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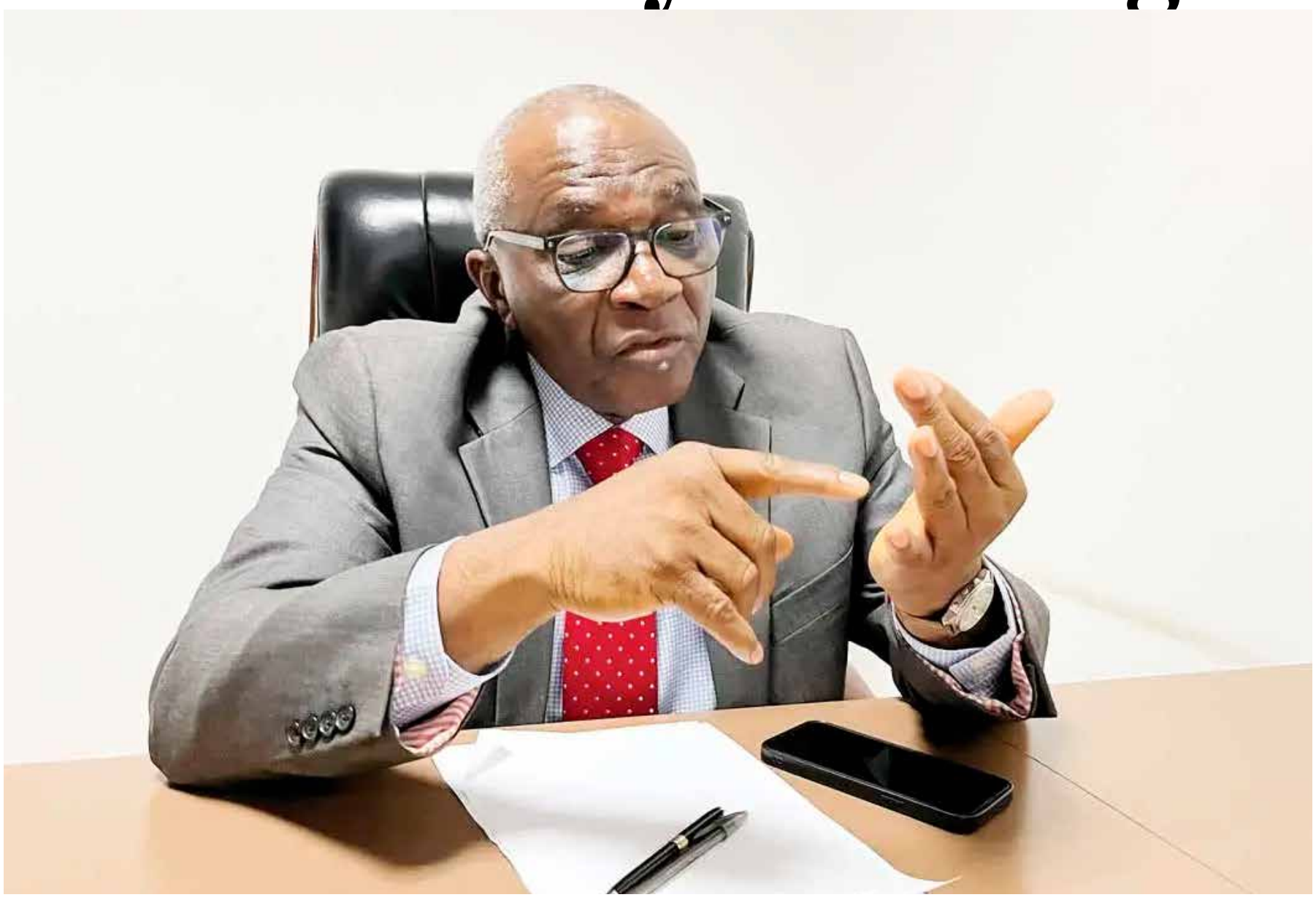
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FROM THE ARCHIVE Do the right thing even if nobody is watching which is called INTEGRITY

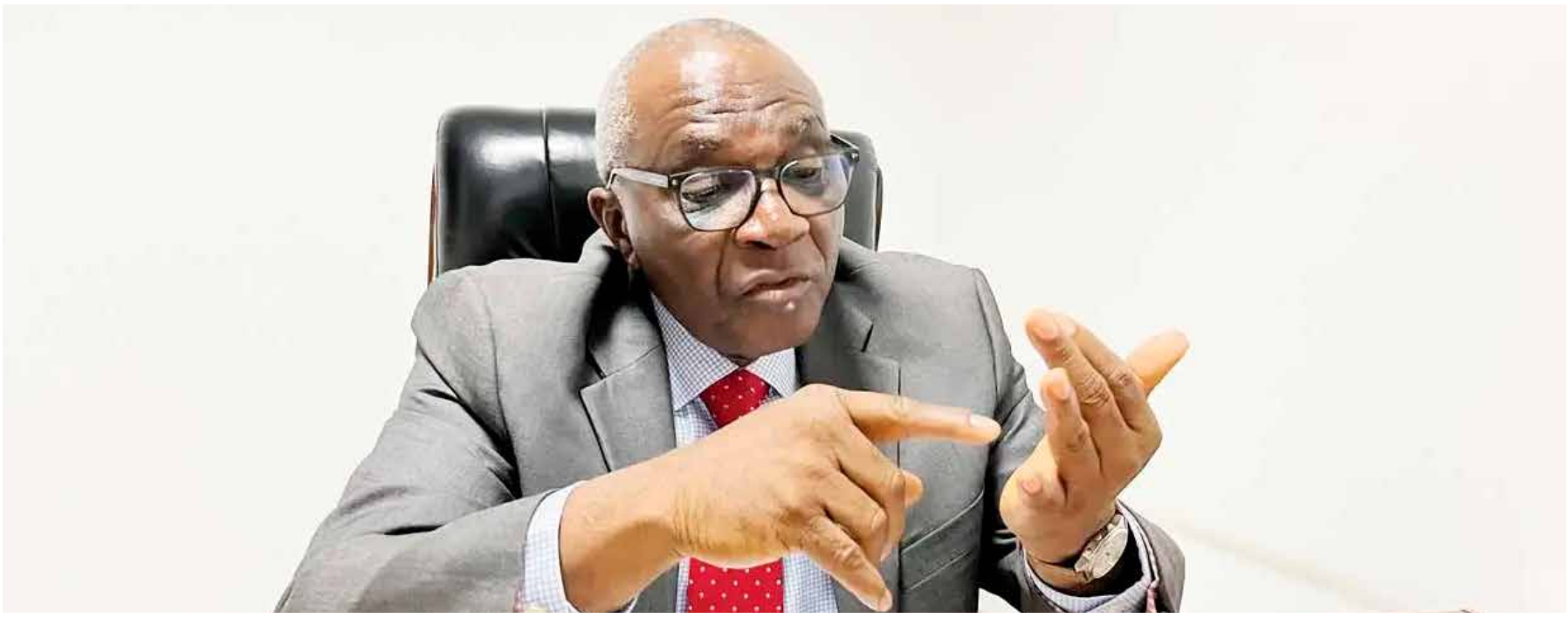
Goodluck Jonathan explains coup in Guinea-Bissau, his evacuation from country

Inside Tinubu's war room, thanks to Bayo Onanuga



INSECURITY IN NIGERIA: Citizens can seek foreign help if their govt can't protect them, says OBJ

Inside Tinubu's war room, thanks to Bayo Onanuga



BY IKEDDY ISIGUZO

AFTER weeks of commendations of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, for doing nothing about the sweltering security situation, Senate President Obong Godswill Akpabio moved in with a vote of confidence from the Senate.

It was to be the icing on the cake of the President's ineptitude, and his obvious clueless of management of the terrorist attacks on Nigeria, after he has rejected external assistance to fight the terrorists who hide under religion and ethnicity.

Akpabio, cocksure, sure-footed, ran into a huge storm at his Senate. How can a discussion of Nigeria's insecurity have a first item that asks for a vote of confidence on the President?

Senator Enyinnaya Harcourt Abaribe's question unsettled Akpabio. The Senate President belatedly adopted the question as if it meant anything to him.

Who gave the orders for soldiers posted to Government Girls Comprehensive Secondary School, Maga, to be withdrawn, moments before the abduction of its 24 students?

Has the Commander-in-Chief done anything about the suspect or culprit? Kebbi State Governor Nasir Idris first expressed his anger about the abduction. He acted on DSS intelligence to have soldiers deployed to the school.

Ordinary Nigerians have also wondered about that aspect of the operations at Maga which from the Abuja's silence appeared to be parts of legitimate orders.

The Governor got no answer to the sabotage that cost at least two lives, the school's Vice-Principal, and a security guard. When Senator Abaribe elevated the concern to the floor of the Senate, restraining himself from giving his anger full range, Akpabio's antenna picked up signals that the intended vote of confidence for the President, if he got one, would be diluted, doused in controversy.

Senator Henry Seriake Dickson had barely started when Akpabio abbreviated him. Dickson used "the other side", to describe those who supported the President without a critical view of the damages that insecurity was causing, well beyond the immediate locations of the attacks.

Akpabio flared up. "The other side", Akpabio said, suggested that the Senate was divided. He claimed the Senate was one. Akpabio kept abridging Dickson until he finally had Dickson's microphone switched off.

That is how Akpabio's one Senate works. He knows what he wants said and nearly how it should be said. "The other side" referred to the members of the Senate from majority or the minority party, depending on who was speaking. Didn't the Senate President knows this?

What was so important about a vote of confidence on the President, and for doing exactly what?

Akpabio explained that not making planned trips to South Africa and Angola to attend to the security issues at home, was enough for the Senate to commend Tinubu. Akpabio seemed upset that the interrogations of the security situation were delaying the delivery of the vote of confidence to the President which could be time-bound.

Senator Dickson issued an official statement after the rowdy Wednesday session. "I stated that It is very clear that not only our democracy is under threat, but the nation itself is being reduced, belittled, and threatened. I also disagreed with the approach and tone of the motion, and some of the comments from members of the majority party who, in my view, were unnecessarily political. That, in my view, did not match the seriousness of the issue.

"At this point, the presiding officer did not allow me to conclude my comments. But what I was saying was that, yes, as I have said several times, the entire nation is under attack, and we must all unite to address this challenge. However, I do not agree with the request in the motion, supported by majority of speakers from the majority party, that the President and the government should be commended. I disagree with it.

"I believe that the President needs to be told the truth, and that those with access to him, particularly from the majority party and others, should tell the President the true situation of things. The seriousness of the matter is such that there should be no sugarcoating, or attempts to be politically correct, as that is, in my opinion, unnecessary.

"As I said, we are the Senate of the Federal Republic with powers to oversight the President and the military, including the ministers and the security leaders. And that we must do. That is our responsibility to the nation and the people of Nigeria who are presently under attack, displaced, traumatised, killed and apprehensive. They are wondering what their leaders and their government are doing. In the prevailing circumstances I expressed on the floor a strong objection to the motion of commendation because it is ill-timed, insensitive, and even provocative.

"It is not helpful to the image of the Senate as an institution or the President who it sought to commend. If things have been so well done, we would not be where we are today.

"How will the victims, the soldiers fighting, and families of those killed feel?

"There are members of the National Assembly who spoke in support of this commendation but who cannot visit their communities or their Senatorial Districts because of insecurity and killings. There are members of the National Assembly whose Senatorial Districts are currently under the occupation of terrorists who run parallel governments and impose all manners of taxes on their constituents. How will their people feel?," part of Dickson's statement read.

"The deliberations and resolutions of the Senate must reflect the realities that may not be open to the president. People should reduce hypocrisy: sycophancy, unnecessary blackmail, and eye service.

"Mr President must be told that the nation is at war as we are losing our security personnel, our citizens, and our territories . Our reputation is being ridiculed and our democracy and nation are endangered.

The times call for frankness, strong political will, and decisive leadership to act for the good of Nigeria.

"I support the resolutions reached by the Senate to begin an inquiry into the circumstances under which the military personnel deployed in Kebbi were withdrawn, and on whose orders, as stated by the Governor. I also support an investigation into the circumstances leading to the capture of General Uba and his subsequent killing by ISWAP, the way it happened, and how the Army handled the events and the management of his family," Dickson added.

He suggested that the Commander-in-Chief, and the Service Chiefs could have challenges the Senate should help address rather than minimising the seriousness of the insecurity with a vote of confidence.

For days, last week, Bayo Onanuga, OON, CON, aide and confidant of the President, spoke with the emphases of his front row position about Tinubu's commitment to ending the terrorist attacks. The President, Onanuga said, was depressed. It possibly was what Onanuga reflected in that Security Council meeting picture of Tinubu slouched on his seat.

Presidential aides insist the President was in deep thought as he listened attentively to the briefing from his Service Chiefs. The public thinks he was sleeping. Various versions of the picture have been re-produced to confirm the public position.

Onanuga was also on television to explain why our military cannot attack the terrorists. "They arrive in large numbers, fully armed, and overwhelm the numbers we have on ground," he said.

He has joined those who say that the security agencies know "where all the bandits are". He tends to suggest that the terrorists will not be attacked because they are using their victims and the civilians as shields.

The solution must be to negotiate with them, as Sheikh Ahmad Gumi confidently says while warning that the terrorists should be "included in the budget".

At various times, Gumi has been firm in his demand that the government pays the terrorists, and a sort of amnesty programme for them.

We are learning the difference between "rescue" and "release" from the terrorists. They claim they were the ones who "released" the 24 Kebbi school girls and the 38 Kwara worshippers, emphasising that "they were not rescued".

How did the victims in both cases regain their freedom? Onanuga mumbled an explanation on television.

"The security agents got in contact with the bandits to release those people unharmed, and finally on Sunday, they were able to get them out unharmed.

"They know the risk. If they keep those people there and refuse to release them, the next thing will be for the government to embark on a kinetic action and attack their base," Onanuga said.

"Why would 12 teenagers go to the farm and just leave their security in the hands of nature? These people will not come and capture one person. They want numbers," he said, in reference to another incident, and meaning that movements should be with approval of security agencies, the same security agencies that demobilise moments to attacks?

"They want to do maximum damage, maximum embarrassment to the military and the police," Onanuga told Nigerians.

More vexatious is Tinubu's attitude to the war on terrorists as he proved with his emergency measures. Are we to wait for the proposed new recruitments to be concluded before we hit the terrorists? Will more boots counter obvious intelligence leaks as seen in Brigadier-General Musa Uba's death and the abduction of the Kebbi school girls?

From the President's war room, Onanuga convers the belief that the "maximum damage, maximum embarrassment" these attacks cause are "to the military and the police", not to the President, Commander-in-Chief, not to Nigeria.

The President's ineptitude in managing insecurity crises is steeped in the importance he attaches to winning the 2027 election. He will avoid anything that will obstruct his paths to re-election. His excuses for not attacking the terrorists are out of fears that he would be branded against the North and religious fundamentalists.

Our laws are clear about what to do with criminals, based on their crimes. Terrorists should be dealt with as the criminals that they are, according to the law, not their region or religion.

Tinubu's re-election is not as important as "the security and welfare of the people", which according to Section 14 2 b of the Constitution, is the primary purpose of government". Tinubu needs to snap out of his selfishness and protect Nigeria and Nigerians.

ISIGUZO is a major commentator on minor issues

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INSECURITY IN NIGERIA: Citizens can seek foreign help if their govt can't protect them, says OBJ

BY ORIAKU IJELE

Former president, Olusegun Obasanjo has decried the rising spate of banditry, kidnapping, and other forms of insecurity in the country, stressing that Nigeria has all it takes to tackle the menace.

Obasanjo reiterated this position in Jos, Plateau State during his speech at the Plateau Unity Christmas Carols and Peace Festival.

"Nigerians are being killed regardless of their religion or tribe, and that is worrisome," he said, adding that "the first duty of every government is the safety of lives and property of its citizens.

"Since the abduction of the Chibok girls, banditry, kidnapping, and other security challenges have continued to escalate.

"So, we should ask our leaders at all levels to do what they ought to do; our government must rise to the occasion and do the needful," he added.

Obasanjo maintained that, with advancements in technology, Nigeria should be able to tackle its security challenges effectively.

"With technology, there should be no hiding place for any criminal. The life of every Nigerian, whether Christian, Muslim, or pagan, matters," he said.

"With drones, we can fish these criminals out. Why are we apologising Why we are negotiating?"

He also contrasted his tenure with the present day, recalling a time when Nigeria had significant influence in Africa and foreign powers, including the U.S., informed his administration before acting on the continent.

SSpeaking further at the Plateau Unity Christmas Carols and Praise Festival, Obasanjo made the following points regarding international support for Nigeria's insecurity:

He argued that the current Nigerian government appears "incapable" of protecting its citizens from rampant killings, kidnapping, and banditry and must do more to restore confidence, while assertinh that if the government fails in its primary duty, "we have a right to call on the international community to do for us what our government cannot do". He added that Nigerians "should have no apology for that".

He questioned why modern technology, such as drones, is not being used to eliminate criminals, pointing out that Nigeria had the capacity to locate them even during his era.

Meanwhile, troops of the Nigerian Army neutralised dozens of terrorists, apprehended 57 suspects, and rescued 45 kidnapped victims across the country in one week.

The Director of Defence Media Operations, Maj.-Gen. Michael Onoja, made this known in Friday in Abuja, while giving an update on nationwide military operations within the week.

Onoja said the troops also recovered large caches of arms, vehicles, and ammunition while dismantling criminal and terrorist networks in multiple theatres of operation.

In the North East, he said that troops of Operation HADIN KAI killed several terrorists, apprehended 11 collaborators, rescued eight kidnapped commuters, and destroyed multiple terrorist camps.

He added that air interdiction missions in Sambisa neutralised additional terrorists and destroyed their storage facilities.

Under Operation FASAN YAMMA, Onoja said the troops killed several terrorists and bandits, apprehended 15 suspects, and the rescue of 13 kidnapped victims across Zamfara, Kebbi, Sokoto, Katsina, Kaduna, and Niger States.

He added that troops also recovered weapons, vehicles, livestock, and intercepted a suspected terrorist arms dealer with N4 million in cash and military-grade weapons.

In the North Central, Onoja said the troops of Operations ENDURING PEACE and WHIRL STROKE, killed scores of extremists, apprehended 11 suspects including notorious terrorist Umar Idi (aka Lere).

He added that 19 kidnapped victims were rescued, alongside the recovery of weapons, vehicles, and illicit funds.

The defence spokesman said the troops of DELTA SAFE foiled oil theft worth over N173 million, destroyed 11 illegal refining sites, and arrested 13 criminals.

In the South East, he said the troops of Operation UDO KA rescued five kidnapped victims, arrested seven criminals, and eliminated terrorists' safe havens in Enugu State through coordinated air strikes.

He commended the troops for their courage and professionalism, urging continued public support and intelligence sharing.

He reaffirmed the commitment of the military to protecting lives, properties, and national sovereignty until peace is fully restored nationwide.



Labour Party presidential candidate in the 2023 election, Mr Peter Obi, paying a solidarity visit to Sen Chris Ngige at his country home in Alor, Anambra State, following an armed attack on his convoy earlier in the week.

Court orders release of 27 houses wrongly seized by EFCC

The Federal High Court in Abuja has ordered the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to immediately release 27 houses wrongly seized by the commission.

Justice Joyce Abdulmalik issued the order while giving a judgment in a suit marked: FHC/ABJ/CS/348/2025 filed by the EFCC.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the EFCC had, on March 13, obtained an ex-parte interim forfeiture order against the 27 property which it said were acquired from proceeds of unlawful acts.

Following its publication of the interim forfeiture order in a national daily of April 4 as ordered by the court, James Ikechukwu Okwete and his company, Jamec West African Limited, approached the court.

Okwete and his company claimed ownership of the 26 property, while Adebukunola Iyabode Oladapo showed interest in House No 12, Fandriana Close, Wuse 2, Abuja.

Okwete, Jamec Ltd and Oladapo objected to EFCC's subsequent application for final forfeiture of the assets.

Meanwhile, Justice Abdulmalik, in a judgment on Oct. 31, upheld the objection, dismissed EFCC's application for final forfeiture and vacated the earlier order for interim forfeiture.

The judge consequently ordered the commission to immediately release the property.

Justice Abdulmalik, while delivering the judgment, said based on her analysis of the evidence presented before the court, "I firmly find that the property owner/respondent's (Okwete's) affidavit to show cause has merit.

"Additionally, I hold in favour of Adebukunola Oladapo being person interested in House No: 12 Fandriana Close, Wuse 2, Abuja, FCT, that since the learned senior counsel for the applicant (EFCC) has informed court that it has no objection to her affidavit to show cause, that her affidavit filed to show cause, stands substantiated in its entirety.

"Without more, I forthwith set aside and vacate in its entirety the interim order of forfeiture granted on 13th March, 2025 to the applicant in respect of the properties listed in the schedule attached to the applicant's ex-parte originating motion.

"Accordingly, I order the immediate release of the aforementioned properties/its documents to the property owner/respondent and the House No: 12 Fandriana Close, Wuse 2, Abuja, FCT to Adebukunola Iyabode Oladapo respectively.

"In that vein, the applicant's motion for final forfeiture along with the corresponding responses filed are now otiose. I so hold," Justice Abdulmalik said.

However, lawyer to Okwete and Jamec Ltd, Serekowei Larry, SAN, has written to the Chairman of the EFCC complaining about the commission's alleged failure to comply with the judgment.

National Tax Policy Committee gets Tinubu's approval to implement new tax reforms

BY MATHEW BRANGYET

President Bola Tinubu has officially approved the formation of the National Tax Policy Implementation Committee (NTPIC).

Chaired by Mr. Joseph Tegbe, the committee is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the administration's significant tax reforms in alignment with the economic goals of the government and the citizens of Nigeria.

The Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Mr. Wale Edun, will supervise the committee's activities.

The NTPIC will conduct extensive consultations within both the public and private sectors to gather diverse input for the implementation process.

Mr. Tegbe, a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (FCA) and the Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria (FCIT), brings over 35 years of professional experience from both public and private sectors. He has previously served as a Senior Partner and Head of Advisory Services at KPMG Africa.

Mrs. Sanyade Okoli, Special Adviser to the President on Finance and Economy, will act as the Committee's Secretary. Other members include Ismaeel Ahmed, Rukaiya El Rufai, and others.

In establishing the Committee, President Tinubu emphasized that the effective implementation of the Tax Acts is crucial to the nation's economic transformation agenda. It is essential for strengthening public finance management while meeting the valid expectations of investors and productive sectors.

"These new Tax Acts demonstrate our administration's commitment to creating a fair, transparent, and technology-driven tax system that promotes economic growth while safeguarding the interests of citizens and businesses. The National Tax Policy Implementation Committee will ensure coherent, effective, and well-aligned execution across all levels of government," stated the President.

The NTPIC's mandate highlights the importance of broad stakeholder consultation through nationwide engagements with the private sector, professional bodies, and subnational governments, alongside public awareness campaigns to support the effective implementation of the new tax laws.

Additionally, the committee prioritizes strong inter-agency coordination by aligning the efforts of key revenue and regulatory institutions, harmonizing existing frameworks with new legislation, and ensuring unified oversight and reporting during the transition process.

The Committee is composed of experts from tax administration, finance, law, the private sector, and civil society, ensuring a balanced and inclusive approach to policy execution.

The chairman expressed the committee's readiness to work diligently in support of national development. "We understand the strategic importance of these Tax Acts. Our committee will collaborate closely with all stakeholders to assist the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy in ensuring smooth implementation and fostering public trust in the tax system," he said.

Mr. Wale Edun also added, "With the establishment of this Committee, the President has not only set the direction but also provided the authority and support necessary to reset not just the tax system, but the entire fiscal policy framework of the Government, which aims to drive significant economic growth for the benefit of all Nigerians."


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Goodluck Jonathan explains coup in Guinea-Bissau, his evacuation from country

Former President Goodluck Jonathan has described the recent political upheaval in Guinea-Bissau as a "ceremonial coup," rather than a military takeover.

Jonathan stated this while addressing newsmen on Friday in Abuja, after returning from Guinea-Bissau where he had been temporarily trapped by the incident.

He described the bizarre circumstances surrounding the coup announcement by the sitting President, Umaro Mbalo, as strange.

"What happened in Guinea-Bissau, I wouldn't call it a coup.

"It was not a coup. Maybe some people would describe it as such for want of a better word—I would say maybe it was a ceremonial coup.

"For two reasons: it was President Mbalo who announced the coup.

"Later, the military men came out to address the world, saying they were in charge everywhere, even though Mbalo had already announced the coup, which is strange.

"Not only did he announce the coup, but Mbalo, while the coup was taking place, was using his phone and addressing media organisations across the world, claiming he had been arrested," he said.

Jonathan, who recalled his recent role as ECOWAS mediator in Mali when the military took over government, said that soldiers did not overthrow a government and still allow the ousted president to be addressing press conferences or commenting on his arrest.

He questioned, "Who is fooling who?"

He said what happened in Guinea-Bissau was quite disturbing, adding that he felt more pain than the day he, as sitting President, called former President Muhammadu Buhari to congratulate him after losing the 2023 election.

He said the development appeared to be taking Guinea-Bissau back to "those dark days" when the military acted with impunity, adding that the situation was totally unacceptable.

Jonathan, who was part of the West African Elders Forum (WAEF) election observer mission to the country, said all observer missions in Guinea-Bissau believed the election was peaceful and that the result was expected to be announced.

"You know, results for presidential elections are collated at different levels.

"The nine regions' results were ready. So they were collating them at the capital.

"When they were almost through, and we were all waiting for the results to be announced, then Mbalo announced that there is coup that they have taken over.

"They have arrested him. But from all indications, nobody arrested him," he said.

Jonathan emphasising the need to uphold the integrity of the electoral process in the sub-region, called on ECOWAS and AU officials to go ahead to tally the results and announce it for the world to know what happened in Guinea-Bissau.

"My conviction and my charge to ECOWAS and AU is that they must announce their results.

"They have the results, because AU and ECOWAS officials were at all regions when the results were collated.

"They cannot change those results. They should tally all those results and announce.

"They cannot force the military out, but they must announce. Let the world know who won that election.

"They owe the world that responsibility," Jonathan said.

He recalled the 2010 crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, where he stood firm as ECOWAS chair to ensure the internationally recognised winner of the election Alassane Ouattara, was sworn in over the incumbent Laurent Gbagbo, saying "democracy is about majority."

"The leadership of ECOWAS, luckily, Mada Bio was a former military man himself.

"So, he should be courageous. The leadership of AU, they must be courageous. They must announce who won that election.

"I'm not saying they should mobilise soldiers to go and fight. No, no need to shield blood.

"But we must know, because the results are there. They have the results. The AU, ECOWAS, they have the results.

"We cannot be playing pranks. Nobody should call others fools.

"There's no way they announce Military coup at a time they want to announce the result. How?

"And the president was the person who announced the coup. It doesn't happen anywhere," he said.

Jonathan expressed disappointment with President Mbalo, who until recently chaired the ECOWAS.

"That is the most painful thing. President Mbalo just yesterday was the chair of the authority of heads of state and government of ECOWAS.

"One would expect him, as a president of Guinea-Bissau, to do his best.

"Luckily, he's an ex-military man. So he has a military constituency.

"He was a very senior military man before retiring. So he has his own friends, his boys, and so on.

"He should be the person that can prevent any coup in Guinea-Bissau. I don't expect a coup that would remove him from office," he said.

On ECOWAS suspending Guinea-Bissau, Jonathan called it "traditional" and necessary to maintain the bloc's democratic principles, saying it's costly to do the right thing, but ECOWAS must not bother.

"The only thing is that they must modify the protocols or create some other protocols to make sure that ECOWAS do things that will endear them to the citizens," he said.

Jonathan said that when ECOWAS continued to do those things, those countries, that left would return to join the bloc.

He said that the military would not be forever, noting that with time, society would be tired of them and demand that they leave.

"It will not take more than 10 years for all these countries to go back to civil rule and they will join ECOWAS.

"So for now, even if only five countries out of the 15 are ready to carry on with ECOWAS, they should. We should not bother about that and begin to change their position.

"ECOWAS must stand firm. We cannot accept military in ECOWAS," he said.

The former president also demanded the immediate and unconditional release of the main opposition leader, Fernando Diaz, who remains in custody.

Jonathan calling on international community to talk to the military to release Diaz, said he had not committed any offence that warranted his restriction.

He advised the military not to take Guinea-Bissau backwards to the dark days of 2011 to 2014.

In a related development, former President Goodluck Jonathan has thanked Nigerians and regional leaders for their show of love and concern during the Guinea-Bissau political upheaval while he was there observing the election.

Jonathan spoke to newsmen on Friday in Abuja after returning from Guinea-Bissau where he was temporarily trapped in the country by orchestrated military coup announced by the sitting President, Umaro Mbalo.

"You know, since I left office, I have always been scared talking to the media. But in this particular case, I decided to speak to the media.

"First and foremost, to thank Nigerians for the show of empathy, the encouragement.

"Because while we were in Bissau, and this so-called coup happened, the information we got was that the whole country was agitated, young and old, irrespective of religious divides or political divides.

"I sincerely appreciate Nigerians, and I want them to hear directly from my mouth to appreciate their concern," he said.

The former President also commended the interventions of President Bola Tinubu and his Ivorian counterpart, Alassane Ouattara, for his safe return to Nigeria

He also clarified why he was brought back to the country by Ivorian airline.

"Secondly, to thank my president, President Tinubu, and the Ivorian President.

"Both presidents were to send aircrafts to lift us, but somehow you know Côte d'Ivoire, is closer to Guinea-Bissau.

"There's always some relationship among the Francophones countries.

"They were able to penetrate their system to get a landing permit first before Nigeria could do that.

"So, the Ivorian aircraft was already on their way to pick us. So when we learned about the Nigerian aircraft, about leaving, we asked them not to bother.

"That is why you see the picture that I was brought by an Ivorian aircraft.

"So we thank the two presidents, President Quatarra, President Tinubu, and indeed thank Nigerians, young and old, for that," Jonathan said.

The recent political instability in Guinea-Bissau, which left former President Jonathan temporarily stranded in the country, erupted just days after the West African nation held closely contested presidential and legislative elections on Nov. 23.

Jonathan was in Bissau leading the West African Elders Forum Election Observation Mission to monitor the polls, which were initially reported to be peaceful and well-conducted.

The crisis began as the National Electoral Commission (CNE) was preparing to announce the official results of the vote, expected to be a tight race between the incumbent, President Umaro Mbalo, and the main opposition candidate, Fernando Dias.

The turmoil escalated on Nov. 26, when reports of heavy gunfire near the presidential palace and the National Electoral Commission headquarters surfaced in the capital, Bissau.

Shortly afterward, President Mbalo himself told various international news outlets that he had been deposed and arrested in a coup d'état, though he claimed that no force had been used against him.

Hours later, military officers calling themselves the "High Military Command for the Restoration of National Security and Public Order" appeared on state TV, announcing they have seized control and suspended all political institutions.

Amid the chaos, the safety of former President Jonathan and his delegation became a matter of national and regional concern.

Jonathan and his team returned safely to Nigeria on Thursday.



First Lady of Nigeria, Senator Oluremi Tinubu (middle), with national Assembly, women lawmakers during the First Lady Dinner with Member of the National Assembly, held at State House Conference Centre, Abuja yesterday,

69-yr-old Lagos prophet in trouble for allegedly defiling girl, 13

The Police in Lagos on Friday, dragged two men, including a 69-yr-old prophet before an Ikeja Chief Magistrates' Court, over charges bordering on alleged defilement of a 13-year-old girl.

The defendants are: Samuel Aghono, a 69-year-old prophet who resides at Ijora Badia, in Lagos, and Olayemi Oyinloye, a 39-year-old hotelier, who also resides at Ijora Badia, Lagos.

They are standing trial on charges bordering on conspiracy, defilement and obstruction of justice.

They both, however, pleaded not guilty to the charges.

The prosecutor, ASP Adegoke Ademigbuji, told the court that the defendants committed the offences on Aug.16, at a Hotel, in Amusu street, Ijora Badia.

He said that the victim's grandmother alleged that she had received a prophesy from the first defendant, that her granddaughter (the victim) required spiritual cleaning to avery impending daimpr.

He alleged that the grandmother was instructed to bring her grand child to a hotel, to meet the prophet, in furtherance of the purported cleansing.

According to the prosecutor, after bringing her grand child to the prophet, he instructed the grandmother to live and thereafter, he gave the girl a substance to drink, which weakended her.

The prophet was alleged to have consequently, defiled the girl in her vulnerable state.

Meanwhile, the second defendant was alleged to have obstructed the police from arresting the first defendant, which action "gave him in" as an accomplice.

The offences contravene the provisions of sections 138, 252 and 411 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State, 2015.

The Chief Magistrate, Mrs M. F Onamusi granted the defendants bail in the sum of N300,000 each, with two sureties each in like sum.

Insecurity: A nation adrift in incompetence



The mass abduction of over 300 students, including staff, from the Government Girls Comprehensive Secondary School (GGCSS) in Maga, Kebbi State, and St Mary's School in Papiri, Niger State — within a week — is one failure too many for Nigeria's authorities. It indicates that all is not well, and more so, that the nation is becoming destabilised by incompetence, sabotaged from within, and governed by leaders who appear more interested in political optics than in producing results.

How can a country regarded as a continental powerhouse — one with numerous security agencies and defence budgets running into trillions of naira — allow its future leaders to be repeatedly taken by criminals?

In March 2024, over 200 students were abducted from the LEA Primary and Secondary School in Kuriga, Kaduna State. Six children reportedly died in 2021 after gunmen stormed the Salihu Tanko Islamiyya School in Tegina, Niger State and kidnapped 135 pupils. In February 2021, armed men attacked the Government Girls Science Secondary School, Jangebe, Zamfara State, in a nighttime raid and fled with 279 students. Again, 300 boys were abducted from the Government Science Secondary School, Kankara, Katsina State, in December 2020. Earlier incidents include the April 2014 kidnapping of over 200 girls from the Government Girls Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State, and the 2018 abduction of 110 students from Government Girls Science and Technical College, Dapchi, Yobe State.

While Nigerian parents wept and communities trembled with fear, the Minister of Defence, Mohammed Badaru, the Chief of Defence Staff, General Olufemi Oluyede, and the National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, were away in Dubai. Meanwhile, Minister of State for Defence Bello Mohammed Matawalle took up the insensitive task of struggling to justify why three top players in Nigeria's security circle should be out of the country at the time terrorists executed a Brigadier General, dozens of students were kidnapped, and worshippers and farmers in Kwara State were abducted.

The history of security emergencies, especially abductions in Nigeria, is made even more distressing by the lacklustre response that often follows. Aides to government officials issue belated statements, followed by equally overdue visits, suggesting that protecting life and property is the least priority in Nigerian government circles. The bloody acts are condemned. Promises are made. Thereafter, the criminals return, emboldened by the state's implied inability to protect the citizenry. This familiar cycle played out yet again, as the Kebbi and Niger abductions occurred despite previous assurances that security had been reinforced.

Where were the security forces when the students and staff were marched away from their schools? How did armed groups move through communities, execute their operations, and escape without encountering meaningful resistance? Kebbi State Governor Nasir Idris has asked the Ministry of Defence to explain why, barely an hour before the attack, military personnel at GGCSS suddenly withdrew. "We need to know why they left. We had intelligence, we provided security, so what happened?" the governor lamented. Fingers point to unsettling possibilities. There have been credible indications of sabotage within the army itself: a fifth column that either actively aids these criminal enterprises or deliberately undermines efforts to combat them. How else should the seeming ease with which bandits operate in areas supposedly under military surveillance be explained? How do large groups of armed men move weapons, hostages, and supplies across territories without detection? Sadly, the government appears unwilling — or perhaps intimidated — to undertake the sweeping reform needed to cleanse the security apparatus of this ailment.

The country must also abandon the notion held in some quarters that worsening insecurity simply means more money is needed. Figures on Nigeria's military spending between 2020 and 2023 showed an estimated N19.388 trillion. The total defence and security sector budget in 2025 was put at N4.91 trillion. N595b was specifically allocated to the intelligence sub-sector. Until there is an indisputable change, records show that Nigeria's insecurity crisis does not cower before the billions of naira thrown at it yearly. It stands to be said that what the situation requires is renewed patriotism and a stronger commitment to the nation's collective survival.

As the embarrassing attacks continue, Nigeria increasingly presents itself to the world as an unserious nation. A state that cannot guarantee the safety of schoolchildren has forfeited its most fundamental responsibility. If the current government cannot take appropriate and decisive action to end the nightmare, the honourable path is to step aside and hand the reins of office to those who have the competence and courage to do so. Governance is not a birthright; it is a solemn responsibility. Any government loses its legitimacy when it repeatedly demonstrates its inability to fulfil the primary duty of protecting its citizens.

Nigeria today faces military emergencies that require the mobilisation of all available resources and personnel. This should include not just serving officers but retired military men who still possess the experience, expertise, and commitment to contribute to national security. It is illogical and wasteful that the government continues to retire military personnel who have decades of institutional knowledge and operational experience while the nation burns.

The controversial Operation Safe Corridor must also be stopped immediately. While rehabilitating repentant insurgents might sound progressive in policy documents, it is obscene in practice when viewed against the backdrop of ongoing violence. How can the state justify "rehabilitating" captured terrorists while their former comrades continue to kill soldiers and abduct citizens? How does it explain to grieving families that their loved ones' killers may receive amnesty while they receive only condolences? The initiative sends a troubling signal that crime pays, and that the Nigerian state values its enemies more than its citizens.

It is time for Nigeria to carry out a total overhaul of its security architecture. The President must demonstrate, through actions, that ending insecurity is one of his administration's foremost concerns. This means being on the ground in affected communities, not hiding behind Aso Rock statements. It means holding the security chiefs accountable for failures. Nigerians did not elect leaders to watch helplessly as their children are stolen from schools and their communities terrorised by bandits. The military must undergo rigorous vetting to identify and eliminate saboteurs within its ranks. A compromised military is worse than no military at all because it provides false security while enabling the enemy. Those found guilty of aiding bandits and terrorists must face the full weight of the law.

Authorities must abandon reactive approaches to insecurity. This will mean making credible investments in intelligence capabilities that pinpoint threats ever before they materialise, hardening soft targets like schools and communities, and cutting off the financial and logistical networks that sustain criminal groups. It also means working with communities to build trust and gather intelligence rather than treating them as collateral damage in airstrikes.

The ultimate solution is more political than it is military. The leadership must understand that its legitimacy stems not from its capacity to win elections but from its ability to protect citizens. Will Tinubu's administration finally rise to meet the moment, or will it continue to steer a nation's descent into chaos? Time, patience, and lives are running out.

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Oyo govt cracks down on street vendors on walkways, issues warning

STEPHEN GBADAMOSI, IBADAN

The Oyo State government has directed traders, artisans, motor dealers, and vendors occupying pedestrian walkways and roadside spaces to vacate the areas or face penalties.

The warning was issued by the Oyo State Road Traffic Management Authority (OYRTMA) Chairman, Major Adesagba Adekoya (rtd), at his office, secretariat, Ibadan.

Adekoya stated that using walkways for business was illegal and created traffic bottlenecks, accidents, and inconvenience for shoppers.

He identified hot-spot locations where illegal trading was prevalent, including University of Ibadan (UI) area, Samonda, Mokola, and others.

He said, "traders are required to relocate to designated market spaces immediately, especially during the festive period."

Adekoya warned that non-compliance would result in fines and court appearances.

In the meantime, the state Commissioner for Information, Prince Dotun Oyelade, said the state government commended OYRTMA's efforts to "improve road safety and public order," and reiterated its commitment to upgrading infrastructure and ensuring safe movement throughout the state.

Oguntoyinbo visits Oyo Assembly, seeks support for 2027 governorship ambition

STEPHEN GBADAMOSI, IBADAN

A governorship aspirant, Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo, who had, on Tuesday, formally declared intention to contest the 2027 governorship election on the ticket of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) at the party's state secretariat in Molete, on Thursday, paid a courtesy visit to the 10th Oyo State House of Assembly, where he also sought the lawmakers' support for his ambition.

Ambassador Ogntoyinbo, widely known for humanitarian advocacy and youth development initiatives, received notable attention at the Assembly, as legislators, political leaders, and party faithful gathered to listen to his vision for the future of Oyo State.

Speaking during the session, Ajadi Oguntoyinbo described his ambition as a divine assignment and a response to consistent calls from political elders and ancestral communities across the state.

"I, Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo, stand before you today, 27th November 2025, to seek your leadership, mentorship, and guidance, as I offer myself to succeed our great leader, Engineer Oluseyi Makinde, Executive Governor of Oyo State, in order to continue the mandate of good governance," he declared.

He further stressed that his declaration was not a routine political exercise, but a commitment to genuine service.

"My declaration is not just a political step; it is a call to serve my father's land, Oyo State, with sincerity, compassion, and unwavering commitment. For years, political stalwarts and ancestral families in Oyo have urged me to bring my humanitarian service to the state, just as I have always done on my mother's side in Ogun State. Today, I stand here answering that call," he said.

Oguntoyinbo explained that choosing to begin his consultations with the House of Assembly was intentional, describing the legislature as a cornerstone of democracy.

"I have come to this distinguished House out of respect. The legislature is a vital arm of government; and any sincere aspirant must acknowledge its authority, influence, and importance."

In his remarks, the Deputy Speaker of the House, Hon. Abiodun Mohammed Fadeyi, commended Ajadi for prioritising the Assembly in his consultations, describing him as "young, vibrant, and purposeful."

He highlighted the political significance of Ajadi's ambition, noting the shared heritage between Egbeda and Ona-Ara Local Government areas.

"Governor Seyi Makinde is from Ona-Ara, and Ambassador Ajadi is from Egbeda. Both fall within the Oyo Central Senatorial District and share similar political alignments. I would be delighted to see someone from Egbeda succeed him," Fadeyi said.

"It is only God that crowns efforts. Be prayerful and persevere. I believe you will triumph over every adversity. You are the first aspirant to come and explain your ambition to this House; and that shows great respect for governance.

"I read your profile and saw that you are a journalist. Journalists are versatile; they understand society deeply. I am a journalist too," he said.

The Chief Whip of the House, Hon. Oyekola Gbenga Joseph, emphasised the need for continuity in governance.

"Success without a good successor is failure. The battle is not for the powerful, but for the resilient. Be consistent and determined, and success will follow you."

Convocation Lecture: Educational foundation essential for productivity, economic growth in Nigeria, says Ezemonye

BY TITUS AKHIGBE, BENIN

The Vice-Chancellor of Igbinedion University, Prof. Lawrence Ezemonye has highlighted the pivotal importance of education in driving Nigeria's economic transformation at the university's 23rd convocation held on Friday.

The Vice-Chancellor underscored that a strong educational foundation is essential for fostering innovation, enhancing productivity, and ultimately leading to sustainable economic growth in the country.

Ezemonye stated that Nigeria is navigating a period of significant economic transformation, stressing that the role of education in this journey can not be overstated.

Ezemonye spoke while addressing the graduates during the 23rd convocation lecture of the institution in Okada, Edo State.

He highlighted the significance of the lecture's theme, "The Nexus between Education and National Prosperity in a Transformative Economy," asserting its relevance to current challenges.

Ezemonye described the convocation lecture as an essential intellectual platform that goes beyond traditional graduation ceremonies to address pressing societal issues.

"Convocation lecture serves as a pivotal intellectual platform, a forum where we transcend the boundaries of conventional learning to confront and contemplate the pressing issues of our time.

"The theme chosen for this year's lecture, "the nexus between education and national prosperity in a transformative economy, " is both timely and profoundly relevant.

"As a nation, Nigeria is navigating a period of significant economic transformation, and the role of education in this journey can not be overstated.

"Comtemporary research consistently affirms that education is not merely a social good but a powerful catalyst for economic prosperity and social progress. It is, therefore, with great expectation that we await the insights of our guest lecturer, a man whose current portfolio and personal conviction place him at the heart of this critical discussion. " Ezemonye said.

Delivering the 23rd convocation lecture of the institution, the Minister of State for Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction, Dr. Yusuf Tanko Sununu said education remains key in unlocking opportunities, adding that education ensures social mobility and reduces inequality.

Sununu also emphasized the need for Nigerian graduates to embrace skill acquisition to complement their education, just as he commended Igbinedion University Okada for prioritizing entrepreneurship studies at the undergraduate level.



The Director General of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Mrs. Zubaida Umar, receiving a team from the Public Service Institute of Nigeria (PSIN) during a courtesy visit led by the Administrator/Chief Executive of PSIN, Barrister Imeh Okon to NEMA headquarters.

Edo boosts security over bandit threat

BY JONATHAN IDIAHI, BENIN

In reaction to increasing threats of terrorists and bandits across the Nigeria nation, the Edo State Government has tightened security operations in parts of the State.

The Government stated this following a threat said to have been issued by a self-acclaimed bandit.

The governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo assured residents of adequate security, in a statement released by his media aide, Fred Itua and availed journalists in Benin, the State Capital.

"The attention of the Edo State Government has been drawn to a trending video circulating on social media, allegedly featuring a self-acclaimed bandit issuing threats and claiming presence around Ekpoma and adjoining communities in Edo Central Senatorial District.

"The Government wishes to assure the people of Edo State that Governor Monday Okpebholo has been fully briefed on the matter and has, in response, convened a high-level security meeting."

The Governor since assuming office has treated security as a top priority and has "not left any stone unturned" in confronting emerging threats, Itua asserts.

"Over the past weeks, the Governor has held continuous strategic security briefings and activated a statewide surveillance architecture covering key corridors, including the Benin–Auchi Expressway, Ekpoma–Uromi Road, Ehor–Iruokpen axis, Benin Bypass, the Ewu–Irrua–Ubiaja route, Benin–Afuze–Auchi corridor, amongst others.

"These measures are designed to ensure early detection, swift response, and sustained pressure against criminal networks."

Acting therefore, on the Governor's latest directive, the Department of State Services, the Nigerian Army, the Nigeria Police Force, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, local vigilante groups, and the Edo State Special Security Squad have commenced intensified operations across forests, boundary communities, and known flashpoints, it was disclosed.

Continuing, the statement stated; "Search-and-comb missions are ongoing, backed by enhanced intelligence gathering and coordinated patrols to deny criminal elements' haven anywhere within the State.

"Already, significant breakthroughs have been recorded. Arrests have been made in connection with recent security breaches, and several leads are currently being pursued.

"The Government reiterates that these operations are continuous and will not cease until every inch of Edo land, urban centres, rural communities, and transit corridors is fully secured and safe for residents, commuters, and investors."

Urging citizens to remain calm, vigilant, and cooperative with security agencies, the State Government warned against misinformation and unverified videos circulating online.

This is as the Governor reiterated his commitment to safeguarding lives and property, and assured that his administration would continue to deploy all lawful measures to ensure that criminality has no space to thrive in the State.

In the unrelenting fight against crime and criminality, the State government through its security outfit in conjunction with other agencies, has arrested suspected kidnappers and intensified actions against cultists.

As dividend of efforts deployed so far, the State Special Security Squad on Saturday, 22 November, 2025 arrested two suspected kidnappers in Egbai community, Ovia North-East Local Government Area.

As a property allegedly used as an operational base by the kidnappers, was also demolished by the security operatives.

The suspects, identified as Anthony Fedigha Ebimienwei and Luke Disemoh, were said to have been arrested acting on a "high-level, intelligence-driven surveillance", security authorities said.

Trump: US will pause migration from 'third-world countries'

Donald Trump has said he will "permanently pause migration" to the US from all "third world countries".

The US president wrote in a Truth Social post that this would "allow the US system to fully recover" from policies that had eroded the "gains and living conditions" of many Americans. He did not provide details of his plan or name which countries might be affected.

His comments came a day after an Afghan national was accused of shooting two members of the National Guard in Washington DC, one of whom has died. Trump suggested the incident underlined a major national security threat.

The president's subsequent announcements represent a further toughening of his stance on immigration.

In the wake of the shooting, he promised to remove from the US any foreigner "from any country who does not belong here". The same day, the US suspended processing all immigration requests from Afghans, saying the decision was made pending a review of "security and vetting protocols".

Then on Thursday, the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) said it would re-examine green cards issued to individuals who had migrated to the US from 19 countries. The announcement did not explicitly mention Wednesday's attack.

When asked by the BBC which countries were on the list, the agency pointed to a June proclamation by the White House that included Afghanistan, Cuba, Haiti, Iran, Somalia and Venezuela.

There were no further details about what the re-examination would look like.

Trump's strongly worded two-part post on Thursday night went further, pledging to "end all federal benefits and subsidies to noncitizens".

In the post, the president also blamed refugees for causing the "social dysfunction in America" and vowed to remove "anyone who is not a net asset" to the US.

The post, which Trump introduced as a "Happy Thanksgiving salutation", was filled with anti-immigrant language.

He said that "hundreds of thousands of refugees from Somalia were completely taking over the once great State of Minnesota" and took particular aim at the state's Democratic lawmakers.

"I will permanently pause migration from all Third World Countries to allow the U.S. system to fully recover," the president wrote.

Main suspect behind murder of S. Korean college student in Phnom Penh arrested

The main suspect behind the torture and killing of a South Korean college student allegedly involved in online scams in Cambodia in August has been arrested by local police officers, a diplomatic source said Friday.

Cambodian authorities apprehended the suspect, a Chinese national, in Phnom Penh on Thursday on murder and other charges, according to the source.

The suspect is accused of torturing and murdering the 22-year-old student, surnamed Park, near Bokor Mountain, where employment scams and detentions targeting South Koreans have frequently occurred.

Lee was reportedly dining out at a restaurant in the capital city when he was caught.

"(Local investigators) apprehended the suspect yesterday," the source said. "We cannot reveal the details as the investigation is still ongoing."

The Korean Embassy in Cambodia said it had been informed of the arrest from local officials, and it plans to review whether the suspect can be repatriated to South Korea.

Park left for the Southeast Asian country on July 17, telling his family that he was attending an exhibition there. He was found dead inside a car on Aug. 8, with signs of torture on his body, according to local police.

Three Chinese nationals allegedly involved in the crime were indicted with physical detention last month by a court in Cambodia on charges that included murder and fraud.

The case triggered a public outcry in South Korea, prompting the government to send a delegation to the country and establish a joint task force to address online scams and other crimes against its citizens.



Guinea-Bissau military announces General as leader of new junta

The military in the West African coastal state of Guinea-Bissau on Thursday announced that it had installed a new leader.

State broadcaster TGB reported that General Horta Inta-A is to serve as transitional president for a one-year period.

Much remains unclear about the balance of power in the country and the circumstances surrounding the alleged coup, days after presidential elections.

Eyewitnesses told dpa that the streets of the capital, Bissau, were deserted, while soldiers were deployed at key locations across the city.

A day earlier, a group of officers said they had taken power in the tropical nation of around 2.2 million people.

They said the military uncovered a plan to rig the e

Guinea-Bissau is an important hub for cocaine smuggling between Latin America and Europe.

The now deposed President Umaro Sissoco Embaló reportedly told a French media outlet that he was detained by the military. However, he said he had not been harmed.

The military is also said to have detained Embaló's challenger, Fernando Dias.

Both Embaló and Dias had declared themselves the winner after Sunday's presidential election. The results have not yet been published.

Guinea-Bissau has experienced several coups and coup attempts since gaining independence from Portugal in 1974.

The military has been heavily involved in politics for many years.

Former General Embaló has been in power since 2020 and dissolved parliament at the end of 2023.

He has spoken several times in the past about coup attempts against him, most recently in October.

National Guard member dies after shooting in Washington DC

One of the two members of the National Guard who were shot in Washington DC on Wednesday has died, US President Donald Trump said.

Sarah Beckstrom, 20, succumbed to her injuries, while the second National Guard member, 24-year-old Andrew Wolfe, "is fighting for his life", Trump said on Thursday evening.

Both were shot at close range near Farragut Square in downtown DC just after 14:00 EST (19:00 GMT) on Wednesday. Police have arrested one suspect in the shooting, Rahmanullah Lakanwal, a 29-year-old from Afghanistan.

The attack has prompted a range of announcements from the Trump administration aimed at curbing migration from Afghanistan and a number of other countries.

The two soldiers who were attacked had been deployed to the American capital as part of the Trump administration's efforts to crack down on what it sees as rampant crime in several US cities.

Trump confirmed Ms Beckstrom's death while on a Thanksgiving call with US service members.

"Sarah Beckstrom of West Virginia, one of the guardsmen that we're talking about, highly respected, young, magnificent person... She's just passed away. She's no longer with us," he said.

Trump later spoke to her parents, a White House official told BBC's US partner CBS News.

The US president previously said the attack underlined a major national security threat.

In the wake of the incident, officials said they would suspend processing all immigration requests from Afghans, and re-examine green cards issued to individuals who migrated to the US from 19 countries.

When asked by the BBC which countries were on the list, the agency pointed to a June proclamation by the White House that included Afghanistan, Cuba, Haiti, Iran, Somalia and Venezuela.

On Thursday, Trump went on to vow to "permanently pause migration" to the US from all "third world countries", without providing details of his plan or naming which countries might be affected.

Jim Justice, a Republican senator from West Virginia, said he was "absolutely devastated" to learn of Ms Beckstrom's passing.

"Our prayers are with her family, friends, and fellow guardsmen during an incredibly difficult Thanksgiving Day," he said in a statement.

"We are also lifting up Andrew Wolfe in prayer as he continues his journey to recovery."

More than 2,000 troops have been guarding the nation's capital since August, when the president began deploying troops to cities to tackle what he called "out of control" crime.

Ms Beckstrom and Mr Wolfe were among those who were deployed in August, the West Virginia National Guard confirmed to BBC News.

National Guard troops are a reservist force that can be activated to serve as military troops, but have limited power as they cannot enforce the law or make arrests.

The location of the shooting, just blocks from the White House, meant a number of law enforcement officials arrived quickly at the scene to treat the two victims and apprehend the gunman.

The suspect was shot four times, law enforcement sources told CBS.

He will be charged with three counts of assault with intent to kill while armed, as well as possession of a firearm during a crime of violence, US Attorney Jeanine Pirro told a news conference on Thursday morning, before news of Ms Beckstrom's death.

"We are praying that they survive and that the highest charge will not have to be murder in the first degree," Pirro had said. "But make no mistake, if they do not, that will certainly be the charge: murder in the first degree."

Bondi told Fox News on Thursday that her office would seek the death penalty against the suspect, calling him a "monster who should not have been in our country".

Mr Lakanwal reportedly came to the US under a programme named Operation Allies Welcome, which offered special immigration protections to Afghans in the wake of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

At the time, the Taliban had taken back control of Afghanistan, raising fears of retribution against those who had co-operated with the US.

Mr Lakanwal had helped guard US forces at Kabul airport in 2021 as thousands scrambled to escape Afghanistan as the Taliban swept back to power, a former military commander who served alongside him told the BBC.

The suspect had been recruited to Unit 03 of the Kandahar Strike Force. His unit was known locally as Scorpion Forces, operating initially under the CIA but eventually for the Afghan intelligence department known as the National Directorate of Security.

Mr Lakanwal was a GPS tracker specialist, the former commander told the BBC, describing him as a "sporty and jolly character".

The Nigerian Tax Act 2025: Gains, pains, and the path ahead -ESV Abiodun

KEHINDE AKINPELU ILORIN

The real estate sector in Nigeria is on the brink of a revolution with the introduction of the Nigerian Tax Act 2025. Posited by ESV Babatunde Folarin Abiodun MNIVS RSV, this landmark legislation promises to bring about significant changes that aim to boost government revenue and promote transparency in the industry. As stakeholders prepare to navigate the gains and pains of this new tax regime, it is essential to understand the implications and chart a path forward for the future of real estate in the country.

One of the key gains of the Nigerian Tax Act 2025 is the increased transparency it mandates in property transactions. By requiring strict reporting and documentation for property sales, the Act aims to curb informal transactions and enhance investor confidence in the market. This move towards a more formal and transparent real estate sector is expected to create new revenue streams for the government, including Capital Gains Tax, Withholding Tax, and Value Added Tax on real estate services.

In addition to promoting transparency, the Act also paves the way for digitalization in tax reporting and property data. This shift towards digital platforms is set to reduce corruption and simplify the process of verifying ownership and transaction history. Moreover, developers stand to benefit from tax incentives for affordable housing and urban renewal projects, encouraging them to take part in addressing the housing deficit in the country.

However, amidst these gains, there are potential pains that stakeholders must be prepared to address. The new tax regime could lead to higher transaction costs, which may, in turn, drive up property prices. Property owners, developers, and agents will also face a compliance burden with new reporting obligations and tax requirements.

Insecurity: Ododo suspends night activities at worship centres in Kogi

IDRIS AHMED, LOKOJA

Kogi State Governor, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, has disclosed a comprehensive security measures to combat the growing insecurity in the state.

Addressing traditional rulers, security agencies, and community leaders, during the State peace and Security meeting on Thursday,held inside Government House, Lokoja, Governor Ododo assured the Stakeholders that the state will not surrender to criminal intimidation.

Ododo,who described the meeting as one of the most strategic security engagements in recent times, said it is to practicality demonstrate the administration's commitment to keeping the State safe.

He announced the immediate measures to include, closing security gaps, especially in mining areas, which he described as "potential magnets for criminal groups if left unchecked."

Other comprehensive security action plan includes enhanced intelligence and surveillance operations, improved access to remote areas, and improved logistics for rapid-response teams.

He also ordered a comprehensive review of all mining operations in the state, with a view to identifying the owners, locations, workers, outputs, and existing security arrangements.

While noting the risks associated with the unregulated mining environment, Governor Ododo further directed local government Chairmen to submit complete lists of mining sites and companies within their jurisdiction immediately.

As part of the new Security measures, mining companies and high-value related business are mandated to also donate two Hilux vehicles each to the State Security Trust Fund within three months.

He also called for strengthened joint security operations among the agencies, particularly in forested areas, schools, worship centres, and mining corridors.

Speaking on tourism, holiday travel and road safety, the Governor commended Security agencies in the State, urging them to support the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) from December 10, 2025, to January 15, 2026 for a hitch free yuletide.

He also increased responsibility for the local government Chairmen, as they mandated to hold regular security meetings, support vigilantes, and fast-track mining data collection.

Traditional rulers are also charged to monitor land use and identify new entrants into their communities, while religious leaders are advised to promote peace.

According to the Governor,all night activities at religious worship centres have been suspended pending the improvement in Security situation of the State.

He warned that any criminal hideout or accomodations, rented house harbouring criminals will be demolished .

The governor also directed the Ministry of Information to intensify grassroots sensitisation to prevent misinformation and panic.

FG's security centre tasks NYSC members on fight against arms proliferation in Northeast

BY LUKA YELMI, BAUCHI

The National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) has charged members of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in the Northeast to play an active role in curbing the spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the region.

Maj.-Gen. Abubakar Adamu (Rtd), Northeast Zonal Director of the Centre who made the call in Damaturu, Yobe and Borno states stated that the involvement of youth would significantly help tackle insecurity.

He explained that SALW fuels banditry, kidnapping, cultism, and other crimes, hindering development and creating fears among citizens.

The Centre's Assistant Director, Mr. Aminu Saleh Mohammed, urged corps members to report anyone involved in SALW possession or fabrication, promoting tolerance and peaceful co-existence.

The NYSC Coordinators in Yobe and Borno states welcomed the proposal to establish a Small Arms and Light Weapons Community Development Service (CDS) group, assuring collaboration with the Centre to fight SALW proliferation.



Scene as ActionAid Nigeria, marks 25 years of action, service, and transformative work across the country.

27yrs after, Aneke floors KDSG agency in court, recovers property

IDIBIA GABRIEL, KADUNA

A Kaduna based Engr. Augustine Aneke has recovered his property located at plot T. 19 Katsina road, from a state government agency identified as Kaduna Line Limited, formerly known as Kaduna State Transport Authority (KSTA) through a court judgement.

Aneke and the Kaduna Line Limited were parties to the case with suit no: KDH/KAD/675/25, bordering on title and ownership to the property aforesaid.

The case which lingered for 27 years was determined by the Honorable Justice J A. Ambi of High Court, Kaduna state on the 17th November, 2025 in favour of Aneke, according to statement made available to newsmen Friday.

In the judgement, the Honorable court, found Aneke as the lawful and beneficial owner of the property.

Earlier, the Court of Appeal, Kaduna Division granted an Order of Perpetual Injunction restraining Kaduna Line Limited from interfering with the Aneke's ownership and peaceful enjoyment of the property.

Unsatisfied with the Appeal Court decision, Kaduna Line Limited appealed to the apex court of the land, and in its wisdom, the apex court dismissed the appeal of the company.

Earlier on the 29th of April, 2014, the High Court of Justice of Kaduna State, declared Aneke as the rightful and beneficial owner of the property covered with Certificate of Occupancy (CfO) No. KD/2392, dated 29th August, 1998.

Fielding questions from newsmen, the lawyer to the Judgement Creditor (Aneke) Barr. Casmir Ugwoke, explained that the judgement was a well deliberated litigation which has taken longer time since 1999.

The matter emanated from the Kaduna state High Court up to the Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court. "And in all of these, my client won. So, today, it calls for celebration," Barr. Ugwoke said.

Kaduna Govt. sets new standard in protecting women, girls

IDIBIA GABRIEL, KADUNA

Kaduna State has reinforced its position as one of Nigeria's leading champions for women's rights and protection, unveiling a far-reaching suite of reforms aimed at safeguarding the dignity, health and future of women and girls.

This renewed commitment was articulated by Governor Uba Sani represented by the Commissioner of Health at the event "Canada Investing in Women and Girls: "Sights and Sounds Across Nigeria," held during the Global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.

Governor Sani's message centred on Kaduna's determination to confront both the visible violence suffered by women and girls and the often-overlooked structural inequalities that quietly shape their lives.

The governor noted that the state's approach is grounded in the belief that gender equality is not peripheral to development but central to progress, according to statement shared by his media aide Ibraheem Musa Friday night.

"The well-being of women and girls is not an adjunct to development; it is the core of any state that aspires to equity, stability and prosperity," he said.

The Governor highlighted the commissioning of the Kaduna State College of Nursing and Midwifery, Panbegua, describing it as a deliberate effort to expand the state's capacity to produce skilled maternal and newborn health professionals.

"When a young woman enters that institution, she steps into a future in which her competence can save lives," he said, adding that every trained nurse and midwife "shortens the distance between vulnerable households and the care they need."

He explained that the administration has also pursued innovative solutions to everyday barriers faced by girls, particularly in schools.

The state's menstrual hygiene programme, which provides sanitary pads to thousands of schoolgirls and supports the production of reusable alternatives, has significantly improved confidence and attendance among adolescent girls.

"Where a pad is available, a future remains open; where it is absent, the doors to opportunity quietly begin to close," the Governor remarked. He noted that such interventions, though simple, reinforce the state's stance that a girl's dignity and education are non-negotiable.

Kaduna's determination to protect women extends into the justice system, where the state has intensified its response to gender-based violence. The Governor emphasized that violence "thrives in silence and impunity," which his administration is determined to dismantle. Strengthened criminal processes have led to increased convictions, sending a clear message that abuse "will not be excused, rationalised or minimised."

Nigerians slam some health workers' attitude towards patients

STORIES BY ADA DIKE

An observer made a post online recently concerning some health workers who don't consider the plights of patients in some public hospitals.

Adebowale Tosin described the Nigerian health care system as a show of shame. In his words: "Medical practitioners who have grown mean, wicked and cruel, yet justify it with 'governance problem'.

Tell me, is it still governance issue to look a patient in the face and tell him, if he complains again you'd make sure nobody attends to him and whatever wants to happen should happen?

"You said a test is urgent but don't come around to eventually refer the patient till two weeks after! They complain, you say you'd deal with them. God will duly reward all of you wicked doctors and nurses, including those of you dancing on TikTok. What's killing most people is negligence.

"Also, the good ones among them are proof this is more about your personality first before you start blaming the not so perfect system," he added.

Reacting to Adebowale's post, Amanda Aganbi recalled her experience by saying: "I remember 2023 when my brother was admitted. ... every single day, we'll go to the nurses, kneel down and beg for them to attend to him. Some of them said, ...for coming to beg us, we are not coming.

"On the day he died, we were running around begging nurses to come attend to him... before they came, he had already gave up the ghost. In all our prayers..we should pray against having anything to do with a Nigerian public hospitals."



Similarly, a medical doctor, Desii Og, described the unacceptable attitudes of some health workers as a systemic issue and ethical problem..

"As a doctor myself, my relatives and friends tell me of their experiences with healthcare workers in some, especially government hospitals, I can't help but shudder. Our pride and arrogance is on another level. There's a systemic issue, but there's also a deeply personal and ethical problem with the way we ourselves deal with and approach our patients. May the Lord help us."

Akinyemi Olusola recalled how he went to one state hospital some time back, the doctor on ground was a lady.

In his words: "Yes I met people whose case were critical than mine, and they were neglected.

"When it was my turn, a king came in, she left me who is the next in line, knelt to greet the king who came very healthy and probably was there for medical check up. I challenged her, she was angry. The king was allowed to sit, while who need immediate assistance was left to myself till the pleasantry was over.

Since that day, I try to prevent things that will hospitalize me or get me admitted," he explained.

How can leave a sick patient, and be romanticizing a healthy royal man when there is work on ground? He asked.

"I told her that day: now, if you go to public office and you're left unattended to, it's your kind who will get angry and want preferential treatment or claim orderliness when you aren't doing the same to us here. It was not funny. I won't generalize, but I always pray nothing serious happen to anyone and attend government hospitals. This may not be the story of all the medical personnel but that experience amazed me till date."

"This reminds me of our family experience at Ile-Epo general hospital in 2021," says Aluko Michael.

"When my Dad was ill, indeed the loss of a loved one is never easy, but when it occurs in a place where they are supposed to receive care and healing, it becomes even more devastating.

"The events that unfolded in that hospital are etched in my memory. The nurses and doctors seemed overwhelmed, disinterested, and unprofessional. My father's medication was repeatedly skipped, and when I brought it to the attention of the staff, I was met with apathy. The lack of care and compassion was something else.

Lagos holds workshop for health security



Lagos State held a five-day intensive, multisectoral workshop to develop the State's Action Plan for Health Security (SAPHS), marking a major step in strengthening the state's capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to emerging public health threats.

The workshop, held from November 24 to 28 at the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), Alausa, is being convened by the Lagos State Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC), with technical support from Research Triangle Institute (RTI) and the U.S. CDC.

The workshop builds on the 2024 Joint External Evaluation (JEE) of Lagos' health security capacities and a subsequent technical planning meeting that produced a draft framework. Over the next five days, participants drawn from human, animal, and environmental health sectors are expected to translate JEE findings into a cost, implementable, and trackable action plan aligned with the International Health Regulations (IHR).

Declaring the workshop open, the Special Adviser to the Governor on Health, Dr. (Mrs.) Kemi Ogunyemi, delivered a powerful charge to participants, stressing that health security must now be treated with the same urgency as traditional security concerns. She noted that while national conversations often centre on banditry and insecurity, biological threats are rarely acknowledged despite lessons from Ebola, COVID-19, and other emerging diseases.

Dr. Ogunyemi reminded stakeholders that Lagos, as a densely populated megacity and major international gateway, remains highly vulnerable to health threats. She emphasised that preparedness for the "unknown" must be the guiding principle of the SAPHS development process. "Health is security. The next threat may not be cholera or malaria, it may be something far more unpredictable. This plan is our shield," she said.

The Special Adviser urged participants to take ownership of the plan, stressing that the document must be expert-driven, actionable, and capable of protecting Lagos residents regardless of future challenges. She added that once finalised, the plan would be forwarded to the State Executive Council for formal adoption and deployment across sectors.

Welcoming participants, the Director of Epidemiology, Biosecurity and Global Health, Lagos State Ministry of Health, Dr. Ismail Abdus-Salam, expressed satisfaction that the long-awaited process had finally begun after months of scheduling constraints. He said the workshop represents an opportunity to produce decisions that are realistic, implementable, and aligned with shared expectations across all sectors.

Dr. Abdus-Salam highlighted significant progress already recorded by the state, including improved staffing and operations at the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) and an ongoing upgrade of the facility. He noted that while Lagos has made strides, genuine improvement requires balanced progress across human, animal, and environmental health systems.

He emphasised that Lagos deliberately resisted pressure to inflate its JEE scores, choosing instead to reflect true capacity gaps to ensure sustainable growth. According to him, the rigorous planning model applied during the annual operational planning process must guide SAPHS development to ensure effective implementation from 2026 through 2030.

Delivering goodwill remarks, the Director of Emergency Preparedness and Response at NCDC, Pharm. Chibuzor Eneh, expressed delight at the strong turnout despite competing national engagements. Representing the NCDC, Director-General, Dr. Jide Idris, reaffirmed NCDC's commitment to Lagos, describing the state as "our own" and a national leader in health security development.

She assured participants that additional NCDC teams would join the workshop within 24 hours, underscoring the importance attached to the Lagos SAPHS. Eneh commended Lagos' partners, including RTI, U.S. CDC, and Resolve to Save Lives, for supporting the state's efforts to strengthen its health security architecture.

Stakeholders converge for National Health Dialogue 2025



The National Health Dialogue 2025 was held recently in Abuja.

Themed: Evidence, Innovation and Financing for a Healthier Nigeria, one of the high points of this event was a Fireside Chat with the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate.

In his keynote address, our Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer

of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), Dr. Muyi Aina spoke about the importance of partnership and collaboration among all stakeholders in building a healthier Nigeria.

"True leadership is not a solitary journey. It is empowered by partnerships. To our indispensable media collaborators: you are the guardians of our collective accountability and the amplifiers of our progress. Your pen holds the dual power to scrutinize and to inspire, to highlight gaps and to spread the hope that is now tangible in our revitalized Primary Healthcare Centers. This is the power of unified action. Together, we are not just building a healthier Nigeria—we are restoring trust, one community, one PHC and one headline, one life at a time. This is the promise of Renewed Hope in the health sector, and together, we will deliver it." said Dr. Aina.

In attendance were the chief host, the Chief Executive Officer of the Center for Journalism, Innovation and Development (CJID) Mr. Dapo Olorunyomi, Honorable Commissioners, Permanent Secretaries of State Ministries of Health, Executive Secretaries, and other Chief Executives of State Primary Healthcare Development Agencies, Directors and leaders from federal and state ministries of health and agencies and media organizations.

Drinking boiled dry pawpaw leaves prevents prostrate enlargement



Nature has been helpful in treating different ailments in the world.

The latest information has to do with using dry pawpaw leaves to manage prostrate enlargement.

A seasoned herbal fertility expert, Iya Alagbo-Omo Wewe 1, said: "Dear men, if you're looking for a simple, effective way to prevent or manage prostate enlargement, keep this in your home always:

"Get dried pawpaw leaves in abundance.

Dehydrate properly and grind into a fine powder.

"Take one teaspoon in a small cup of warm water. You can sweeten with honey. Drink at least once a week.

"Alternatively, boil the dried leaves and drink half a glass twice a week.

"It's a natural preventive measure every man should have within reach."

AIICO unveils bundled insurance plan for vulnerable Nigerians

AIICO Insurance Plc has introduced a new bundled insurance package to reduce financial risks faced by smallholder farmers, rural families, and informal workers across Nigeria.

The product, named AIICO All-in-One Financial Protection, was unveiled after a nationwide engagement tour covering Ibadan, Kano, and Calabar.

Mr Babatunde Fajemirokun, Chief Executive Officer of AIICO Insurance, confirmed the development in a statement issued on Thursday.

Fajemirokun said the product was created in response to the persistent exposure of traders, artisans, transporters, farmers, and micro-entrepreneurs to shocks caused by illness and emergencies.

He added that the initiative was supported by AIICO's international partners, Leap-Frog Investments (UK) and the European Investment Bank.

He explained that the package offers three benefits: personal accident cover, hospital encashment, and a deferred annuity savings plan for retirement.

"Premiums have been deliberately set at affordable levels, with annual rates from N800 for Personal Accident and N5,000 for Hospital Encashment," he said.

"Deferred Annuity contributions are flexible and depend on the customer's age, chosen annuity level, gender, and preferred commencement date."

According to him, the product design was shaped by feedback received from traditional rulers, farmer groups, cooperatives, and community leaders during the regional consultations.

Dangote Refinery saves Nigeria ×10bn annually — Esan

Mr Sunday Esan, Senior General Manager, Corporate Communications at Dangote Industries Ltd., says the Dangote Refinery has saved Nigeria more than ₦10 billion annually in foreign exchange by replacing fuel imports with locally refined products.

Esan made the disclosure on Thursday in Lagos during the 2025 Media Week of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Lagos State Council.

The theme of the event is "Unlocking Opportunities for Businesses in a Challenging Economy: The Role of the Media / Roadmaps to Energy Security in Nigeria".

He noted that the refinery had significantly reduced the nation's dependence on imported petroleum products.

"The refinery is more than a national landmark; it is reducing foreign exchange outflows, driving GDP growth, creating jobs, positioning Nigeria as a regional energy hub, and strengthening our national energy supply."

Esan said the Dangote Refinery, which began operations almost two years ago, has already made substantial contributions to the Nigerian economy.

He said these include helping to curtail PMS and diesel importation, stabilising the Naira, creating thousands of jobs, and strengthening the country's energy supply chain.

He highlighted that fuel imports dropped by 1.54 per cent in the first quarter of 2025.

"While Nigeria spent $2.6 billion on fuel imports in Q1 2024, the figure declined sharply to $1.2 billion in Q1 2025.

"Dangote Refinery has saved Nigeria over ₦10 billion annually in foreign exchange by replacing imports with local production.

"It has significantly curtailed oil imports and created measurable economic impact," he said.

Speaking on production capacity, Esan revealed that the refinery was reviewing a scale-up from 650,000 barrels per day to 1.4 million barrels per day.

He added that global interest in the refinery continues to grow, with Saudi Aramco — one of the world's largest refiners — and U.S. buyers expressing interest in its jet fuel.

He also described the massive size of the complex, noting that the refinery spans an area approximately seven times the size of Victoria Island, Lagos, requiring a minimum of five hours to tour by car.

"This shows the magnitude of the investment that one man, Alhaji Aliko Dangote, has brought to life," he said.

Esan added that the acquisition of 4,000 CNG trucks for product distribution has created no fewer than 24,000 jobs.

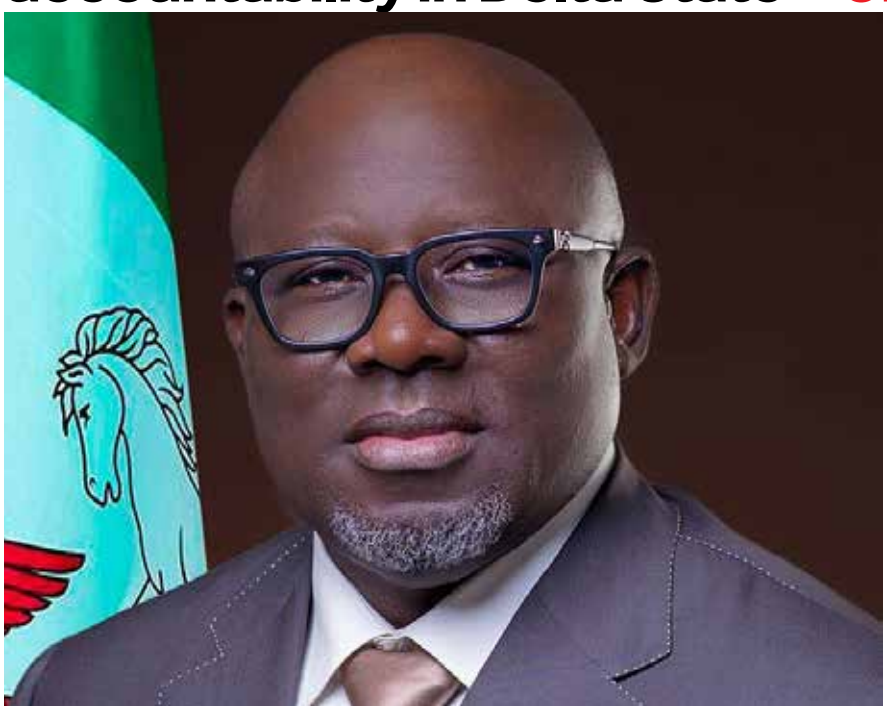
On the role of the media in advancing energy security, Esan urged journalists, particularly NUJ members, to set the right agenda and report accurately on developments in the energy sector.

"We want your members to visit the refinery so your reports will be accurate and well-informed.

"When some people are bent on pulling it down, you will understand that this is a national asset we must protect," he added.

Also, Mr Udeme Akpan, Energy Editor at Vanguard Newspapers, stated that businesses could benefit significantly from strong media partnerships through access to credible information needed for informed daily decision-making.

New tax law 'll drive more growth, accountability in Delta State – Oborevwor



BY NOSA AKENZUA

As Nigeria prepares to implement its new tax regime from January 1, 2026, Governor of Delta State, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, has described the reform as a major catalyst for economic growth, improved service delivery and stronger accountability in governance.

The Governor stated this while delivering a goodwill message at the 2025 Annual Lecture Series and Convention of the Delta Online Publishers Forum (DOPF), themed "Nigeria's New Tax Law: Implications and Opportunities for Businesses and Society," held in Asaba. He was represented by the Honourable Commissioner for Works (Rural Roads) and Public Information, Mr. Charles Aniagwu.

Oborevwori commended DOPF for its consistent commitment to knowledge-driven engagement, describing the forum as an important partner in civic education and nation-building.

"Knowledge is power, and when you make knowledge available, you distribute power to society," the Governor said. "Unlike events that only entertain, this forum equips citizens with information that empowers decision-making in business and governance."

He affirmed that the administration welcomed the tax reform, stressing that the success of any tax system depends not only on collection but on accountability and citizen engagement.

"When people pay tax, they naturally become interested in how their money is spent. This new law will strengthen public scrutiny and promote better governance because taxpayers will demand value for their money," he noted.

Drawing examples from advanced economies, Oborevwori emphasised that taxation remains the backbone of sustainable development.

"In countries like the United States, personal and corporate taxes are the lifeline of the government. That is what funds infrastructure, social services and national security. It shows clearly that taxation is central to development," he added.

He urged media professionals to take the lead in enlightening Nigerians on the provisions of the new law.

"By educating the public, especially business owners and workers, you are helping the nation to succeed. What you have done today deserves recognition and support," he said, while also calling on the Presidential Committee on Fiscal Policy and Tax Reform to take note of DOPF's proactive engagement.

Earlier in a welcome address, Chairman of DOPF, Mr. Emmanuel Enebeli, said the forum convened the lecture to foster informed dialogue on Nigeria's fiscal future as the nation transits into a new era of tax reforms.

He stressed that taxation must translate into visible governance outcomes.

The conversation today is not just about taxation. It is about what Nigerians expect in return; better roads, safer communities, and efficient service delivery that improves daily life," Enebeli said

He applauded the Delta State Government for the progress on the Ughelli–Kwale–Asaba Road, describing it as proof of purposeful leadership, while urging urgent intervention on federal routes including the Agbor–Asaba–Onitsha Road and the Agbor–Obiaruku–Abraka–Eku–Sapele Road.

On security, the DOPF Chairman commended the Governor for establishing the Delta State Security Trust Fund and appealed for speedy implementation of the recently passed Community Security Bill.

Delivering the keynote lecture, Associate Professor of Accounting at Dennis Osadebay University, Dr. Ochuko Emudainohwo, explained the new tax framework, stating that four major Acts would come into effect in 2026, including the Nigeria Tax Act, Nigeria Tax Administration Act, Nigeria Revenue Service Act and the Joint Revenue Board Act.

He listed the objectives of the reform as revenue diversification, reduction of overreliance on oil, expansion of the tax net, and modernization of tax administration.

"Nigeria's tax-to-GDP ratio remains among the lowest in Africa. The new law seeks to correct this imbalance while protecting businesses and strengthening the economy," he explained.

AKmodel Group celebrates 5 years in business with mouth-watering rewards to customers

BY ORJI ONYEKWERE



AKmodel Group is celebrating its fifth-year anniversary since its formation. The group is led by MD/CEO Builder Abdulhakeem Odegade who started off as a builder but has spread his tentacles into selling of landed properties as well as development across the country.

According to actor Paul Obazele, the brand ambassador of AKmodel Group, the company came up with the idea that people should buy land and wait rather than wait to buy land.

In essence, they encourage people by making the process of acquiring land easy and affordable. This, he added, has helped a lot of their customers own properties without stress.

The brand ambassador explains more: "I got involved with this because of what I believe and stand for. I am a transparent human being. I tell you this, that's what I am going to do. If you lie to me, I will come against you with every resource.

"By the time our relationship started, the company picked up. We do land banking; there's no land we will give to you that you can fault. We don't have hidden charges. We take it from beginning to the end and we are regulated by the Lagos State government. We don't hide anything".

For the fifth anniversary celebration, Obazele said the company is going on tours of sites. The group will also reward partners and agents by giving them 10-20 percent discount on their lands. This, he said, also depends on the volume and quantity and where the customer is buying from.

"We have lands cut across the nation and we represent our clients very well," he added.


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I am still hopelessly in love with you - Actress Amarachi Igidimba tells hubby

Nollywood actress Amarachi Igidimba, has penned down an emotionally touching love note for the husband as he added a year.

The actress who shared her pictures with the husband and the kids, did not hide her emotions as she called the husband "my Lord.

Amarachi wrote:" "Happy birthday to Odogwu, dimaanu'm . My Lord, daddy TenTenkings, my world best, my king, the one specially meant for me, my heaven ordained husband, my husband that let me be me with no apology or explanation. My crown and pillar.

"I love you forever fine fan. Still hopelessly in love with you with one billion butterflies in my belly …….. Today and forever may you be blessed abundantly.

"May we grow old together in good health and abundance of fruitfulness, God's provision, love, protection, all our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren in Jesus' name, Amen.



New twists over death of Nollywood star, Odira Nwobu in South Africa

The Nigerian entertainment industry has been thrown into mourning following reports that popular actor and digital content creator, Odira Nwobu, has passed away.

His death was first made public on Monday through a Facebook post by blogger and fellow content creator, Awuzie Frankline, who shared a video allegedly showing the entertainer lying lifeless.

Although Frankline did not disclose the full circumstances surrounding the sudden tragedy, multiple reports indicate that Nwobu was said to have died in South Africa, only hours after a night out at a club over the weekend.

The details remain unconfirmed, as neither his family nor his management has issued an official statement.

Frankline, visibly broken by the news, posted a series of emotional messages describing his disbelief and grief.

"God, why! ODIRA, why leave us. The call I received just now was not a good one," he wrote. In another post, he lamented, "You were full of life just a few hours ago in South Africa, and you even had your thanksgiving service months ago with so many people celebrating you. How can you return from South Africa lifeless? I am drowning in tears. Death is rude. I am heartbroken."

Other colleagues have also reacted with shock. Actress Evan Okoro expressed her disbelief, writing, "How? No! I can't believe this, nooooo."

The Actors Guild of Nigeria (AGN) has not released an official announcement, increasing public uncertainty.

The actor had survived a serious car accident just months earlier. A viral video at the time showed bystanders pulling victims from a mangled vehicle, sparking conversations about the pressures associated with the entertainment lifestyle and the need for improved well-being among performers.

Odira Nwobu earned a loyal following through his vibrant presence both on screen and online. Known for his humorous skits, expressive acting style, and youthful fanbase, he had become one of the standout figures in the new wave of Nigerian content creation.

Everything is better with you, Adesua serenades Banky W

Beautiful Nollywood actress Adesua Utomi, has serenaded her husband and singer, Bankole Wellington aka Banky W,.with a lovely and emotional note she posted on her Instagram handle

Backing it up with pictures of them sharing kisses and hugs on their bed, the kitchen and the sitting room, Adesua said, she is grateful to God that it's Banky W she is doing life with.

She noted that with the singer everything is better with him whether it's eating, dancing or chilling.



She wrote: "Everything is better when it's with you... Whether it's eating, dancing, chilling, community service, gospel concerts, cooking, holding hands, living... EVERYTHING. Everything is better with you.

"I like you. My goodness, I like you... A WHOLE LOT. It's actually quite confusing. Hahaha Thank God it's you I'm doing life with. It's a beautiful life baby. A beautiful life.

"8years down? Seems like yesterday. Seems like forever. We're doing it honey; we're growing old together.

"God, thank you so so much. I have just one request. Please, give me 50 more on this side, with this man... Please and Amen.

"Love you baby. Truly, Madly, Deeply".

I don't mind having a baby outside wedlock - Mercy Eke

Former Big Brother Naija winner Mercy Eke, has revealed that she would not mind having a child outside wedlock. The reality TV star, said this when she appeared in a recent podcast. The BBN season 4 winner admitted that if she gets pregnant before marriage, she would keep the baby though it's not what she wished for.

Adding that getting pregnant outside marriage will not affect her image as it's only the poor in the society that are stigmatized for having children outside wedlock.

"I won't go the extra miles to get pregnant out of wedlock. But if it just happens, I would leave it and I would have my baby. I want three kids; two girls and one boy or three girls. I love female children.

"Even if don't get married, I would still have kids. What most people don't know is that the stigma of being a single mother only applies to women who don't have things going well for them.

"The women [single mothers] that are shattering glasses, men are begging them for marriage. I can get married tomorrow if I want to. But what I want in a man, I have not seen it. It's not like there is no suitor. There are plenty… So, even if I have a baby, I would still see a man,"



Why premarital sex is dangerous - Chacha Eke

There's this myth that only women use black magic to keep a partner. Lies. It works both ways, says actress Chacha Eke.

She is of the opinion that some men are not just toxic, they are warlocks. Men who use charm, seduction, and spiritual manipulation to hijack a woman's destiny.

A woman can genuinely fall in love with a man with potential that's not what this is. This is about men who target light, not love.

"You'll often spot it when a woman is madly in love with someone far beneath her standards - in looks, maturity, or finances. It's not hate, it's not judgment it's shock. Shock, at the spiritual imbalance they're sensing. Something just doesn't add up.

Onlookers are left confused. Why him?" "What did she see in him?"

"Meanwhile, the bewitched woman becomes his defender. The more people question it, the deeper she falls. That's not love that's a spiritual entrapment*, she explained.

The actress added that this is one of the reasons why premarital sex is dangerous. Sex is a portal of energy exchange. Sleep with a warlock, and you open doors for him to drain your peace, your glow, your influence, your brilliance.



She explains more: "At first, everything feels perfect. Then slowly peace fades, joy weakens, beauty dims. She starts losing herself piece by piece. She becomes a shadow of herself, serving him with purity while being depleted inside."

Chacha added, "Until one day, the charm wears off, the veil lifts, the spell breaks. Her soul begins to fight back. She sees the lies. She starts questioning what once felt divine. She breaks his control. Then he panics - smears her anything name, calls her difficult, crazy, rebellious to make her doubt her awakening. Because the spell he thought would last forever has lost potency.

"Ladies, if this post resonates - it's your confirmation. You weren't crazy. You weren't delusional. You were spiritually targeted, trapped and milked of your vitality by a destiny swapper who fed on your light.

"Now that your eyes are open - run to God. Pray for mercy. Pray for deliverance. Ask Him to restore your peace and rebuild your destiny.

"Escaping such entanglements is war emotional, mental, spiritual, physical. But your peace is worth. Fighting for. Your destiny is worth reclaiming.

And with God on your side you will rise again", Chacha noted.

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Between Kumuyi and a daring Pakistani woman



The 1978 book, I dared to call Him Father, by Bilquis Sheikh, sacked the staid and sacral stance of the slumbering world with its contribution to the generational interaction between Muslims and Christians. Bilquis was an aristocratic Pakistani Muslim whose conversion to Christianity plunged her into a whirlwind of rebellion, rejection and ridicule at the hands of family and society. Her book, with Richard Schneider, is the granular account of her epic battle to battle those who challenged her daring moves in a conservative community.

Her religion doesn't admit God as a personal father. She writes: "No Muslim, I felt certain, ever thought of Allah as his father… Wouldn't it be sinful to try to bring the Great One down to our own level?" Now,Bilquis did not only call God her Father; but also, she went ahead to follow her deep-seated convictions to become a follower of Christ, sacrificing convenience and convention. She spoke of threats from kinsmen to visit her with honour killing.

I dared to call Him Father had initial worldwide sales running into hundreds of thousands of copies, and easing into history as "one of the most popular Muslim-Christianity conversion books of the 20th Century." It has been translated into several global languages including Chinese, French, Italian, Spanish, Korean, Arabic and Persian.

Therefore, when Pastor William Folorunso Kumuyi, General Superintendent of the Deeper Christian Life Ministry, DCLM, took his Global Crusade with Kumuyi, GCK, to Pakistan between late October and early November 2025, many observers spoke of a deja vu experience. The international evangelist, not a novice to the world of valorous adventures for the Gospel of Christ, was treading where a woman trod decades earlier and came out with "an enthralling story of faith and courage in the face of danger and difficulty."

Mankind has moved on since. We no longer allow fruitless religiosity to destroy our shared humanity. The plea of China's Mao Zedong to all men and women to "Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend" has been accepted by all. So, Pastor Kumuyi was warmly received in the Muslim land of Pakistan, he also returning with triumphant narratives.

In the Islamic-majority country for the first time, the respected African cleric preached Christ as the Saviour and only Solution to the protracted existential crisis man is struggling with. He was in Lahore, Pakistan's second-largest city boasting a population of 14.8 million. GCK teamed up with the home-grown Eternal Life Church and Isaac Television, for the three-day programme that revealed how this great land of Asia has transformed from a closet into an open society with open arms waiting for new beneficial teachings and civilization paradigms.

Tens of thousands of Pakistanis thronged the meeting grounds to watch Kumuyi pray, to receive salvation, to be healed and to receive deliverance from ignorance. In the clergyman's own words after the trip, "What a divinely ordained-time we had in Pakistan! The Crusade, Ministers' Conference, and Sunday Worship Service were powerfully saturated with salvation, new commitments to Christ, profound healings, and mighty deliverance for countless precious souls. By God's Grace, across the events, we saw-Total Attendance: Over 58,000 participants. Total New Converts: Over 33,000 souls committing to Christ! We rejoice for every single soul."

One of the most stirring gatherings in Pakistan was recorded on Day 2 of the GCK. During his sermon with the topic, The long-awaited freedom for the man, the Nigerian preacher said God wants man to realize that he is critical to His plan to reclaim man from the mire of sin and despondency. He said: "The world is not upright, because man is not upright. If God fixes man into a state of righteousness and uprightness, his environment and deeds will also be righteous and upright…Make man upright, and release him into the world upright…No uprightness for man, no uprightness for the world!"

Kumuyi referred the audience to the book of Romans 7:24: on his own man is wretched; incapable of self-redemption, he's heedlessly heading for a shipwreck. He said God intervened by sending Christ to contain the cruise to calamity.Christ's mission is to save man, who would in turn be used to deliver universal man. Pastor declared: "If God doesn't save man, man can't save the world."

The renowned evangelist of holiness gave an illustration of man's criticality in fulfilling the plan of God. A man of God, he said,was preparing a Sunday message. But his young son wasn't allowing him full concentration.

So to keep himaway the busy pastor tore a paper with the map of the world into pieces, and asked the lad to go and fix them back, expecting the task to take the boy's attention from him. But the boy was back in a few minutes, to his dad's surprise. "How did you do it?" He asked. The son said: "When you took the paper to tear it, I saw the picture of the man on the back of the page. I don't know the world; but I know the man. So I fixed the man at the back, and got the world fixed also.'

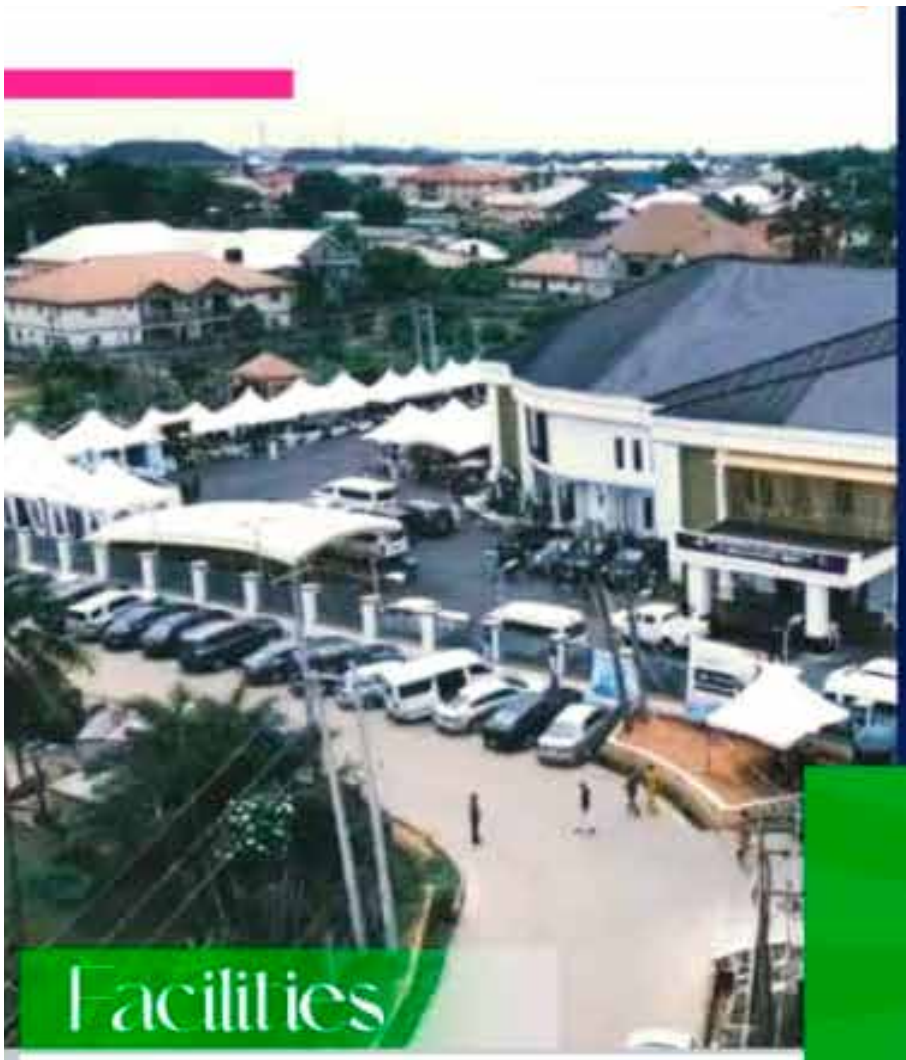
The General Superintendent of DCLM said God is also piecing broken man together through faith in Christ in order to mend the cracked world.

He told the Pakistanis that his GCK was going all over the world to present this good news of the Divine purpose to spiritually rejuvenate men and women for service to God and prepare them for Heaven. Kumuyi's devotional, Daily Manna, has also become a silent evangelist in homes, schools, offices, Police cells, prisons, hospitals and hotels among other places worldwide, delivering this message of Christ to the lost.

Pastor Anwar Fazal who hosted Kumuyi expressed a passionate desire: Pakistan is expecting the Nigerian churchman to visit again next year. He said Pakistani Christians would be praying God to let Kumuyi bring a billion souls to the Kingdom of Christ.One more sign of such warmth was the reception Kumuyi receivedwhen he and his team visited Pakistan's Minister for Human Rights and Minority Affairs, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, a non-Christian, whose work is to build interfaith bridges and harmony.

It isn't a tall order; nor is it an unreasonable anticipation. Already, GCK reaches more than 180 countries, with millions in attendance online and physically and hundreds of thousands decisioning for Christ. All God requires from man is to give Him a listening ear in a space devoid of violence, coercion, religious bigotryand intolerance, as He sends His servants to us with words of hope and peace.

Ojewale is a writer in Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria.



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Why I got into Edo politics -Filmmaker Paul Obazele

Actor and movie producer Paul Obazele, is passionate about preserving our cultural heritage, especially, the Benin culture through movies. In this interview, he also disclosed why he contested the last Edo state governorship election. Sit back and enjoy this encounter he had with ORJI ONYEKWERE.

Which work are you doing presently?

Okay, I just finished a work called Osamede. It is in the cinemas right now. In fact, it's doing a world tour. It was released in Nigeria here on October 17. It did well and has won awards. We are doing a UK and US tours. Some of my colleagues are out there but I can't join them because of other serious engagements I have. They are even preparing that of Oslo, Norway.

Osamede is big in the sense that it becomes a massive cultural export and a thing of exploit because people do not understand the enormous power of what our tradition beholds. They also do not understand the unity of purpose that we have after the Invasion of the Benin kingdom in 1897. It was excellently shot.

You seem to have this passion for epic movies, why?

If you don't tell your story, somebody will do that for you and your identity will be messed up, your story will be distorted and your voice will be destroyed. Everybody talks about the Great Britain today, they told their stories and they changed their name from the current pronunciation of what their name used to be. If you watch the movie the 'Last Kingdom', it has to do with Uhtred of Bebbanburg.

They will tell you how he presented and they fought for what you have today and the very realm they are talking about is a tourist attraction. So, why would I wait for somebody to tell my story?



I have a very proud heritage. I have a very proud kingdom. I have a story of my people, what my ancestors did and I must tell the story.

So, it gives me great joy when I come out to want to depict what I know. The white man can't tell my story. I don't hate them. I love them.

They have told their own story. I cannot come and start talking about their own story when they know their story. It's like a fallacy. It's like a joke.

Osamede for example, when they went to Cannes, it was embraced totally. because it was something they are looking forward to. They want to know about Africans. They want to know about Nigeria. They want to know about the Benin Kingdom.

It's an empire that existed. It has civilization before, it also had what they call the Great Wall. Before what they call street lights.

The discovery of what everybody will be hearing about, the Black Stone is just part of it. The joke. It's just part of the story. You understand it?

That Black Stone is like the elephant. When 10 blind people come to touch, they tell you different stories of the elephant. That is what the Black Stone is all about. Osamede is like that.

There are people who are custodians of power in the kingdom.

There's what they call unity of purpose and fight for a cause in defense of the land. That is what you see in Osamede and at the end of the day, love found its way; two people who never knew themselves came together. The ancestry was defended. If you go back to yore, the same thing, we told our story. Go to Invasion 1897, the same thing went on.

Yes, I don't blame people who shoot, uh, the normal story, but I want to fault them because they refuse to tell your story.

We have not been able to exploit stories from Arondizuogu and King Jaja of Opobo. The prince who went into into slavery. A slave boy that soon became a king.

Even Queen Amina, we have not finished telling the story. I thank God for the life of someone like Okey Ogunjiofor.

We have not told them well. It's real. The fact is that we have not come to understand that not one person does a movie because there are different components. He has done his best to pull it through. I expect other people from my industry to come and say, "Okay, let us support this. Let us take it to this angle." Yes, lifting beyond this.

Yes. So many stories, so many stories that made us the proud and the people we are now.

Nobody has talked about Kosoko. The lineage of Kosoko. King Kosoko, how large it's. Nobody has told the story of Madam Tinubu and yet we have a Tinubu Square.

We have so many kings in this in this country called Nigeria that have not told their stories and without them, the areas they come from will not have been able to stand.

Go back to Edo North. The Owans have their own story. They will tell you about the river that is ankle height. And it doesn't go beyond that. The river is destructive. No evil person comes in there.

And if they tell you that the story happens to be the tears of a princess that was maltreated and killed. Yes, It's a massive, strong story. So, the river hates injustice. We have not told it.

Go to Fuga. They will tell you about the cave in Fuga. The cave in Fuga where we have massive reserve of gold guarded by a python. You don't get in there.

People come in there for tourism. But you cannot take anything from that place.

Doing research and shooting these movies, wouldn't it expose the myth behind such tradition?

I don't think the Christians fight that. It's just a belief system. But the fact is that the Africans, the Christians in Africa, they know they come from that place.

Some people will believe. Some people will not believe. But the truth is that they have to to tell you that it gives them justice.

In one of the lines of one of the followers of Uhtred, he said, Uhtred of Bebbanburg. I'm telling you about the Last kingdom. He said, one of the guys told him, "Why don't you go to, London.

He said, I would rather stay where I stay because in London, if you come into London, you'll be consumed and destroyed because it's supposed to be a cosmopolitan ground.

That there's something they've not been able to understand about the town that sucks life out of you. And it is true. The moment you leave our villages and you come to the city, it happens. It happens. But to them, it's a mystery. Today, if you go to London, you find that London is a 24-hour thing.

People are moving. If you are not smart, you'll be sucked back to London. That's the truth. It's still there. There are some people who don't want to believe. So, it's the same thing about my culture, my kingdom, my people, Edos, we believe in the strength of what our stories are. We get our stories; we tell our stories.

Still talking about our culture, a lot of these young ones will contradict what you are saying because of their orientation. How do we integrate them back to our culture?

It's true to remember that as long as we take history away from what our curriculum is in school, it begets, whatever teachings you want to bring in, because we knew what our roots are. For some years now, history has been removed from our curriculum. As long as we keep removing history from our curriculum, it becomes a distortion of what our information system is.

For example, if you have admission to read medicine in the US, you must learn American history. So, if we want to preserve what our cultural heritage is, what our belief system is, which aids our religion, our Christianity, our Christian life, it aids it. Because the people of old never taught you how to lie, never taught you how not to believe in your parents, never taught you how to look down on your parents, never taught you how to look down on your culture and your tradition, never taught you how to be insulting to people, never taught you how not to be respectful. The religion also never taught you how not to respect your parents, but that's the truth.

You now come to understand what your culture is because the history of your people are being told. Today, people will stand up to their father, 'Daddy you cannot do that.' Our history never taught us that. Our history taught us how to respect elders. Our history never told us to tell our elders 'dont be silly daddy' actually it's not an abuse, but to us, it's an abuse. Those are things our tradition taught us and if we can't teach our children from home, then we have failed.

But your belief as a Christian contradicts the traditional belief?

I will go back to Benin, the kingdom has what it called the Aruosa church, built in the 14th century. There is a bible in the church. Do your research. The ones who want to follow Christ will follow, Christ and the the ones that want to follow their traditional believe can do so. There are laws of the land

You were once the AMP President and then you became the President of Edo Film Makers Association of Nigeria. Why did you condense to being President of Edo film makers.

They're two different things. The national president of the AMP cuts across the nation. However, for Edo Film Makers, all the guilds that have to do with moving making are embedded in the association. It became pertinent that they all come together as a unit.

Remember when I became President, for the first time, we did the Edo State International Film Festival, that was when Senator Adam Oshiomole was the governor. When I was AMP President, we did the Eko International Film Festival.

I resonate what tradition is, what our beauties are and what we need to teach people. Till date, I am still the national president of Edo Film Makers World Wide.

Do you still have the ambition of contesting for the governorship under ADC, since it's now a strong opposition party?

People have been telling me to come back home but I just laugh. I came into politics because my state yearned for a stronger voice and an egalitarian society and I was not impressed with the people that came out. So, I decided to come out

As at the time I came in, if anybody had told me I was going to leave the Labour Party, I will tell the person, it's a lie. When I saw what was going on, it was a far cry from what I expected and I said no, I can't continue like this.

When I came in I wanted to prove a point that you don't need to be dirty to win something, you don't need to lie to win and I won the primaries under ADC because I left Labour Party to ADC.

I keep saying it, the reason I entered is because Edo deserves to be better. In fairness to former Godwin Obaseki, he did well.

Just like if I have to rate present the present government of Gov Monday Okpebholo, he could do well if he has good people surrounding him. The reason is because the moment you have sycophants around you, they blur your vision and your thought process. If he has people with good intentions not praise singers. My vision for Edo State, we must have good health care, generate employment and housing scheme for the people.

When I set out, I did what is called a covenant with the people not a manifesto. I told them, If I go in after a while, you don't see anything; talk and I will resign. I said so because I did so in AMP when I was the president. I controlled 26 states and I made meaningful contribution that time. That brought in 4.8 percent to our GDP then.

The present leadership of AMP is dominated by women, is this a deliberate?

Yes. They said give them a voice and we have done that. They are our daughters they came out and they have done well in fairness to them. Except that when you are working and somebody is pulling you down, it becomes difficult for you to pull through compared to my time when we put force and brutality, we were able to do things. At that time, we had many things bedeviling us and we were able to walk through. We had the issue if finance, piracy, people not wanting to belong to association and guild, we also had the issue of identity, letting government know what we stand for and what we can do.

Now it's good for them except that some people will say, 'why will a woman rule me?'. So, when she is going this direction, they are going the other direction.

Osun 2026: Adeleke tilts towards Accord Party



Governor Ademola Adeleke of Osun State is reportedly leaning towards the Accord Party as his platform for the June 2026 governorship election, sources close to his camp have told Daily Trust.

The development comes amid growing uncertainty over his position within the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and failed attempts to join the All Progressives Congress (APC).

Currently in the United States for what sources described as medical reasons, Adeleke's return is expected to clarify his political future. With the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) setting a December 15 deadline for party primaries, the governor now faces a limited window to determine the platform on which he will pursue his re-election bid.

Governor Adeleke won the 2022 Osun State governorship election on the platform of the PDP, defeating the incumbent Governor Gboyega Oyetola of the APC in a tightly contested race. His victory was largely credited to his strong grassroots appeal, particularly among younger voters, as well as support from traditional and local political networks across the state. Behind the scenes, the fallout between Oyetola and his predecessor, then Minister of Interior Rauf Aregbesola, reportedly influenced the outcome, while some analysts also point to the APC's failure to secure federal backing—allegedly due to the perceived marginalisation of then-presidential aspirant Bola Ahmed Tinubu, whose influence is considered significant in Osun, which is regarded as his ancestral home.

The election was closely fought, with Adeleke securing a narrow margin of victory. The results were later upheld by the courts after the APC challenged them, citing alleged irregularities. His win marked a major political shift in Osun, ending the APC's hold on the state since the previous election cycle.

Despite earlier picking up the nomination and expression of interest forms of the PDP, Adeleke's tilt towards the Accord Party ahead of his re-election bid thus reflects a calculated response to the complex political landscape in Osun.

At the national level, the PDP is embroiled in a fierce leadership battle between two factions. The first group is loyal to newly elected National Chairman Tanimu Turaki and supported by Governors Seyi Makinde of Oyo and Bala Mohammed of Bauchi. This faction recently held a convention in Ibadan, asserting control of the party and announcing the removal of opponents. Adeleke's absence from the convention underscored the precariousness of his position.

Across the divide is the Wike faction, aligned with FCT Minister Nyesom Wike and Senator Samuel Anyanwu. Anyanwu has rejected his removal, insisting he remains the lawful National Secretary, and the Turaki-led faction has no authority to sack him. The conflict exploded on 18 November, when both camps clashed at the party's national secretariat, prompting security operatives to fire teargas.

The fallout has intensified confusion within Osun's PDP chapter and heightened risks for Adeleke's political future if a resolution is not reached soon.

Before considering the Accord Party, Adeleke reportedly explored joining the APC. Sources familiar with the discussions said he was close to crossing over, with a power-sharing arrangement drafted in advance. Of Osun's nine House of Representatives seats, Adeleke was to nominate four, while the APC bloc would take the remaining five. He was also expected to produce the Chief of Staff, among other key positions.

"Everything was set for his defection. But twenty-four hours before his public declaration, while he was already in Abuja to meet the president and seal the deal, some powerful presidential aides working with former Governor Oyetola and the APC structure in the state shut the door against him. With that resistance, the plan collapsed, and Adeleke quietly returned to Osogbo," one insider told Daily Trust.

Prior to the failed attempt, Adeleke was asked to end his relationship with former Interior Minister Rauf Aregbesola, who had actively supported him during the 2022 governorship election. Aregbesola later fell out with the APC and became openly critical of the party's leadership. APC power brokers feared that an Adeleke-Aregbesola alliance would be too strong to confront in 2026.

To comply, Adeleke publicly distanced himself from Aregbesola, issuing a statement signed by his spokesperson, Olawale Rasheed, accusing the former minister of mismanaging civil servants' welfare, introducing the controversial half-salary policy, misusing contributory pension funds, and withholding cooperative deductions. Adeleke described Aregbesola's boast of dislodging his administration in 2026 as "a symptom of a troubled mind battling his benefactor and haunted by the suffering he inflicted on millions of Osun people through his evil policies and programmes."

Despite this public distancing, the APC structure, supported by key presidential appointees, continued to block Adeleke's entry, leaving him politically cornered.

To break the deadlock, Adeleke and his team reportedly considered the African Democratic Congress (ADC), which now has Aregbesola as its national secretary, as a fallback option. Reports suggested that Nasir El-Rufai approached former Vice President Atiku Abubakar on behalf of Aregbesola to negotiate Adeleke's terms, including the positions of deputy governor and chief of staff. Adeleke deemed the demands excessive, and talks collapsed again.

Accord Party emerges as a viable option

Recent developments indicate that Adeleke has finally settled on the Accord Party as his likely platform for the 2026 election. Several members of his political camp confirmed the move, and former Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola, widely regarded as Adeleke's political mentor, gave credence to the development in an interview on Osogbo's Rave FM within the week.

Speaking in Yoruba, Oyinlola said, "At a time we considered going to the APC, but I said I would not follow them because I know that party well. My position has not changed. The APC fails to honour promises. As secretary of the New PDP during the formation of the APC, I didn't get anything for my efforts. My decision to move with Adeleke depends on the party we choose. If it's a party I do not believe in, I will not join. APGA would be a one-shot chance. The Accord Party is a fair option because I know how it was formed and its founder, Olusegun Obasanjo. I was also part of those in the formation of the African Democratic Congress, but it failed to meet expectations despite having prominent politicians and still has lingering issues. When the governor returns this week, we will discuss and tell the people of Osun of our decision."

APC, PDP share perspectives as Adeleke plays a waiting game

On the issue, the APC Director of Media and Information in Osun State, Kola Olabisi, told Daily Trust that rejecting Adeleke's entry into the party was aimed at fostering and preserving peace.

"Our rejection of Governor Adeleke was because we knew that there was no way he could add value to our party but rather lead it to disintegration. What about those who have been in the party since spending their time and resources? His coming would cause disaffection and disharmony," Olabisi said.

He added, "We already have a system of operations, and joining the party at that time was like trying to climb a tree from the top. All politics is local. What we stand to lose with his coming is far greater than what we stand to gain. APC is well positioned in Osun State without necessarily bringing in any liability. Any of the 13 governorship aspirants can win the election for the party. Adeleke will never be a threat because two PDP senators and three powerful House of Representatives members have joined us, including former BoT members who helped him get elected but are now no longer with him. The PDP has disintegrated."

Meanwhile, the state PDP chairman, Bisi Sunday, expressed confidence that the party would overcome the crisis.

"We are on the same page with the government on this issue, and there is no problem. The deadline for party primaries is December 15, and we are still in November. We will see how it goes. Don't forget a day in politics is a very long time. When we get to the river, we will cross the bridge," he said.

Sunday emphasised the party's resilience, adding: "PDP remains a party that has not changed its name from inception. Our internal issues will be resolved sooner rather than later. The APC can continue to celebrate but will be shocked to see us coming out stronger from this issue. We still have time. PDP will survive, I can assure you, even though the APC are behind the crisis."

He urged the people of the state to continue supporting the government: "Whatever happens, we want to see the people of Osun behind us, and with that we can move mountains. Power is from God, and the people are the repositories of it. We are going to win the next election by God's grace, and what we have done for the people in just three years surpasses the 12 years of the APC."

However, Adeleke's spokesperson, Mallam Rasheed Olawale, when contacted, said, "The governor will speak on the issue at the right time."

Expert analysis and political implications

An associate professor of Political Science at Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Lanre Sikiru Nurudeen, said that former Governor Oyetola's decision not to join the race may have been influenced by advice from the President to create a pathway for Adeleke.

The academic emphasised that the national PDP crisis has left members in confusion, with uncertainty over which faction INEC will recognise. "It would be risky or political suicide for any serious candidate in Osun to rely on the party under the current circumstances," he said.

Nurudeen said Adeleke now has limited options: "The governor must either seek another political platform or attempt to reconcile with former Minister Rauf Aregbesola, a move he described as politically delicate. Adeleke is in a tight corner, and the coming weeks will determine how he navigates the situation."

He added that the President may still intervene, noting, "The APC would not want to create any opening for an alliance between Adeleke and Aregbesola, given the latter's approach to politics. If the people of Osun feel Adeleke has performed very well, the question of platform may not really matter."

Kogi APC set for 2026 LG election, unveils schedule of activities

BY IDRIS AHMED

The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in Kogi State has officially unveiled the schedule of activities in preparation for the forthcoming Local Government Elections, with a strong assurance to aspirants and party supporters of a free, fair, and transparent contest.

Briefing the press at the APC Secretariat, Lokoja, the State Chairman of the APC, Hon. Abdullahi Bello, reaffirmed the party's readiness to uphold internal democracy and create an equal playing field for all contestants in line with the timetable released by the Kogi State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC).

He emphasized that the APC remains a party built on inclusiveness and unity, urging all aspirants to pursue their ambitions without fear or intimidation, assuring aspirants and party supporters of a free, fair, credible and peaceful contest.

"Our party is committed to a credible process devoid of rancour. We encourage every aspirant to advance their dreams by strictly following the guidelines provided by the APC and SIEC. No one will be sidelined," he assured.

The chairman praised the unwavering loyalty and support of Kogi citizens and APC members toward the administration of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo, describing their dedication as the foundation of the party's achievements so far.



According to him, the successes of the Ododo administration are a direct product of the collective cooperation and commitment of party faithful who have continued to stand firmly behind the leadership.

Hon. Bello expressed gratitude on behalf of the Governor and the party leadership, pledging sustained delivery of democratic dividends across the state regardless of political affiliation.

"We are one family and one state. The administration remains focused on serving the people of Kogi State with fairness and equity," he added.

The APC Chairman therefore appealed for calm, unity, and peaceful conduct throughout the process, stressing that the spirit of sportsmanship must guide all aspirants, noting that the real victors at the end of the process will be the people of Kogi State.

He further encouraged aspirants and supporters to channel complaints or concerns to the party's secretariat, assuring them of prompt attention and transparency at every stage.

The APC Chairman renewed the call for vigilance and steadfastness toward the ideals that have sustained the APC's influence in the state.

He disclosed that sales of nomination and expression of interest forms commenced from 27 November to 1 December and are available at the APC State Secretariat, Lokoja.

The deadline for submission of completed forms by aspirants is from 2 December to 3 December.

Screening of aspirants will commence on 4th of December, followed by the publication of the list of qualified aspirants, appeal, and final list of aspirants. On 5 December, disputes will be resolved and the final list released.

Primary elections will hold on 6 December from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with the announcement of results on 6 December immediately after verification.

Insecurity: S'West APC calls for collaborative efforts, warns saboteurs



BY STEPHEN GBADA–MOSI

Piqued by the rising cases of killings, kidnapping and other organised crimes in parts of the country, the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the South-West geopolitcal zone has charged all stakeholders to urgently come up with plans and actions capable of salvaging the situation, even as it blames the development on "some enemies within and outside who do not wish the nation well."

Tension among Nigeria heightened, following the reported incident of simultaneous abduction of schoolgirls in Kebbi and Niger states as well as killing of some worshippers inside a church in Kwara State where more than a dozen residents were also whisked away by the attacking gunmen. Meanwhile, all the abducted persons have been rescued and being taken care of by the government.

In a statement issued on Friday and made available to journalists in Ibadan, the Oyo State capital, by its South-West Zonal Publicity Secretary, Mr. Ayobami Afolabi, APC lauded the Federal Government and governments of the affected states for their swift response and coordinated efforts which yielded the timely rescue of all the victims of the attacks from their abductors.

"In recent times, there has been an increase in cases of violent attacks against some innocent citizens, especially in the Northern part of the country; and the pattern of these reported incident were similar.

"This validated the opinion of many pundits who had established the fact that cases of terrorism, banditry and related crimes in Nigeria were being sponsored from within and outside for political and economic interests.

"To this end, every patriotic citizen must rise up to the challenge in their private and official capacities. There is no economic or political status desired by any individual or groups that is worth the lives of innocent people who fall victims of violent attacks, as the situation calls for collaborative efforts and decisive actions from those in power and the rest of the citizenry.

"State governors have to encourage and empower community-based security outfits to complement the efforts of federal security agencies, while residents should help in the area of intelligence gathering.

"Undoubtedly, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is poised to deliver his administration's Renewed Hope Agenda to benefit all parts of the country as well as every citizen and resident of Nigeria.

"We should not play into the hands of those who do not wish our country well. With the latest declaration of state of emergency on security and the directive on mass recruitment into the Army and Police Force by the president, sponsors of insecurity and their agents should have a rethink, as all saboteurs will have themselves to blame." Afolabi added.

2027: I will resign if Tinubu fails to win – Okpebholo

BY JONATHAN IDIAHI

Ahead of the 2027 Presidential election in Nigeria, Edo State governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo has boasted; he would deliver the State for the President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu and his party, the All Progressives Congress (APC).

Seemingly so sure of his boast, Okpebholo declared: "If the President did not win, I will resign!"

The governor made the declaration while speaking with Babajide Kolade-Otitoju former anchor of the TVC discussion programme, Journalists Hangout in Benin, the State Capital.

On how he would do it, Okpebholo asserts that he is a grassroots politician, and a home boy who is always at peace with his people having learned so much from his mentor; Chief Tony Anenih of blessed memory. Hence it would be very easy for him to accomplish.

He adds; the impactful performance of his administration for the good of Edo people would be the magic wand for the victory.

President Tinubu now gives much money to Governors which he is not ready to put in his pocket but has vowed to use to work for Edo people, Okpebholo said.

He continued; that his administration is confronted with so many challenges begging for attention, hence he finds little or no time for himself and cannot afford the luxury of globe trotting for frivolities.

"Instead of using the money to travel, I will use the money to work for Edo people."

Therefore, in prioritising the most important areas of need of the people, his administration has employed and staffed 5,000 teachers who have been trained for effective delivery of quality education to the children in schools. He promised that 3,000 more will be employed soon.

In the one year of his administration, 63 schools have been rebuilt and 43 are undergoing reconstruction.

Also, at least 80 Primary Health Centres have been revamped and built to modern standards, well equipped with the deserving facilities and medical personnel including doctors who reside at the place of work, with quality accommodation provided by the State government.

"We have recruited health personnel including medical doctors for these PHCs in remote area, we pay them well and they reside there.

"Also, apart from the flyover projects his administration has embarked on in the State Capital, he asserts that the building of roads have been extended to other parts of the State to connect communities and ease movement.

Atiku commissions ADC Office, inaugurates committee in Taraba

BY OKERAFOR ATHANATIUS

Former Vice President of Nigeria, Alh. Atiku Abubakar has unveiled and commissioned the Secretariat of the Taraba State chapter of the African Democratic Congress (ADC).

Alh. Abubakar who doubles as former People's Democratic Party (PDP) Presidential candidate in the 2023 general elections also witnessed the inauguration of ADC Transition and Operation Guidelines Committee.



Saturday Monitor Correspondent gathered that officials of the Party's Transition and Operation Guidelines Committee that were constituted were immediately inaugurated into office.

They were; Senator Abubakar Umar Tutare as Chairman, Barrister Haruna Kwetishe - Secretary. Few among the members were; Hon. Kashimu Maigari, Danji SS, Alh. Abdullahi Ade.

Addressing mammoth crowd of party members and supporters during the ceremony held in Jalingo the State capital, Alh. Atiku Abubakar charged the people of the State to ensure they possess their Permanent Voter's Cards (PVCs).

"It's only when you have your PVCs that you have the power to vote Candidates of your choice during the elections",

"ADC comprised of people of proven integrity, well-meaning Nigerians, who are poised to salvage Nigerians from the shackles poverty that the All Progressive Congress (APC) bad governance have placed on them",

"Nigerians have suffered so much under APC led Federal Government and ADC is out to chase and pursue 'bad governance' out of power", he said.

Wazirn Adamawa further recalled the relationship between Adamawa, his home State and Taraba State saying he's at home in Taraba State.

Calling on the people to embrace and support ADC, Abubakar said Adamawa and Taraba states have a bond existing among them (the old Gongola State) before Gongola was split into two and gave rise to the two states.

Speaking during the welcome address, the Taraba State chairman ADC, Hon. Adamu Hassan Muhammad (Matawallen Iware) thanked the former Vice President of Nigeria and his entourage for finding time to come to Taraba to unveil the ADC Secretariat and inaugurate the party's Transition and Operation Guidelines Committee.

Hassan Muhammad who prayed for the dignitaries' safe trip to their destinations also prayed for the success of ADC during the 2027 general elections.

NDLEA arrests two over 300 blocks of cannabis hidden in car

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in Adamawa State has made another significant breakthrough in its campaign against drug trafficking with the arrest of two men transporting 300 blocks of cannabis.

The State Commander, CN Aliyu Abubakar, confirmed that operatives intercepted a Honda Civic loaded with the compressed cannabis blocks, leading to the arrest of 40-year-old Joseph Ayah.

According to the Command, the drugs were transported from Edo State and were destined for Numan Local Government Area of Adamawa State.

In his confession, Joseph admitted he was delivering the cannabis to a regular buyer. "I carried Indian hemp from Edo State to Numan, but I was arrested when I got to Numan while I was waiting for Mr Sani, whom I usually supply the Indian hemp," he said.

The NDLEA also arrested Joseph's travel companion, Abdulmalik Yusuf. He, however, insisted he had no idea the vehicle contained drugs. "Mr Joseph met me in Kogi State to escort him to Bauchi, but I didn't know what he was carrying in the car. I stepped down to buy something, then NDLEA arrested me," he explained.

The NDLEA Command in Adamawa said investigations are ongoing, and the suspects will be charged once the process is concluded.

FG intensifies anti-drug campaign as NDLEA, DFWA partner on youth-focused initiative

The Federal government has intensified its fight against drug abuse to curb rising substance misuse and protect its young population, Brig-Gen. Mohammed Buba Marwa (rtd), Chairman of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), has said.

He emphasised that tackling drug abuse requires collective action from families, schools, communities, and faith-based institutions, not just arrests and seizures.

Marwa spoke in Abuja on Wednesday during the formal inauguration of Drug Free World Africa (DFWA) operations in Nigeria, an event that also marked the unveiling of the organisation's first educational leaflet, 'Steering Dynamic Drug-Free Youth'.

He said the agency, under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda, has expanded its operations to include prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and reintegration of drug-dependent persons.

"For emphasis, the agency now focuses on prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and reintegration of drug-dependent persons," Marwa said.

Highlighting the agency's achievements between 2021 and 2025, he noted that thousands of arrests, hundreds of convictions, and the dismantling of major drug trafficking networks had been recorded nationwide.

"Enforcement alone will not win this war," he stressed, calling for stronger involvement from families and communities.

Parents, he said, must hold meaningful conversations with their children, while teachers should guide students academically and morally.

Religious leaders, he added, must continue shaping responsible behavior through their influence.

Marwa reaffirmed NDLEA's commitment to partnering with organisations like DFWA to build a drug-free Nigeria and Africa.

Senator Patrick Ndubueze, representing Imo North, echoed Marwa's emphasis on moral and parental guidance as a critical weapon in the national anti-drug fight.

"The war against drugs should start from various homes. Parents must educate their children, monitor their behavior, and teach them to avoid peers who may be engaging in harmful habits," he said.

The lawmaker warned against giving children detailed information about specific drugs, arguing that excessive curiosity could encourage experimentation.

Instead, he said children should be taught the broad dangers and moral implications of substance abuse while urging the government to tighten prescription controls and monitor pharmacies dispensing restricted substances.

Chinagorum Nkaru, Founder of DFWA, described the inauguration as the beginning of a bold and transformative movement to build a generation free from the effects of drug abuse and addiction.

She said DFWA envisions an Africa where young people are empowered, guided by purpose, and inspired to live dignified, responsible lives.

The educational leaflet launched, according to Nkaru, embodies three essential tools, education, awareness, and hope, designed to help young people make informed decisions and become ambassadors of positive change in their communities.

Nigeria's diversity not a burden but a gift that must be safeguarded – Marwa



Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (rtd) has urged Nigerians to always remember that the country's diversity is not a burden but a gift and a trust that must be safeguarded by all.

Marwa gave the charge while delivering the keynote address at the public presentation of a book: Buni Boy, written by late legal luminary Niyi Ayoola-Daniels in Abuja on Saturday 29th November 2025.

According to him, "Today holds a special significance for me due to the profound and compelling nature of this gathering. What moves me most is not only the book itself but also the life of its author and what that life represents. It speaks to the unity and strength woven through our diversity as Nigerians. To many people, the author's narrative may seem distant, almost unreal, as if drawn from another world. Yet those of us who grew up in the 1960s know it as lived truth. The experience captured in the narrative mirrors the country we once walked through with unguarded hearts.

"The story stirs my memories and reminds me of a time when life was plain in its blessings and people showed more kindness in their daily dealings. This evening, I am not here to retell the story, for it stands strong on its own. Instead, I will reflect on its core theme, to remind Nigerians of this era that our diversity is not a burden but a gift and a trust we must safeguard.

"I have long been an advocate of unity in diversity and of the strength that rises from it. Hence, today's occasion provides me an opportunity to further amplify the message. The Nigeria of my youth understood its own diversity, even in the troubled days of the 1960s when the civil war raged through this country. I recall my teenage years at the Nigeria Military School, NMS Zaria, where the pupils came from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

"It was never a school for northern boys alone. No, not a school for Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, Tiv or Idoma. It was a school for all ethnic groups in Nigeria. Whether you speak Hausa, Yoruba or Igbo, we regarded ourselves as kin. Our teachers reflected the same broad mix. For instance, from 1966 to 1970, the Commandant of the NMS was a Yoruba officer, Col. T. B. Ogundeko, of blessed memory. We didn't see him as a Yoruba man. We saw a Nigerian, a man with whom we have a shared identity.

"Before attending NMS, however, I had my primary education across four cities: Zaria, Enugu, Abeokuta, and Lagos. This was the result of my father's mobile life as a soldier. Living in different sociocultural settings taught me early that people of other tongues and traditions are still my own. That truth has stayed with me ever since.

"The Nigerian Army, where I served for over 30 years, is built on a foundation of unity, and the ideal of one Nigeria shapes its work. That experience only strengthened my conviction. As an officer, I served across the country and built bonds that cut through the artificial barriers created by our sociocultural differences. In the army, intermarriage and close fellowship pushed us to look past ethnic lines and stand together as one.

"On a personal note, my life has taught me that the diversity of this country enriches us. It sharpens our understanding of one another. It strengthens the fabric of our shared existence. It unites far more than it divides, whatever the voices of doubt may say today.

In my private and professional life, I have always embraced the full breadth of Nigeria's diversity. My friends come from every corner of the country. I have worked with people of every ethnicity. The people around me, even today, reflect the wide spectrum of our multiethnic nation. The chieftaincy titles I hold, more than 30 in number, show that same reach. Even my own family reflects our national mix. Wherever I stand in this country, whether among the Ogoni, or Bachama, among Igbo or Idoma, anywhere at all, I am at home."

He recalled that as Military Administrator of Lagos state, the Yoruba people showed him great love and supported his administration despite their hostility to the government at the federal level then. He said the support he received from Lagos encouraged him to conduct a free and fair election that brought his successor to office.

"Eventhough the Head of State then Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar did not interfere in my conduct of the governorship election, the military hierarchy did. After seeing the then Senator Bola Tinubu's strong campaign and popularity, the military hierarchy instructed me to prevent him from emerging governor because of his pro-democracy activism in NADECO against the military government then but I chose to conduct a free and fair election that produced the most popular candidate as governor of Lagos state. The rest today is history", he stated

NDLEA arrests two drivers for allegedly conveying illicit drugs in Edo



Operatives of the Edo State Command of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, have arrested two suspects in possession of cannabis sativa weighing 1,046 kilograms.

The NDLEA Commander in the state, Dr. Mitchell Ofoyeju, disclosed this on Thursday in a statement made available to newsmen in Benin City.

Ofoyeju said the suspects, identified as Felix Edah, 45, and Lucky Abagha, 51, were arrested during an operation on November 13, 2025.

He stated that the duo were apprehended when their vehicles, loaded with cannabis sativa, were intercepted during a motorised patrol along the Benin-Akure Road and Ugbogiobo Community in the state.

Ofoyeju added that both vehicles allegedly departed from the Uyere community in Ovia North East Local Government Area and were heading towards Benin City when they were caught.

He confirmed that the vehicles have been confiscated as instrumentalities of crime.

He said one of the suspects, Felix Edah, a male from Delta State, had a vehicle containing 38 bags of dried weeds suspected to be cannabis, weighing 494 kg, while the second suspect, Lucky Abagha, had 46 bags of cannabis weighing 552 kg.

He said the combined weight of the drugs is 1,046 kg.

The Edo State NDLEA Commander added that operatives intercepted Felix Edah's Mercedes-Benz V-Boot with registration number DE311BEN, carrying the suspected illicit drugs.

He also said Lucky Abagha was apprehended while driving a Mercedes-Benz V-Boot with registration number JJJ 56 JW, registered in Lagos, along the Benin-Akure Road.

Ofoyeju said the suspects have since been detained at the Benin office of the agency for further investigation and questioning.

While confirming that investigations into both cases are ongoing, the NDLEA Commander emphasised the agency's commitment to curbing drug trafficking and enforcing drug laws in the state.

According to him, these arrests are part of ongoing efforts to tackle drug-related crimes and dismantle trafficking networks operating within Edo State, especially as the yuletide season approaches.

He, however, urged members of the public to cooperate with law enforcement agencies by reporting suspicious activities related to drug trafficking, as part of reinforcing collective responsibility in the fight against drugs in the country.

The surprise success stories to follow at the World Cup



The draw for the 2026 Fifa World Cup will be held in Washington DC next week (5 December), and while supporters of teams that qualified will be anxious to know who they will play, most of the world's population will not be represented.

China, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Pakistan - five of the planet's six most populous countries - have all missed out on the tournament co-hosted by the Canada, Mexico and the United States next June and July.

Indeed, of the 209 countries that started out on the journey, only 64 still have a chance of reaching the finals. And that number will be whittled down to 48 after play-offs in March determine the fina line-up for football's global showpiece.

With only 155,000 inhabitants and 444 sq km of territory, Curacao is the smallest nation ever to qualify for a World Cup, in terms of both population and size.

Most of the inhabitants of the Caribbean island, located just 60km off the Venezuelan coast, could fit in the venue for the final, the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey (capacity 82,500).

Curacao boss Dick Advocaat, 78, will become the oldest coach to lead a side at a World Cup. The former Rangers and PSV boss has also been the national manager of eight different countries, but called qualifying with Curacao "the craziest thing I've ever achieved as a coach".

For a brief period until Curacao qualified, Cape Verde was the country with the second-smallest population to qualify. The small Atlantic archipelago off the coast of West Africa booked their place after beating Eswatini 3-0 last month.

Victory meant the Blue Sharks secured top spot in their group and a place at the 2026 tournament ahead of continental heavyweights Cameroon.

The national team has relied heavily on members of the diaspora to improve its footballing fortunes over recent years. Centre-back Roberto "Pico" Lopes – who was born and plays in Ireland – got his first call-up via an approach on business networking website LinkedIn.

"We're all over the world. It's great what we can achieve when we're together," he told the BBC's Destination New Jersey podcast.

Both stayed only briefly but football's development there has been longer lasting. Uzbekistan have put in consistent performances in the Asian Cup, reaching the semi-finals in 2011 and the quarter-finals in 2023.

Having narrowly missed out before, the White Wolves will make their debut next year under the guidance of former Italy centre-back and 2006 World Cup-winning captain Fabio Cannavaro.

Jordan fans have known they will be going to the finals since June, when they clinched qualification with a 3-0 away win in Oman.

The team's Moroccan coach, Jamal Sellami, dedicated the achievement to "all the people who believed in us" and praised the years of hard work from players and the Jordan Football Association.

Their recent progress has been notable, reaching the final of the 2023 Asian Cup after taking out Jurgen Klinsmann's South Korea in the semi-final before losing to hosts Qatar.

How Manchester United are trying to tackle touts

Stories have been recounted of fans left in tears after discovering the seats they have bought for games at Old Trafford do not exist, having been sold by touts, sometimes multiple times.

For the Premier League game at Liverpool, it was discovered someone paid £900 for a ticket in the away section.

The resale of tickets is illegal in the UK but the same legislation does not apply to companies abroad.

The club is trying several approaches to combat the problem but their powers are limited and accept there are times when it appears the people they are trying to stop are one step ahead.

Additionally, as they have discovered, some of the actions they do take are met with fierce resistance from their own supporters.

22,000 blocked and cancelled tickets - so far

Speaking to United staff earlier this month, the scale of the problem was laid bare.

In the past, a feature of an Old Trafford matchday were the people dotted around Sir Matt Busby way offering to sell tickets. But numbers have dwindled.

Now trading is done on Facebook or on WhatsApp groups and in a way that makes formal identification hard or impossible. Infiltration is incredibly difficult.

In the minutes of October's Fans Forum meeting, United said 2,000 tickets for the Premier League game with Chelsea on 20 September were "successfully reclaimed" and "over 4,500 active users were blocked" from buying tickets. The club believes the use of bots to purchase huge number of tickets under assumed names is the major problem.

On average, the club says, season ticket holders return between 5,000 and 7,500 tickets per game for "repurposing". They estimate between 10% and 15% of United's 47,000 season tickets are owned by touts, who take over tickets from holders who do not want to keep them. Valid addresses are no longer required because the tickets are delivered in digital form.

Around the first five home games of the season, United either blocked or cancelled 22,000 tickets, a figure the club regards as the "tip of the iceberg".

The club places checks on suspicious tickets that require fans to seek out officials at the ticket office at away games. From that, it was established that one fan paid £900 to for a ticket to see the win at Liverpool, another paid £800 for the 2-2 draw at Tottenham earlier this month.

With more tickets available, some of the scenes at Old Trafford can be upsetting as supporters discover they have been duped. For away matches, the ticket holders are allowed into the game. The source of the ticket is logged and action taken. At home, it is frequently not possible when tickets for the same seats are being sold multiple times.

Touting is big business. It is estimated it is worth hundreds of thousands of pounds a year to those involved and is not restricted to Manchester United. The biggest northern clubs and all those in London are the main targets, with overseas supporters, willing to pay a premium to circumvent club ticketing policies they either have no knowledge of or whose criteria they do not meet.

At one point, Manchester United sent non-permanent staff out to buy tickets off the street. Within minutes, it became apparent those running the touting operation had worked out what was happening and demanded to know why. On-street ticket checks have led to verbal and physical threats.

What's going on with fan disorder at European games?

Donyell alen had just given Aston Villa the lead at home to Young Boys.

He ran over to the corner flag, only to be met with a barrage of cups from the visiting supporters and left with a cut to the top of his head.

After the Netherlands forward scored his second goal in Villa's 2-1 Europa League victory on Thursday night, more objects were thrown while Young Boys fans ripped out seats and clashed with police.

Two away supporters were arrested on suspicion of affray and assaulting a police officer, while a further four were arrested on Friday.

Uefa does not release historical data, but there are 116 active suspended stadium bans across all competitions, including women's and youth teams. A further 16 have been triggered and are pending being served.

The most common offence is the lighting of fireworks (67), followed by racist or discriminatory behaviour (31), the throwing of objects (25), crowd disturbances (12) and damage to stadiums (seven). Some stadium bans are because of a combination of offences.

These carry a threat of having no away fans at a game, partial stadium closures or playing behind closed doors. The bans are usually suspended for two years and triggered if the offence is repeated.

Where did that incident happen? It was their previous visit to England in November 2023 when they faced Manchester City in a Champions League fixture at Etihad Stadium.

The Swiss club were given a one-match suspended punishment for crowd disturbances and fined for the throwing of objects and acts of damage to the stadium.

In February this year, Young Boys had a suspended partial home stadium closure activated for the lighting of fireworks, with a new and more substantial ground punishment placing them on probation for another two years.

Young Boys will be charged for the scenes on Thursday evening, but it remains to be seen whether Uefa gives them a firm ban, or starts a fresh probation period for this specific kind of offence. They will almost certainly be given 30 days to pay for the repairs to Villa Park.

In 2023, the number of arrests at football matches in England and Wales reached a nine-year high according to Home Office figures. The 2023-24 campaign produced another 14% rise, and data released earlier this year showed disorder was up another 18% during the 2024-25 season.

This has not been shown with English clubs in European football, though. Not one of those 132 cases on file with the Uefa disciplinary body involves a Premier League club, but fans continue to carry the weight of past reputation.

In Uefa's fair play rankings for the behaviour of supporters for the 2024-25 season, England ranked in sixth with 241 matches played. The only nations ahead of them had very small supporter bases: the Faroe Islands, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Lithuania and Luxembourg.

The closest nation to play more than 150 matches was Germany in 18th, with Spain 21st.

ctly categorising risk was a contributory factor to the way French police treated Liverpool fans before the 2023 Champions League final in Paris.

That does not mean English fans have not caused trouble. Fiorentina captain Cristiano Biraghi was left with a bloodied head after being hit by a cup thrown by a supporter in the West Ham section during the 2023 Conference League final.

West Ham were fined 50,000 euros (£43,000) and their fans banned for one away game, with a second match suspended. They only came out of a two-year probationary period this summer.

Given Young Boys' history, and that the club's last major offence took place in Manchester, there will be questions about why the club were free to have an allocation at Villa Park but Maccabi Tel Aviv were not.

Switzerland, whose teams played 116 fixtures, are among the worst-behaved in Europe, ranked 44th of 50 countries. Israel are 37th.

Chelsea's 'best player' Palmer fit to face Arsenal

Cole Palmer is fit to play for Chelsea against London rivals Arsenal in Sunday's Premier League game at Stamford Bridge.

The 23-year-old forward fractured his toe when stubbing it on a door last week and subsequently missed the wins over Burnley and Barcelona.

The England international has struggled with injury this season and featured only five times across all competitions.

"He is available to start," said Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca.

"Everyone is happy, the team-mates are happy, we are all happy and the most important thing is Cole is happy because a footballer wants to play games and make the sessions every day.

"He is our best player, we are happy he is back. We need to give him time to be 100% fit. He has done fantastic in the past and no doubt he is going to do very good for this club in the future."

Last week Maresca suggested that this Sunday's game, which kicks off at 16:30 GMT might come too soon for Palmer.

His absence would have been a major blow for the Blues who are second behind the Gunners and will close the gap at the top to three points with a win.

Palmer last featured in a 2-1 defeat at Manchester United on 20 September, with Chelsea playing 13 games since across all competitions since then, winning 10, losing two and drawing the other.

He joined from Manchester City for an initial £40m in September 2023 and has topped Chelsea's scoring charts in each of the past two Premier League campaigns - scoring 22 goals in his debut season and adding a further 15 last term.

Summer signing Estevao Willian has shone in Palmer's absence - with five goals across all competitions - and Maresca suggested the pair could play together.

"[It] depends on the game plan," Maresca said.

"For sure they are exciting. Fans excited. We also are excited. We need always balance between two."

Palmer's return does spark a selection headache for in-form Chelsea and gives visiting Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta another concern before the top-of-the-table match.

Despite being declared fit, there is still a question over whether Palmer should start. Chelsea have shown it's no longer appropriate to call them "Cole Palmer FC", winning 10 of their 13 matches while he has been on the sidelines.



Chelsea employee admits £200,000 club fraud

A Chelsea employee has pleaded guilty to defrauding the football club out of more than £200,000.

Claire Walsh, who worked as an assistant treasury manager at the Premier League side, obtained £208,520 for herself between 8 June 2019 and 23 October 2023, Westminster Magistrates' Court heard.

The 39-year-old, who admitted a charge of fraud by abuse of position, was told by Magistrate Kieran O'Donnell: "You've pleaded guilty to the offence and it exceeds our powers in terms of sentencing. You'll need to be sent to a crown court for sentencing, where they have the appropriate powers."

Walsh, of Elm Park Gardens, Chelsea, will be sentenced at Isleworth Crown Court on a date yet to be confirmed.

National Sport Commission to sanction age-cheat offenders in national sports



BY IDONGESIT INYANG

The National Council on Sports has approved sanctions against age-cheat offenders in national sports competitions, including immediate disqualification, medal removal, and potential criminal charges.

At the end of the National Council on Sports meeting held in Calabar, the Cross River State capital, Council has approved the institution of appropriate sanctions against age-cheat offenders in national sports competitions.

These include, National Youth Games, National Intermediate Games, School Sports competitions and other age-graded competitions.

The prescribed sanction according to the communiqué issued at the end of the meeting and signed by Shehu Dikko, Chairman, National Sports Commission/Chairman, National Council on Sports is immediate disqualification.

Others are withdrawal of all medals, points, records, and rankings, suspension of first-time offender for1-2 years from all sanctioned competitions while the Second-time offender has extended suspension or permanent ineligibility, depending on severity.

For erring Coaches, Team Officials, and Officiating Officials, a formal warning issued according to the communiqué, include suspension of licences for 1-3 years, immediate removal from official duties and

Permanent disqualification for serious or repeated violations.

On team Sports and State Delegations, the communiqué recommended team disqualification, withdrawal of accreditation, annulment of all team results as well as a fine of #10 million on the offending State to cover administrative and investigative costs:

There is also possible criminal charges for all adults involved in the practice, the the National sport body, also stated.

The National Council commended the current leadership of the National Sports Commission for adopting a business-like, pragmatic approach and for the successes that have been recorded in recent times in the sports sector;

It noted the presentation on the importance of emerging risks and the need to provide adequate insurance coverage for athletes, officials, and sports facilities during national sports competitions;

The Council also directed the National Sports Commission to ensure that State delegates provide centralised and verifiable insurance coverage for their contingents participating in competitions organised by the National Sports Commission.

These are the National Youth Games (NYG), National intermediate Games (NIG) and the National Sports Festival (NSF).

Nigerian boxer battles Benin Republic counterpart in WBA Africa title bout

Nigerian boxer, Tope Tp-Rock Musa, says he will outclass his opponent, Koussai Martin, from Benin Republic in the World Boxing Association (WBA) Africa Super Featherweight Title fight scheduled for Saturday in Abuja.

Speaking on Friday evening at the official pre-fight news conference, To-Rock assured fans he would demonstrate superior skill in the ring.

He said he would dismiss his Benin Republic counterpart within five rounds.

"I will show you boxing; I am ready for tomorrow," he said.

The Nigerian pugilist appreciated his fans and the Nigeria Boxing Board of Control (NBBC) for their support.

The Beninese, while reacting to the challenge, said he was fully prepared for what he called "a battle between neighbours".

He said he was ready to deliver "fireworks" in the ring.

According to him, the Nigerian camp appears "over-confident", but he will change the story when the fight begins.

"Our iron will burn; tomorrow you will see fireworks," Koussai MK said.

Earlier, Rafiu Oladipo, President, Nigerian Boxing Board of Control (NBBofC) confirmed that the fight had received full endorsement by the WBA.



Oladipo added that all financial obligations for the boxers had been met by the promoter.

"The WBA has given the endorsement, including how much each boxer will earn, and the promoter has agreed to pay.

"There will be no issues after the fight; the money is already secured."

He explained that both camps had attended the rules meeting conducted in accordance with WBA standards, and expressed confidence that Saturday's showdown would be conducted professionally.

"We expect Nigerians to come out tomorrow to witness the show," he said.

The promoter of the fight, Emmanuel Zacheus, said the decision to bring the fight to Abuja was aimed at deepening professional boxing in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

According to him, the TP Rock camp is confident of victory, having invested heavily in the boxer's preparations.

"Tope has proved himself across Africa; I believe he will become WBA African champion tomorrow by the grace of God," he said.

Zacheus said the event would feature supporting bouts while assured boxing fans of a memorable experience.

He urged Abuja residents to come out physically to watch the fight rather than rely on televised coverage, as the organisers were already planning another major event for May next year, also in Abuja.

"We want all the boxers to prove themselves because we are still scouting for future talents," he said.

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I Lost Another Mother In Mama Ogulagha-Ere - Gov Diri





Governor of Bayelsa State, Senator Douye Diri, has described the death of his aunt, Madam Ogulagha-Ere Egberiwarebo Finikeme, as the loss of another mother.

Speaking at Ayamasa community in Ekeremor Local Government Area of the state on Saturday during her funeral, Governor Diri said following the death of his biological mother, Madam Finikeme became mother to him.

He said she was a loving and caring woman, who prayed for not only her biological children, which included the Government House Director of Transport and Special Duties, High Chief Lucky Youbogha, but for everyone in the family, and expressed sadness that he had no one to call mother anymore.

According to him, the late matriarch, who died at the age of 78, had all the attributes of her sister, who was his biological mother, saying she would be remembered for her good deeds.

He recalled how during his first term election campaign in 2019, he promised that the road to Ayamasa would be completed and expressed appreciation to God that vehicles now drive into the community, which hitherto could only be accessed through neighboring Delta State.

He said: "I thank God for a day like this in Ayamasa. For us from this community, we know how it was before now.

"The immediate past governor, Senator Seriake Dickson, took the bull by the horn to start construction of the Sagbama-Ekeremor road. Part of our campaign when he went round with me in 2019 was that we will complete the road. Today we can drive with our eyes closed to Ayamasa.

"I shed tears when I recall the burial of my late mother and how difficult it was to move to Delta State first before entering Ayamasa.

"After the passage of my mother, this woman became a mother to me. We forgot our mother was no more because at all times she was there for us. She was always praying for us. She showed us love.

"Mama had all the attribute of my late mother and we will continue to remember her good works."

Delivering a sermorn, President of the House of Grace Church International, Apostle David Zilly-Aggrey, urged the bereaved to take solace in the fact that very soon, God will make death to cease as promised in His word.

He said Madam Finikeme had victory as she died in Christ and implored those alive to dedicate their lives to the service of God.

Present at the funeral service were the wife of the governor, Justice Patience Diri, Senator Konbowei Benson, Senator Emmanuel Paulker, Speaker of the Bayelsa House of Assembly, Abraham Ingobere, and other state legislators.

Also in attendance were Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Nimibofa Ayawei, members of the state executive council, Managing Director, Niger Delta Basin Development Authority, Ebitimi Amgbare, and President, Azikel Group, Dr. Azibapu Eruani.

Others were a retired Supreme Court jurist and King of Tuomo kingdom, Justice Francis Tabai as well as President, Ijaw Youth Council, Jonathan Lokpobiri among other dignitaries.

Daniel Alabrah
Chief Press Secretary
November 29, 2025

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