has blood pressure levels of 254/136, putting him at risk of a stroke or cardiac arrest.

"We have submitted our petition to the embassy, and they have promised to take action on the matter before the end of the day," Ayi stated.

“We Can’t Continue To Enable Rubbish!!! Stop Pls” – Obi Cubana



Famous billionaire businessman, Obi Cubana, calls on blogs to refrain from giving visibility to youths disrespecting elders, after the recent clash between Verydarkman and Paulo Okoye.

It would be recalled that the activist had called out Iyabo Ojo, claiming she was never invited to Davido's main wedding, but to his after-party.

Paulo Okoye had criti-

cized him for the remark, which thus prompted Verydarkman to shift his attack to Paulo.

Following this, Obi Cubana took to his Instagram page to call on blogs to desist from giving attention to youths who are disrespecting elders.

According to him, it would only be enabling them and spur them when such attention is being given.

“Dear blogs; pls stop giving visibility to youth insulting elders! You enable them! we can’t continue to enable rubbish!!! Stop, pls!!!,” he wrote.

Reactions have followed ...

unmiitemenu said: “Let vdm reply Cubana if he is that stubborn”

sapphire_x__x remarked: “Until VDM block every good access he has because of Cho Cho Cho”

gen_da_lib opined: “All parties involved are “adults “The insults have gone both ways ”

vanaulkymoore wrote: “The dog that’s determined to be lost in the forest will not yield to the warning whistle of the hunter!”

sammyogbaok said: “If them born very dark man well make e respond to chief”

NDLEA, ALGON Partner On Drug War, To Set Up WADA Committees At LGs, Communities



The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, and the Association of Local Governments of Nigeria, ALGON, have agreed to work together to curb the menace of substance abuse and illicit drug trafficking in communities across the country.

This was one of the agreements reached at a meeting when the National President of ALGON, Hon. Aminu Muazu Maifata led other leaders of the umbrella body for all local government chairmen in the country on a courtesy visit to the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (Rtd) at the Agency's headquarters in Abuja.

Addressing the ALGON leaders, Marwa expressed the preparedness of NDLEA to work with the council chairmen to ensure that people at the grassroots are well sensitized about

the dangers of abusing illicit drugs and also provide help for those already indulging in the unhealthy habit.

According to the NDLEA boss, “we’re particularly happy that you’re here to identify with our work and partner with us because you are the closest tier of government to the people especially the grassroots and our communities where majority of Nigerians reside. This is more so because the drug scourge is in virtually all our communities, no community across the country is spared and as such, we need your partnership to cascade all our efforts in terms of drug demand reduction and even the supply reduction, down to the remote communities.

“This partnership is also important coming at a time when we’re deploying our personnel to the local government areas to establish our physical presence in the rural communities

so that we can support you to curb the scourge of drug abuse and illicit drug dealing, which fuel crimes and criminalities in those areas.”

He encouraged the ALGON leaders to mobilise their members nationwide to set up local government drug control committees and war against drug abuse, WADA, committees comprising traditional rulers, community gatekeepers, opinion and religious leaders as well as market and women groups, among others at the community level. These committees similar to what obtains at the national and state levels, he said, will work with NDLEA commands to coordinate the fight against the drug menace in the communities.

He encouraged them to also take advocacy and drug test as major components of their efforts when they return to their local governments to begin implementation of the

various strategies discussed at the meeting. He added that to make drug test easier, the Agency has mass produced quality test kits easy to use at home, offices and others with the aim of early detection and providing treatment for those who test positive as well as engendering deterrence.

In his remark, the ALGON National President, Hon. Aminu Maitafa lamented the negative impact of drug abuse on the health, businesses and security of lives and property at the grassroots while expressing the commitment of the body to work with NDLEA to ensure that the ugly development is urgently reversed.

“As the body of local governments in Nigeria, we appreciate the enormous work this Agency is doing under your leadership and that is why we have come to partner with you so that we can collectively stamp out the drug abuse problem from our communities.” He assured that they will emplace necessary structures that will facilitate the deployment of NDLEA personnel to their council areas.

Other ALGON leaders at the meeting include: Mr. Itiako Ikpokpo, Director General; Hon. Bala Chamo, National Publicity Secretary; Hon. Aminu Jairo Hassan, National Welfare Officer; Hon. Adamu Bukar, National Auditor; and Hon. Shehu Jega, Chief of Staff to the National President.

#Chivido2024: Adeleke Family Appreciates Guests, Well-wishers Over Davido, Chioma’s Wedding

The Adeleke Dynasty of Edeland in Osun State has expressed heartfelt appreciation to their friends, associates, and well-wishers for attending the wedding of their son and Afrobeat sensation, David Adeleke, popularly known as Davido, to Chioma Rowland.

The wedding took place on Tuesday, June 25, in Lagos.

In a press statement dated on Wednesday, which was signed by the governor of Osun State, Ademola Adeleke, on behalf of the Adeleke Dynasty, described the attendance and goodwill at the talk-of-the-town wedding as “quite robust and overwhelming.”

“We thank friends and associates from far and near for the love they showered on the Adeleke family by their enthusiastic presence and messages to the new couple on their memorable and historic wedding. We were overwhelmed by the massive show of brotherhood for the family in our time of happiness and joy,” Governor Adeleke stated.

Governor Adeleke extended special gratitude to several notable figures who attended the wedding, including “former President Olusegun Obasanjo; the former National Chairman of the PDP, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu; Lagos State Governor and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Sanwo-Olu; Ogun State Governor and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Abiodun; Abia State Governor, Dr. Alex Otti; Governor Godwin Obaseki of Edo State; the Deputy Governor of Imo State, Mrs. Chinyere Ekomaru; the Deputy Governor of Oyo State, Chief Bayo Lawal; the former Governor of Abia State, Dr. Okezie Ikpeazu; and Oyo State Assembly Speaker, Rt. Hon. Adebo Ogundoyin.

“Our heartfelt gratitude

also goes to Senator Sanusi Daggash; Mr. Seyi Tinubu; Mrs. Abike Dabiri; Senator Daisy Danjuma; Senator Yinka Olujinmi; Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe; Senator Osita Izunaso; His Royal Majesty, the Ooni of Ife, Oba Enitan Adeyeye Ogunwusi; the Soun of Ogbomoso land, Oba Gandi Adeoye; the Ataoja of Osogboland, Oba Jimoh Olanipekun; the Timi of Edeland, Oba Munir Adesola Lawal; Oba Saheed Ademola, Elegushi of Ikataland; our esteemed in-laws from Igboland; top business and political leaders from far and near; countless traditional rulers; leading lights of the Nigerian entertainment industry; members of the National Assembly from Osun State; members of the Osun State Executive Council; members of the Osun State House of Assembly; members of the diplomatic corps; members of the diaspora community; and several other dignitaries too numerous to mention here,” Governor Adeleke added.

The ‘Dancing Governor’ concluded the statement with a message of best wishes: “On behalf of my big brother, the father of the bridegroom, Dr. Deji Adeleke; my sister, Chief (Mrs.) Modupe Adeleke-Sanni; and the entire Adeleke family, we extend our best wishes to all those who honored the wedding of our son, Davido, and his lovely wife, Chioma. We pray that sounds and thrills of joy and happiness shall be our portion all the time of our lives. Amen.”

The Adeleke family expressed their sincere thanks to all who attended and supported the #Chivido wedding, making it a memorable event for the newlyweds and their families.



CAS Clears Tobi Amusan For Paris Olympics

The Court Arbitration of Sports (CAS) has cleared Nigeria's 100m hurdles world record holder, Tobi Amusan, to participate in the 2024 Paris Olympics Games.

The CAS dismissed the appeals filed by World Athletics (WA) and by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) against the decision to clear her of a doping offence. In July 2023, Amusan was charged by WA for committing an Anti-Doping Rule Violation (ADRV), under Rule 2.4 WA ADR following three alleged whereabouts failures within a 12-month period.

However, Amusan challenged the decision, and the World Athletics Disciplinary Tribunal (WADT), in August 2023, considered that Amusan did not violate Rule 2.4 of the WA Anti-Doping Rules and that no period of ineligibility should be imposed on the athlete.

CAS, in a statement on Friday, upheld the decision of WADT.

It stated: "In their respective appeal to CAS, WA and WADA had sought the imposition of a two-year period of ineligibility.

"The CAS Panel held a hearing on January 19. Having deliberated, the CAS Panel has issued its decision today dismissing both appeals.

"The CAS Panel unanimously acknowledged that the Athlete committed two filing failures but did not confirm the existence of a missed test, alleged by WA and WADA which would have been the third whereabouts failure committed within a 12-month period.

"Accordingly, the Panel concluded that the Athlete did not commit an ADRV and that the Challenged Decision should be confirmed."



Nunez helps Uruguay to brink Copa America last

Uruguay took an impressive step towards the Copa America knockout stage as Liverpool forward Darwin Nunez starred in a 5-0 win against Bolivia.

Nunez, 25, scored for the seventh consecutive match for his country as Marcelo Biesla's side made it two wins from two in the United States.

Facundo Pellistri, the Manchester United winger, opened the scoring with a close-range header in the eighth minute before Nunez doubled the lead by clipping in a 10th goal in his last seven appearances for his country.

Winger Maximiliano Araujo tucked in his second goal of the tournament 13 minutes from time, before Real Madrid's Federico

Valverde, with a low finish, and Tottenham's Rodrigo Bentancur, with a firm header, rounded off the win.

Uruguay, who sit 14th in Fifa's world rankings, are aiming for an outright record 16th Copa America title as they close in on the quarter-finals. They and Argentina both have 15 wins to date.

"There are still several important steps to take in order to be convinced that Uruguay can reach the level we imagine with the individual talent it has," said manager Bielsa.

"It would be incorrect to make conclusions."

Uruguay face the United States in their final Group C match at 02:00 BST on Tuesday, when a draw would assure Bielsa's side of top spot.

Africa Athletics Championship Ends As Shortcoming Marres Event



Cameroon has just organised its second African Senior Athletics Championship which took place in the virtually empty Japoma Stadium in Douala.

Nearly 800 athletes from all over the continent took part in this 23rd edition of the competition which, despite difficulties at the start, was a ticket to the 2024 Paris Olympics.

"We know that the African championships were relocated from the first stadium. And frankly it was very hard for us to compete," says Algeria's Medhi Amar Rouana, who came third in pole vaulting.

"There were holes and the track wasn't completely straight. But we were all in the same condition, so you had to fight," he says.

While athletes complained about the quality of some of the facilities, this did not demoralise the Ivorian

and Ugandan athletes who won gold medals in their disciplines.

"This is the first time I've taken part in the African Senior Athletic Championships and I'm very happy to win the gold medal. I was really prepared for this," says Loice Chekwemmoi from Uganda, who won the 3,000m race.

A feeling echoed by Jessica Lauren Maca of the Ivory Coast, who is now 200m champion.

"It was really difficult, but I told myself that everyone is in the same situation, so all I knew is that I wanted to come first."

It wasn't until the last two days that the authorities mobilised to provide free transport for locals wanting to watch the competition.

South Africa finished first with 19 medals, followed by Nigeria with 15, and Ethiopia with 10.

The next edition of the competition will be held in Ghana in 2026.

Fans Racially Abused Weah After Red Card In US Loss



The United States Soccer Federation condemned the online racist abuse suffered by several of its players following a 2-1 defeat by Panama at the Copa America.

Monaco striker Folarin Balogun, Crystal Palace defender Chris Richards and Juventus pair Timothy Weah and Weston McKennie were all targeted online after the hosts lost the Group C match in Atlanta.

Weah, 24, was shown a straight red card in the 18th minute after punching Panama's Roderick Miller in the head in an off-the-ball incident.

The former Lille winger, who apologised to his teammates for the incident, said it was a "moment of frustration".

US Soccer said in a statement on X: "There is absolutely no place in the game for such hateful and discriminatory behaviour.

"These actions are not only unacceptable but also contrary to the values of respect and inclusivity that we uphold as an organisation."

Despite Panama's numerical advantage, it was the US that took the lead at the Mercedes-Benz Stadium through a superb strike from Balogun - his fifth goal in 14 appearances for the US.

The lead lasted just four minutes as Cesar Blackman equalised from the edge of the box for Panama, who are 43rd in the Fifa world rankings.

The US, ranked 11th, defended admirably but Panama's pressure told seven minutes from time as Jose Fajardo netted from close range.

Shortly before full-time, Panama were also reduced to 10 men when Adalberto Carrasquilla was shown a red card for a reckless swipe on winger Christian Pulisic.

The US, who co-host the men's World Cup in 2026 with Canada and Mexico, are now level on points with Panama heading into their final group match against Uruguay on 2 July at 02:00 BST.

The US, who have a better goal difference, need to match Panama's result against Bolivia to progress to the last 16.

Little Boy' - Joshua Riled By Dubois As Security Steps In



Anthony Joshua threatened to throw a chair across the face of Daniel Dubois as the two heavyweights were restrained by security during a heated interview.

Dubois, 26, will defend the IBF world title against his fellow Briton at Wembley Stadium on 21 September.

Broadcaster Dazn released a short clip of the interview, recorded before Thursday's news conference, on social media.

Two-time world champion Joshua, 34, said he was "ready to fight", to which Dubois replied: "Let's go. If he wants to swing, let's go now."

A visibly annoyed Joshua told Dubois not to disrespect him, adding: "I'll throw this [expletive] chair across your face."

Dubois has been a somewhat reserved character in the past, but the Londoner refused to back down.

"You don't intimidate me, who do you think you are?"

he asked Joshua.

Both men stood up from their chairs.

Security intervened as Joshua called Dubois a "little boy" and promoters Eddie Hearn and Frank Warren attempted to defuse the situation.

Queensberry's Warren then asked the production team to cut the interview short.

Dubois has won his past two fights, stopping Jarrell Miller in December and Filip

Hrgovic this month.

He was elevated to world champion status after undisputed champion Oleksandr Usyk - who is set to contest a rematch with Tyson Fury in December - vacated the belt on Tuesday.

Joshua is on a four-fight winning streak and has three stoppages in his past three bouts.

The winner will put themselves in prime position to fight the winner of Usyk-Fury.

Euro 2024: Netherlands Overestimated Self - Van Dijk

Captain Virgil van Dijk says the Netherlands may have overestimated themselves going into Euro 2024.

The Dutch only qualified for the last 16 as one of the best third-placed finishers after losing to Austria on Tuesday.

"I can completely understand the criticism," Van Dijk said.

"Things overall can and should be better. Maybe we overestimate ourselves."

Ronald Koeman's side finished behind France as Austria topped Group D with an impressive six points.

The Netherlands, who last won the European Championship 36 years ago, know they are going to have to play much better to repeat that success in Germany.

Van Dijk added: "A lot had to be said [following the defeat to Austria] and we had to analyse

alot.

"It was not the tactics where things went wrong. It was mainly the will to win, so we have talked about that and with harsh words."

Van Dijk was heavily criticised by former midfielder Rafael van der Vaart on Dutch TV channel NOS. Van der Vaart accused him of showing a lack of passion in an overall "disgraceful performance" against Austria.

The Liverpool captain was at fault for the third and decisive Austria goal in Berlin and the 32-year-old told the media on Friday he knows he has to defend to a higher standard.

"I'm not stupid," Van Dijk said. "I also know that I can do better and that it should be better, and that's what I'm working on."

The Netherlands play Romania for a place in the quarter-finals on Tuesday with kick-off at 17:00 BST on BBC One.



McGregor In 'Deep Mental Pain' To Miss UFC 303

Conor McGregor says he is in 'deep mental pain' to watch UFC 303 fight week go on without him.

The Irishman was scheduled to fight Michael Chandler as the headline event in Las Vegas on Saturday, before injury forced him to withdraw.

McGregor, 35, is instead watching the week unfold from Ireland as he continues his rehabilitation from a broken toe.

"I'd be lying if I told you I wasn't in deep pain right now watching fight week take place," he wrote on X.

"Thank you for the messages of support and encouragement, my peers and fans."

Alex Pereira stepped in to replace McGregor at the top of the UFC 303 bill, as he defends his light-heavyweight title against Jiri Prochazka on Saturday.

One Irishman remains on the card, Ian Machado Garry. The Dubliner faces England's Michael 'Venom' Page in a welterweight bout.

Garry, 26, has promised to step up in McGregor's absence as he looks to extend his 14-0 unbeaten record.



Verstappen Beats Norris To Austrian GP Sprint Pole

Max Verstappen edged out Lando Norris by just 0.093 seconds to take pole position for the sprint race at the Austrian Grand Prix.

Verstappen, the last of the front-runners to cross the line, despite being unhappy with his tyres as a result of a chaotic end to the session and crowded track.

Oscar Piastri made it a McLaren two-three, 0.301secs off the Dutchman, ahead of George Russell's Mercedes and Ferrari's Carlos Sainz.

The Spaniard's team-mate Charles Leclerc failed to get around to the line in time before starting his flying lap at the end of the session and will start 10th.

Lewis Hamilton, who ran off track a number of times during the session, ended up sixth, ahead of another disappointing performance from Red Bull's Sergio Perez, who was 1.322secs slower than his team-mate.

The last two races have de-



veloped into a fight between Verstappen and Norris for supremacy and so it was in sprint qualifying at the Red Bull Ring.

But whereas Norris pipped Verstappen to pole in Spain last weekend, the world champion was fastest in every session in the shortened qualifying session that is held for the sprint and always looked most likely to take pole.

In fact, Norris appeared to struggle through the first two sessions, in which he was

only fourth and seventh, but pulled out a strong lap when it mattered.

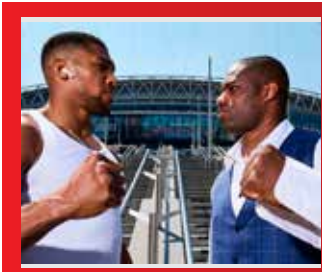
First Russell, then Piastri set the pace, before Norris moved the goalposts by a large amount for such a short lap, only for Verstappen to re-establish himself at the front with the final lap of the session.

The crowd, a large portion of which have travelled from the Netherlands to support him in their trademark

orange tops, cheered him across the line at what is Red Bull's home race on a track they own.

Verstappen said: "It is great to be first here in front of basically my home fans my home grand prix, it has been a good day so far. It has been nice to drive the car. Immediately it was well balanced."

"Of course you make some small changes before spring qualifying and everything has been working really well."



Little Boy' -
Joshua Riled
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In

UAE To Support Bayelsa On Agric, Gas, Seaport Development



The United Arab Emirates has said it will support Bayelsa State in Nigeria's Niger Delta region to develop its gas resources, agriculture and seaport.

The UAE Ambassador to Nigeria, Salem Saeed Al-Shamsi, stated this at a meeting with the Bayelsa State Governor, Senator Douye Diri, at the embassy in Abuja on Tuesday.

The UAE envoy, who appreciated Governor Diri's visit, noted that it was the first time they were meeting but that he had followed developments in Bayelsa and was impressed with his performance in office.

Al-Shamsi commended the governor for establishing a new ministry on blue economy to tap into and develop the state's maritime potentialities.

He also said information available to him was that Bayelsa was peaceful and had recently

successfully conducted local government election.

He said his country was willing to collaborate and support the state and would welcome a visit of its team to Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital city.

According to Al-Shamsi, "We appreciate this visit and the opportunity to explore areas of cooperation and support.

"The UAE is ready to discuss any area of interest between Bayelsa and Abu Dhabi and willing to support the state towards developing its oil and gas resources, its agricultural sector and the seaport.

"You have just established a Ministry of Blue Economy. As a maritime environment, the establishment of this ministry is very commendable.

"The Dubai Ports will meet with your team

and they can discuss how to develop your seaport. We will arrange a meeting with the ADNOC (Abu Dhabi National Oil Company) team on oil and gas development as well as with our Agriculture Minister."

The UAE ambassador appreciated the robust relationship between his country and Nigeria, stating that all outstanding issues between both countries will soon be resolved.

He also commended Nigerians for their resilience in the face of the country's economic challenges, saying the UAE was willing to support President Bola Tinubu and Nigeria to overcome them.

Responding, the Bayelsa governor equally expressed appreciation to the envoy for the warm reception.

Governor Diri noted that his visit was divine as the ambassador already had in mind virtually

all he wanted to discuss with him.

He welcomed the opportunity of meeting with UAE officials to foster bilateral cooperation and relationship also in areas of educational and science and technology development.

Diri said the state seeks private investors to develop its seaport at Agge in Ekeremor Local Government Area and expressed excitement about the proposal of the envoy, saying the port will serve the whole of the Niger Delta and the South East.

He stated that Bayelsa was an oil and gas-rich state but is seeking investors on gas as an alternative revenue source and as the country transits to gas as a cleaner energy.

The governor assured that his team was ready to meet with the UAE officials to discuss the areas of collaboration.