

International Friendly:
Le Bleues edge
impressive Super
Falcons 2-1 in Angers

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Courage doesn't always roar.
Sometimes courage is the quiet voice
at the end of the day, saying "I will try
again tomorrow"

Weightlifting
Development Ranks
High on NSC's
Priority List



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It Was AMGA Games Not A Funfair



'Unlucky' – Super Eagles defender Basseyy bemoans Fulham's draw against Spurs

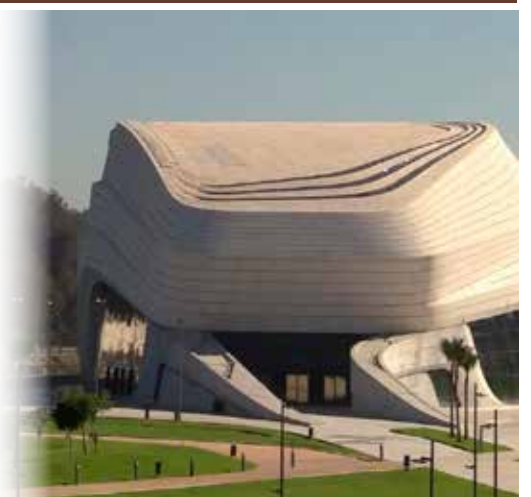


NSC DG Bukola Olopade, Compliments Amaju's Achievements on 54th Birthday

Tijani Babangida To Represent PFAN On The National Sports Commission Board



Morocco, Spain and Portugal battle to host World Cup 2030 Draw



It Was AMGA Games Not A Funfair



It was the events of sports termed AMGA 2024 Africa armed forces games to foster unity and re-integrate the military sports men and women that was all fun to be held with military HYPARCHY from different background. When the news broke that the next destination to play host to the all important games was confirmed with the initial hosting nation to hand over the games flag it was like the usual doubt if it was going to be a success story but it came to pass and it has become history that this great Africa nation was able to play host like a fun fair which will always be remembered in the history of the AMGA games.

There was no doubt is the facilities on ground were well enough to meet the required standard but it became a hitch free games in a much friendly manner with value to the economy in a way of being friendly in the usual hospitality like the experience of other games of the All African games coupled with other sporting tournaments and tournaments of such

magnitude in the recent past.

Those areas of relevant include but not limited to the required expertise in Administrative structures to effectively organize the main organizing committees, the local

organizing committee and the various sub committees to adequately handle the various games with the global standards as effortlessly within the military and the full support of the National sports commission

who are very conversant with events of such magnitude.

The participating countries made the maximum effort to put in their best to harvest many medals in all the seeded games and history was actually made as representatives and ambassadors of their country in the schedule days of events which will remain indelible in the minds of the athletes, teams and officiating official including the host country Nigeria as the next hosting country took over the games flag through the usual ritual of the ceremony performed at the main bowl of the Abuja National stadium Christian MKO Abiola Stadium in the federal capital city of Nigeria.

Under the table leadership of the ever amiable Chief of defence staff Lieutenant General Christophe Musa from the onset this gallant Army General was able to mobilise the various sports institutions to key into this noble event though is basically for military persons but he was very civil in communicating the messages to embrace as the games for all and a Nigeria project.

**SPEAK
ON THE
ISSUES**

WITH
FANNY AMUN

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‘Unlucky’ – Super Eagles defender Bassey bemoans Fulham’s draw against Spurs

The Super Eagles star, reflecting on the thrilling encounter at Spurs, highlighted Fulham’s improved performance and resilience but lamented missed opportunities that could have turned the game in their favour, footballlover reports.

The result came after Fulham’s shocking 4-1 home defeat to Wolverhampton Wanderers last week, which left fans demanding a stronger response.

Against Tottenham, Marco Silva’s side showed determination, with Alex Iwobi creating two chances and coming agonisingly close to scoring when his effort struck the crossbar.

Brennan Johnson put Tottenham ahead, but Fulham captain Tom Cairney levelled the score in the 62nd minute following brilliant hold-up play by Iwobi.

However, Cairney’s late red card for a rash challenge on Dejan Kulusevski left Fulham to defend the draw with 10 men.

Despite the setback, Fulham’s defensive organisation prevented Tottenham from finding a winner.

Speaking to Fulham TV after the match, the former Rangers defender



bemoaned the missed chances and admitted the draw felt like a missed opportunity.

The 24-year-old also emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum in the face of a busy schedule.

“I think it’s a hard one; I think we deserved more. They had Fraser Forster,

who pulled off three top saves that could have been goals. We were unlucky.

We also had a man sent off when we started gaining momentum, but on a positive note, we were able to maintain it to make sure we didn’t concede late as we’ve done in a couple of games now. We were composed and dealt with it well,”

the Nigerian international told Fulham TV.

Fulham now turns all attention to their upcoming home fixtures, where they will host Brighton and Hove Albion on Thursday before welcoming Arsenal on Sunday.

Both games provide a chance for Fulham to regain momentum and delight their fans.

Chief Has Payed His Dues



Chief Adewale Teluwo



Mr Victor Ighedosa Ehime



History they say has a place at a time it matters most, in every issue and we may never be placed in a position to write the wrong with people of history undermined never be privileged to get the appropriate recognition like a prophet that has no place in his land Chief Adewale Teluwo former proprietor of the defunct Obanta united football club of IJEBU Ode and ibunku Oluwa football club respectively including the female team that was christened after one of the numerous wives of the Chief named Vero bim female football club of Lagos State.

In this contest the name of this amiable Chief was so prominent in the football circle after other credible names like Adewale Osinbajo reigned

close to 50 years like a house hold name with the popular slogan UP flaming flamingo and locally pronounced as iyo with fan base over the south western states and in same status as defunct northern team and the once that has survived the storm till date.

The population of the Nigeria state is so huge that for the failure of adequate statistic which has not captured records on performances so many people has not gotten the recognition de so desire in a life time after meritorious services like the case of a living legend in Chief Adewale Teluwo.

Just for the records his immense contribution to sports football in particular remain in immeasurable with records of promotion to improve

game above board over time that players, coaches, parents and the entire football community benefited with players like Taribo West, Godwin Opara, Victor Ighedosa, Festus Odini, Manga Mohammed and others benefited from his benevolence in the recent past,

Many thanks to this singular effort from one of those good minds that thought it wise to remember the amiable Chief Adewale Teluwo the self styled philanthropist with a kind heart of given 247 to human being that are too numerous to mention.

From a very humble back ground from IJEBU land living in Lagos around the Shomolu axes unlike others that has a choice of stay at the exotic

areas of Lagos for his love to always mix with the local communal life with no restrictions to every body from his inner houses to his entire estates which I can witness including his eating habit of a free will at all times.

The event to immortalize this legend of our time has definitely come to stay as it should out-leave this iconic legend for touching live till date and sport to the venerable within and outside his community.

As this great Nigerian is celebrated by those who benefited over time hosting a re- union football event in the first quarter of 2023 as a special event was held inside the main bowl of Late Teslim Balogun Stadium to celebrate Chief Adewale Teluwo for his immense contributions to grassroots and professional football in Nigeria.

The rallying point for the tournament Mr. Victor Ehimen Ighedosa, CEO of X-C-Lent Sports Agency aimed at achieving the primary objectives to achieve the mile stone but not limited to the following mile stone;

1. Celebrate and appreciate Chief Teluwo while he is still with us.
2. Provide a platform for younger footballers—both male and female—to showcase their talents.
3. Inspire the next generation of footballers to strive for excellence and become role models.

Funding and Participation

This maiden edition of the tournament is being funded through voluntary contributions from ex-footballers, demonstrating their commitment to the sport and to Chief Teluwo's legacy. The tournament features eight teams—four male and four female—participating by invitation. Matches will take place at the National Institute of Sports (NIS) Training Pitch, with stakeholders from Nigeria's football industry expected to attend.

Vision for the Future

While the inaugural edition focuses on honoring Chief Teluwo and showcasing talent, future tournaments will expand to include football scouts who will identify promising players for professional opportunities. This initiative underscores the commitment to nurturing young talent and strengthening the foundation of Nigerian football.

The tournament is not just a celebration but a step towards bridging generation of footballers that will ensure brighter future in sports development nation wide.

NSC DG Bukola Olopade, Compliments Amaju's Achievements on 54th Birthday

The Director General of the National Sports Commission (NSC), Honourable Bukola Olopade, has extended heartfelt birthday felicitations to the former President of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Amaju Pinnick.

Describing Pinnick as more than a friend, Olopade referred to him as a long-time brother whose achievements in sports and the corporate world are exemplary.

"It's with great pleasure that I use this opportunity to send my birthday wishes to Amaju Melvin Pinnick, a man whose success is very exemplary both in sports and the corporate world," Olopade remarked.

He went on to highlight Pinnick's remarkable contributions to sports administration in Nigeria and beyond.

"Amaju is a rare gem and a major asset to Nigeria with all he has been able to achieve, from being a former Commissioner of Sports in Delta State to rising to becoming the President of the NFF, and also a CAF and FIFA Executive Member," Olopade stated.

"I therefore join millions of people around the world to celebrate and honour Amaju as he adds another year, and I wish him more healthy years and prosperity," he added.



Football Dev't: Maiden JOSENIHO Kids Football League kick-Off February 2025 in Abuja



Ten (10) teams in the capital city of Nigeria in Abuja are set to make a statement when JOSENIHO Kids Football League kicks off come first week of February 2025,

where children of different age grades will compete for honour and showcase their talents.

A league put in place by a football enthu-

siast Victor Isereke will see over 500 kids competing in different age grades categories.

The category includes, Age 1-8, under 10, under 12 and under 14 where 10 teams from nooks and crannies of FCT is expected to register.

However, after the competition players all the participating kids will smile home with football gifts like uniform, kits ball amongst others.

While the 1st price winner will pocket 1 million naira, second position #500,000, third position #250,000.

While speaking the sponsor of the Joseniho kids football leagues Victor Isereke the aim is to provide templates for the kits to complete and showcase their God's given talent.

According to him, I am football enthusiastic, I have three boys who are footballers, and I have seen people organizing this kind of tournament in Abuja before, I was not impressed with some aspect, I felt I should come up with my own and correct those ar-

reas that were not satisfactory.

"The aim is to provide the kids with that template to compete, there are a lot of football academy in Abuja but many kids still don't have the opportunity to compete to put the things they are learning to practical use so, I felt it's an opportunity to provide the template for the kids to play with one another.

When asked if league is going to be every year or one of one Mr Isereke replied: "It's going to be the first but not the last, I am passionate about it, that is why we are giving our best to ensure their continuity, I have friend associate that are willing to partner to set the foundation right for this tournament."

In his remarked, the Chairman LOC Organizing committee Dayo Faleyimu expressed that the league will be one of the best in the country.

"We are expecting 10 teams for now we have 7 teams registered because we are not to just registering a team we want the best team to be part of this because all we want is the best."

Morocco, Spain and Portugal battle to host World Cup 2030 Draw

Three grand venues are in contention to host the draw for the 2030 World Cup after the 2026 World Cup would have taken place.

The contending venues are the Grand Theater in Rabat Morocco, WiZink Center in Madrid Spain and the MEO Arena in Lisbon, the capital of Portugal.

This came out from FIFA's report that indicates that each of the three joint hosts put forward a unique venue.

Morocco nominated the Grand Theater in Rabat. FIFA described the venue as meeting all the norms with a total area of 25,000 square metres and an auditorium which can seat 1,800 guests.

Spain nominated Madrid's WiZink Center. This venue boasts a vast 5,800 square meters of space and can host over 16,000 people.

Portugal, meanwhile, proposed the MEO Arena in Lisbon. It is known as one of Europe's largest multipurpose arenas and has previously hosted



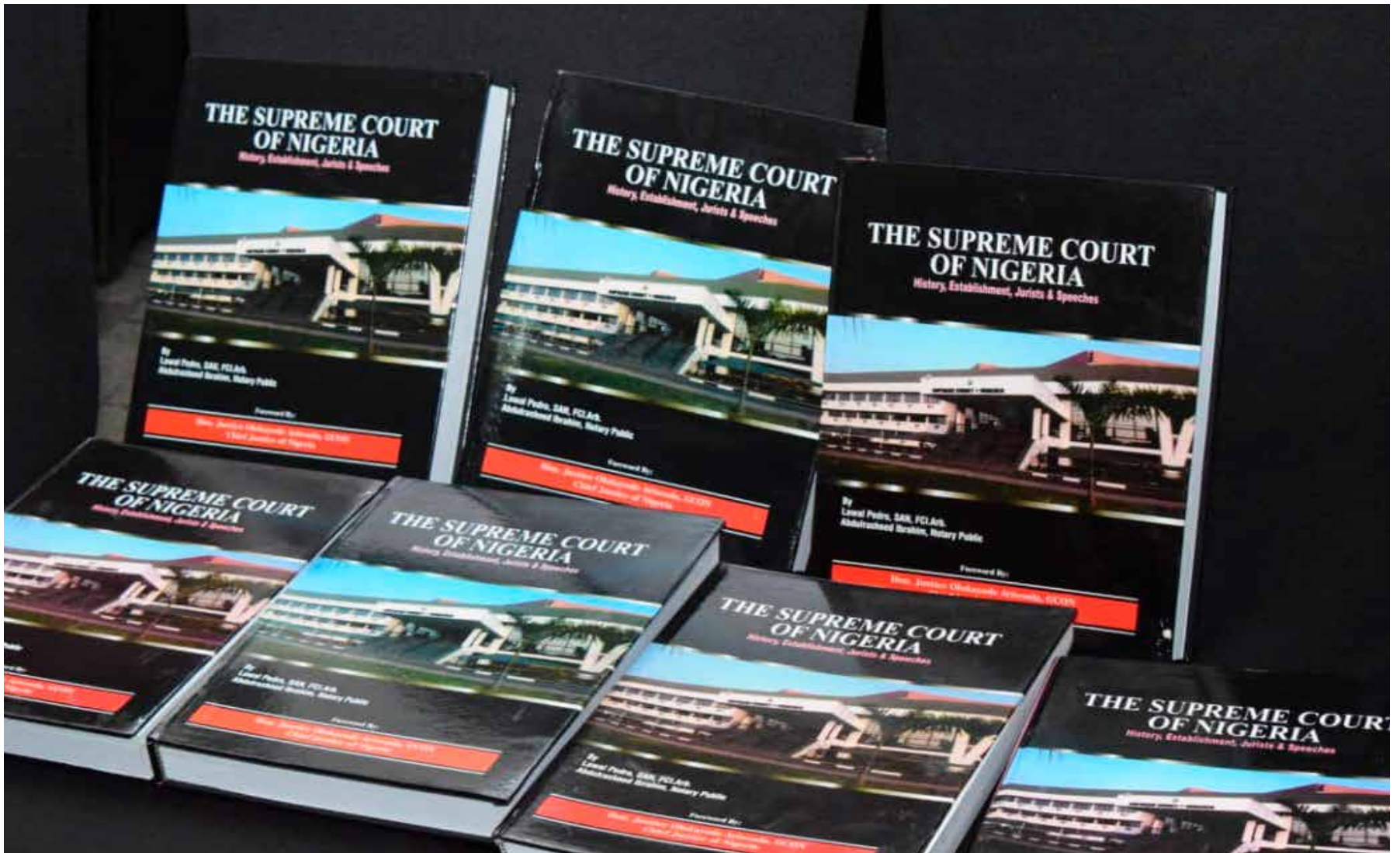
the Euro 2004 draw. The MEO Arena offers 5,200 square meters of space and seating for 20,000.

Meanwhile, Morocco is set to switch the venue of this year's CAF Awards from Marrakech to Rabat

in a bid to showcase the Grand Theater.

It is believed that the change from Marrakech to Rabat is influenced by the French Football Federation.

French President, Emmanuel Macron, saw Rabat's new theatre — with its cutting-edge facilities and striking design — on his recent visit to Morocco.



Weightlifting Development Ranks High on NSC's Priority List

Grassroots weightlifting development is expected to receive greater attention for talent discovery.

The National Sports Commission made this known at the 1st Engineer Habu Gumel Weightlifting competition at the Moshood Abiola National Stadium in Abuja.

The NSC boss Mallam Shehu Dikko while speaking with journalists during the championship disclosed reasons behind the commission's readiness to support the Nigeria Weightlifting Federation, NWF, in the development of the sport in the country.

"Weightlifting is a sport that we have comparative advantage. So we will do all we can to enhance our chances in this sport. Grassroots development of this sport is key because we need regular supply of talents to replace ageing ones. We will do all we can to support you," he said

Dikko also expressed optimism to see athletes who excelled in the national championship feature on bigger international stages.

"By 2028 I hope to see some of these weightlifters doing exploits at the Olympics," he said.

Expressing delight at the Federation's efforts to develop weightlifting in the country, Alhaji Dikko added, the Commission would support the NWF to actualise their set objectives.



"We at the NSC will do our best to partner with you to succeed. If the Federations succeed, we

succeed, so we will do all we can to make you succeed. Hopefully we will make the next edition of this tournament much big," the astute sports administrator stated.

The three-day Habu Gumel Weightlifting competition which held from 1-2 December 2024 saw athletes from different parts of the country compete for honours in Abuja.

The Ekiti State Governor's Cup 2024 has come to an exciting close



With Christ School Ado-Ekiti emerging as the champion

They defeated Efon High School with a impressive 4-0 score line

Community Grammar School Kota took home the third-place prize, beating Government College Ikere with a 2-goal advantage.

The closing ceremony was attended by numerous dignitaries, including former FA Chairman, Chief Taiwo Odebumi Mr. Lekan Adeleke, Mr. Yinka Akeem, and Dr. Olusola Osetoba, who represented Governor Abiodun Abayomi Oyejobi. Governor Oyejobi emphasized the importance of initiatives like the Governor's Cup, saying "Our young people are the heartbeat of this state

Through initiatives like the Governor's Cup, we are not just nurturing athletes but building a generation of responsible and resilient leaders" 1.

The Governor's Cup has been a fantastic platform for nurturing young football talents across Ekiti State

Governor Oyejobi has been a strong advocate for development in Ekiti State, particularly in sports development and education.

His administration has implemented various initiatives to drive growth and prosperity in the state.

The Ekiti State Governor's Cup 2024 was successfully organized by the School Sports Foundation and proudly sponsored by Peculiar Ultimate Concerns.

The competition has been a huge success, with four schools making it to the semifinals:

Government College Ikere, Christ School Ado, Efon High School, and Community Grammar School Kota

World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) Commends Dr. Sam Ogbondeminu Leadership Role

The World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) has commended Dr. Samuel Ogbondeminu of Nigeria, head of Medical and Anti-Doping Portfolio of Technical Committee of African Games (TCAG) Accra 2023, for his continuous efforts and resolute determination that led to the success of the Anti-doping program for the 13th edition of the African game held in Ghana early in the year.

WADA, in a statement released on November 27, 2024, said the effective implementation of the program's during the Games was made possible through the composition of a coordination committee led by Dr. Ogbondeminu who oversee the activities of all stakeholders for the Anti-doping program of the games.

WADA through its Major Event, Anti-doping Legacy (MEAL) program also facilitated timely support through the Anti-Doping Advisory group

to support the event.

Other highlights were the effective training conducted for local Anti-doping personnel in Ghana which comprises 16 Doping Control Officers,

19 Chaperones and 15 Educators.

On-site support and assistance provided during the Games through the presence of many stakeholders including 15 international Doping Control Officers (DCO) from 15 different countries of Africa.

For the first time in Africa, Dried Blood Spot (DBS) testing was done during the African Games where 608 tests were conducted; 544 In Competition (IC), 64 Out-of Competition (OOC) test were conducted by the team.

WADA is hopeful that the African Union will consolidate from the gains from Accra for future editions of the games.



WADA's primary role is to develop, harmonize and coordinate anti-doping rules and policies across all sports and countries.

WADA's activities include scientific and social

science research; education; intelligence & investigations; development of anti-doping capacity; and monitoring of compliance with the World Anti-Doping Program.



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Maiden Anniversary
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Katsina State YSFON Chairman donates Sports Materials to NYSC, Katsina Chapter.

The Chairman Katsina State Chapter of Youth Sports Federation of Nigeria, Katsina Chapter, (CEO) A Rahama-wa Petroleum Nigeria Limited, Alh Aminu Ahmed Wali has made a generous donation of match balls, Trophy and medals to the National Youth Service Corps members (NYSC), Katsina State Chapter, during the opening ceremony of 2024 Camping at Katsina State orientation Camp, Mani Road, Katsina.

This gesture aims to promote sports and encourage youths engagement in physical activities in the state.

The donation highlights the federation and Katsina State Chapter's commitment to bolstering sports development at the grass-roots level and supporting the vital role of the NYSC in community service and development. The match balls will be instrumental in facilitating various sporting events and activities for the NYSC members, the medals are to serve as recognition for outstanding performances, while the Trophy is to be presented to the winners of the competitions.

The state NYSC Director expressed their gratitude for the donation, emphasizing the positive impact it will have on the morale of the corps members and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

This initiative is expected to inspire more youths to participate in sports, thereby enhancing camaraderie and teamwork among young Nigerians.

"Such collaborations between sports organizations and youth service programs are crucial for building a vibrant sports culture and promoting fitness among youths" says Alh. Aminu Wali.



Akwa Ibom FA Chairman, Mr. Samuel Umoh Hails NNL for Successful Kickoff to 2024/2025 Season



The Chairman of the Akwa Ibom State Football Association, Mr. Samuel Umoh, has commended the Nigeria National League (NNL) for the successful commencement

of the 2024/2025 season, following an exciting opening match between Abakiliki FC and Madiba FC in Abakiliki, Ebonyi State on Saturday, November 30, 2024. The game,

which ended in a thrilling 2-2 draw, showcased an exhilarating attacking display that left fans eager for more action in the coming months.

Speaking shortly after the match, Mr. Umoh who was among the football stakeholders to grace the opening game, lauded the NNL board for a well-structured and entertaining opening game. He described the encounter as a perfect demonstration of the competitive spirit the league is known for.

"The 2-2 draw between Abakiliki FC and Madiba FC was a testament to the high level of football that the Nigeria National League has come to represent," Mr. Umoh said. "The attacking quality displayed by both teams, which resulted in four goals, is a great signal of the exciting football we can expect throughout the season. The NNL has kicked off on a high note, and I am confident the league will continue to deliver thrilling matches."

The Akwa Ibom FA Chairman also took the opportunity to send a message of en-

couragement to his state's two teams in the second tier, Dakkada FC and Godswill Akpabio United FC, as they prepare for their own season opener on December 7, 2024.

"On behalf of the Akwa Ibom State FA, I would like to wish Dakkada FC and Godswill Akpabio United FC the best of luck as they embark on their NNL campaigns. The challenges ahead will test your resilience and determination, but I believe in your ability to compete at the highest level," Mr. Umoh remarked. "I urge our players and coaching staff to stay focused, work hard. Dakkada FC will be facing Beyond Limits Academy in Ikenne, Ogun State, while our newly founded Godswill Akpabio United FC will also travel for the away game against Gateway United FC, and we have no doubt that both teams will give their best in pursuit of success."

The 2024/2025 NNL season is set to see several exciting fixtures, with teams across Nigeria aiming to secure promotion to the Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL).

Dikko Conferred With NIQS Fellowship

Chairman of National Sports Commission Mallam Shehu Dikko has been conferred with Fellow of the Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (FNIQS).

Speaking after the conferment at the Institute's Annual General Assembly in Port Harcourt on Friday, an elated Dikko said, "I feel highly honoured to record this great and important professional milestone, the highest professional grade. The journey that started over 35 years ago has come full circle."

He continued, "I sincerely thank the NIQS President QS Kene C Nzekwe, FNIQS and the entire board of the NIQS for finding me professionally worthy and deserving to be conferred with a Fellow, in recognition of my professional work and role in the advancement of the QS

profession and public service over the years."

Dikko paid glowing tribute to his elder brother, Mallam Hussain Dikko for his motivation and mentorship over the years culminating in this feat.

"Indeed, I must thank my elder brother Mallam Hussain Dikko, FNIQS, Chairman ProvidusBank, who Served as President, Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS 2000-2002), President, Quantity Surveyors Registration Board of Nigeria (QSRBN 2010-2017) and presently Chairman, NIQS Incorporated BOT (2024-2034), for all the mentorship and support that prepared me to achieve this professional height among others. May God in his infinite mercies continue to make things easy!", he concluded.



Oyo Education Sector Emerges Victorious in Inter-Sectoral Football Competition

The Oyo State Education Sector on Tuesday defeated the Security Sector to emerge champions of the 2024 Oyo state Inter-Sectoral Football Competition.

The Education Sector team, comprising teachers and officials from the state's education ministry and educational sector, won the match by a lone goal.

Jimoh Mutairu scored the goal in the second half of the final match played at the Lekan Salami Stadium, Adamasingba, Ibadan.

The match, which was organized to foster camaraderie and teamwork among different sectors of the state government, was witnessed by top officials from both the education and security sectors.

Shortly before presenting the trophy to the winning team, Oyo State Governor, Engr Seyi Makinde admonished all civil servants in the state to prioritize physical fitness as part of efforts to boost their overall well-being and make them more productive.

He harped on the importance of exercise in maintaining a healthy lifestyle, adding that physical fitness improves individual health and enhances workplace performance.

He commended the organizers of the match and all participants at the event, adding that the present administration had invested immensely in sporting facilities and activities in the state.

According to him, "We want to encourage our civil servants to integrate physical activity into their daily lifestyles. When you exercise your body, and you're physically fit, it can also enhance your heartbeat and productivity at the workplace."

"Through initiatives like the Civil Service Games, we hope to create a more vibrant



and motivated civil service that will contribute significantly to the development of Oyo State".

The victory was celebrated by the Commissioner for Education, Science and Tech-

nology, Prof. Salihu Adelabu and the entire education sector in the state. According to the commissioner, "This victory is a testament to the teamwork and dedication of our team".

"It is a clear demonstration of the fact that we're not only concerned about the cognitive domain of learning, but also the psychomotor and affective domains as well".

8th African Nations Championship: Eguavoen invites Rabiou Ali, 29 others to camp for Ghana



Head Coach Augustine Eguavoen has invited a total of 30 players to camp as the Nigeria Football Federation activates its commitment to ensuring the qualification of the Super Eagles B for next year's African Nations Championship finals.

The 8th edition of the continental championship – reserved exclusively for footballers plying their trade with clubs in their country's domestic Leagues and possessing standard contracts – is scheduled to run the length of February 2025 in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

Kano Pillars' evergreen midfielder,

Rabiou Ali, who has scored eight goals this season, is among the players called, alongside Remo Stars' goalkeeper Kayode Bankole, Rivers United defender Steven Mayo, and Abia Warriors' exciting forward Sunday Megwo.

There are also Enyimba FC goalkeeper Henry Ozoemena, Remo Stars' wing-back Ismail Sadiq, Enugu Rangers' midfielder ace Kazeem Ogunleye and Nasarawa United forward Anas Yusuf.

Victor Collins, the Nasarawa United defender called up for last month's 2025 AFCON qualifying matches against Be-

nin Republic and Rwanda, and Plateau United's Adamu Abubakar, are also called up.

All the invited players have been instructed to arrive at the Remo Stars Sports Institute, Ikenne-Remo, Ogun State on Wednesday, 4th December 2024, where the team will train ahead of the first leg of the qualification fixture against Ghana's Black Stars B, billed for the Accra Sports Stadium on Sunday, 22nd December. The second leg will take place at the Godswill Akpabio Stadium, Uyo on Saturday, 28th December.

Ghana stopped Nigeria from reaching the Africa Nations Championship finals in 2009 and 2023. In the qualifiers for the inaugural edition hosted by Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria took a 2-0 first-half lead in the opening leg in Accra, only to concede three goals in the second half. The return leg in Calabar ended 0-0. In the qualifiers for the last edition hosted by Algeria, Ghana won 2-0 at home and lost 0-2 in Abuja, but prevailed after a penalty shootout at the MKO Abiola National Stadium.

30 PLAYERS FOR SUPER EAGLES B CAMPING IN IKENNE-REMO
Goalkeepers: Henry Ozoemena (Enyimba FC); Kayode Bankole (Remo Stars); Nurudeen Badmus (Kwara United)

Defenders: Ismail Sadiq (Remo Stars); Waliu Ojewole (Ikorodu City); Imo Obot (Enyimba FC); Taiwo Abdulrafiu (Rivers United); Junior Nduka (Remo Stars); Victor Collins (Nasarawa United); Ifeanyi Onyebuchi (Rangers International); Steven Mayo (Rivers United)

Midfielders: Jide Fatokun (Remo Stars); Rabiou Ali (Kano Pillars); Saviour Isaac (Rangers International); Musa Zayyad (El-Kanemi Warriors); Emmanuel Ogbale (Kwara United); Papa Daniel Mustapha (Niger Tornadoes); Kazeem Ogunleye (Rangers International)

Forwards: Anas Yusuf (Nasarawa United); Adamu Abubakar (Plateau United); Osy Martins (Lobi Stars); Sikiru Alimi (Remo Stars); Temitope Vincent (Plateau United); Samuel Ogunleye (3SC); Abiam Nelson (Kano Pillars); Meyiwa Oritsewiyemi (Bendel Insurance); Ngbemena Ikechukwu (Heartland FC); Sunday Megwo (Abia Warriors); Umar Al-Amin Ibrahim (El-Kanemi Warriors); Adams Aminu Sani (Kano Pillars)



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ENROLL NOW!




International Friendly: Le Bleues edge impressive Super Falcons 2-1 in Angers

France's Les Bleues were 2-1 winners over the Super Falcons of Nigeria in a turgid international friendly game played under frosty and misty weather in Angers on Saturday night.

The nine-time African champions started with some promise at the Stade Raymond Kopa, determined to take the game to the hosts. But at the other end, Marie-Antoinette Katoto had the ball in the net in the 7th minute, only to be correctly ruled offside.

Eugenie Claudine Le Sommer, playing her 197th match for Les Bleues, scored her 94th international goal in the 29th minute to put the host nation ahead. Eight minutes later, it was 2-0 after Tunisia-born Amel Majri got the ball past goalkeeper and stand-in captain Chiamaka Nnadozie.

The high point of the game, however, was Nigeria scoring her first-ever goal against the Les Bleues. From a corner kick to the hosts in added time of the first half, a long clearance from the back found Spain-based Gift Monday, who quickly found gangling Montpellier FC of France forward Ifeoma Onumonu for the latter



to make history.

Without captain and big inspiration Rasheedat Ajibade and defender Oluwatosin Deme-

hin far away from the match venue as a result of injuries, it was always going to be an uphill task for the Falcons to earn a first win over their

hosts. Yet, they gave it a fight in an interesting second period.

Nnadozie was alert to save from Dephine Cascarino just after the restart, and as the game wore on, Majri saw her 20-yard free-kick soar far higher than Nnadozie's goal-post.

With 10 minutes left on the clock, Nigeria broke forward, and from a corner kick, defender Sikiratu Isah came pretty close with a volley that had goalkeeper Pauline Peyraud-Magnin stretching full strength to tip the ball behind the goalpost.

Five minutes later, Christy Ucheibe failed to get her direction right when sweeping the ball from a cross from the right, and watched as it floated over the bar.

In the 86th minute, Nnadozie saved another point-blank effort, and the rebound was scrambled back to the goalkeeper by the hard-working Sikiratu Isah.

Though defeated, the Super Falcons were far from being disgraced, and the game could, perhaps, have been somewhat different had Ajibade and Demehin been involved.

Dikko At Gumel National Open Weightlifting Championships At The Gymnasium Hall, Mko Abiola Stadium Some Minutes Ago!

His words, "We at the NSC will do our best to partner with you to succeed. If the Federations succeed, we succeed, so we will do all we can to make you

succeed. Hopefully we will make the next edition of this tournament much bigger."

"Weightlifting is a sport that we have comparative advantage. So we will do all

we can to enhance our chances in this sport. Grassroots development of this sport is key because we need regular supply of talents to replace ageing ones. We will do all we

can to support you. By 2028 I hope to see some of these weightlifters doing exploits at the Olympics."

Tijani Babangida To Represent PFAN On The National Sports Commission Board

The President of the Professional Footballers Association of Nigeria (PFAN), Comrade Tijani Babangida (MON), has been nominated by the PFAN Board of Trustees (BOT) to represent the association on the National Sports Commission (NSC) Board. This nomination aligns with Section 2 of the National Sports Commission (Establishment) Act 2023.



At a meeting held on Saturday, 23rd November 2024, the PFAN BOT made two significant decisions:

1. Extension of Leadership Tenure: The BOT unanimously agreed to extend the tenure of the Tijani Babangida-led Executive Council.

2. NSC Board Representation: Tijani Babangida was chosen as the PFAN representative on the National Sports Commission Board.

These decisions are, however, subject to

ratification by the PFAN Congress.

The BOT also advised the PFAN Executive Council to reach out to aggrieved members and unify the players' union under one umbrella, as is standard practice in other countries.

Ongoing Efforts and Legal Challenges

The PFAN BOT emphasized that the next critical phase involves securing representation on the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) Board, Congress, and Sub-Committees. These slots are currently subject to the ongoing case at the Federal High Court in Abuja, which seeks equal and proportional representation.

Commitment to Merit-Based Representation

The BOT assured stakeholders that representation on the NFF Board would strictly be based on merit.

Prince Harrison Jalla

New Nsc Chairman Shehu Dikko -Lock Your Office To Visitors And Get To Work—Enough Distractions !

The appointment of Shehu Dikko as the new chairman of the Nigerian Sports Commission (NSC) has ignited fresh hope for the revival of Nigerian sports. However, the magnitude of the challenges before him demands unwavering focus and immediate action. Nigerian sports is at a critical juncture, requiring bold reforms and transformative leadership. Yet, Dikko's early days in office have been clouded by an endless stream of courtesy visits that threaten to derail progress.

While cultural norms often dictate celebrating new appointments with visits from well-wishers, this prolonged indulgence in ceremonial pleasantries—from village heads to influential per-

sonalities—has overstayed its welcome. These unnecessary visits risk projecting Dikko as a leader more invested in ceremonial grandeur than the urgent task of revitalizing Nigerian sports. At a time when our World Cup qualification hangs by a thread and numerous sports disciplines are in disarray, this is not the leadership Nigerians expect or need.

It is imperative that Dikko swiftly changes this narrative. He must figuratively—and if needed, literally—lock his office doors to distractions and focus solely on the monumental task ahead. The state of Nigerian sports demands resolute leadership and innovative solutions. From grassroots

development to elite performance, every sector is crying out for attention, requiring strategic planning and consistent implementation.

The domestic leagues are struggling to secure funding and relevance, while our national teams—once a source of pride and dominance—are now teetering on the brink of mediocrity. These systemic issues will not be solved through endless courtesy visits or photo ops. Leadership at this level calls for prioritizing action over appearances and results over recognition.

To succeed, Dikko must surround himself with competent advisors and professionals who understand the intricacies of sports man-

agement and administration. Those currently encouraging him to entertain distractions are doing his tenure a great disservice. Effective leadership is not about appeasing societal expectations or basking in flattery—it is about delivering sustainable solutions and leaving a legacy of progress.

Time is of the essence. Each moment spent on ceremonial distractions is a moment lost in the fight to restore Nigerian sports to its rightful place. Nigerians need to see Dikko roll up his sleeves, pull up his Babanriga, and get to work on the ground. Tangible results, not endless receptions, are what will define his tenure.

Happy Birthday

Wishing you a birthday
filled with laughter and
testimonies.

Aisha Light Falode



From

**Oluchi tobex tobe-Chukwu
and Olayinka Olawole.**



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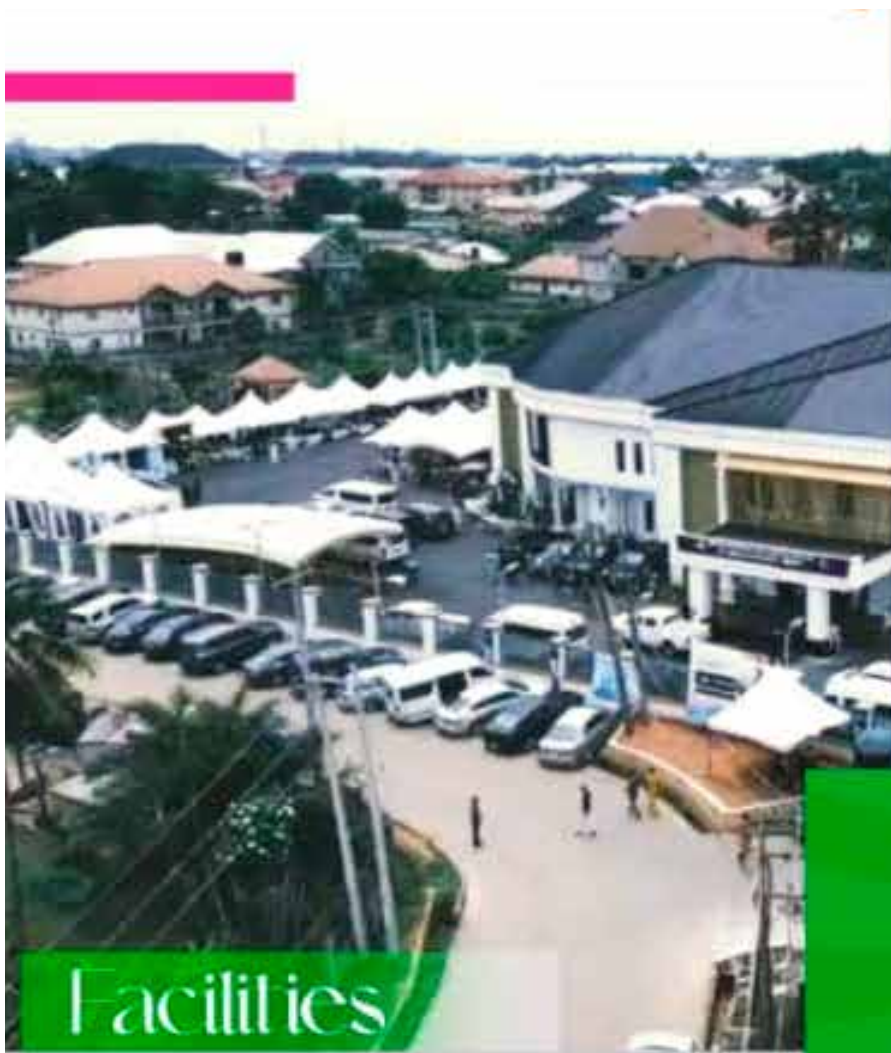
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Residents Lament Indefinite Closure Of Agege Stadium As Renovations Stalls For Over 3 Years

Agege residents have lamented the indefinite closure of Agege Stadium three and half years after renovation work stopped at the stadium, Sports247 reports.

The stadium which was upgraded from a community recreation centre to stadium by Lagos State Government under the leadership of Babatunde Raji Fashola is in a shadow of its glowing past when it was launched for the 2012 National Sports Festival.

The Agege Stadium was about the most active in the state and it was the beehive of sporting activities ranging from school sports to community sports and served as home for many league and non league matches with MFM Football Club played their domestic and continental matches at the stadium.

Due to the busy-ness of the stadium, there are high numbers of people in and out of Agege, suburb of Lagos as local business are thriving due to high volume of people thronging the stadium for top football actions and other sports.

Since the stadium was marked for renovation, the vibrant hub of sports fans and community people is now a shadow of its old self three and half years after it was shut down for the so-called renovation.

The perpetual renovation going at the stadium is taking its toll on local business around the stadium and environment as the once sports Mecca where sports enthusiasts pay pilgrimage from far and wide is now a deserted land as sporting activities no longer happen at the stadium.

According to reports, the Lagos State Sports Commission won't open the place for sporting activities until all renovations are completed.

A visit to the stadium shows much progress has not been made and the re-opening may take much longer unless the Government decides to intervene as a matter of urgency as the site has been abandoned by the contractor over three



months ago.

Eyewitnesses report that some unidentifiable persons had a clash with the contractor in charge of the renovation works in an attempt to take control of the project and since then renovation has stopped completely at the stadium.

The community owners and residents are groaning and lamenting that the indefinite closure is having a huge adverse effect on their economics and asking Government to up the renovation and reopening of the stadium in a record

time as further delay is not favourable.

A community leader painted the effect of the stadium thus:

"This is not just about sports; it's about our community's identity and economic well-being, "We need decisive action, not just words," reacting to Governor Babajide Sanwo Olu administration statement on prioritising the stadium's renovation which has remained a promise on paper and never in action and is casting doubts and minds of citizens which

undermines the credibility of the government and sports authorities.

"The closure has affected sales and we are just managing with the little sales will could unlike how the business booms during Matchdays," says an Alcoholic beverage seller.

The general view expressed by the concerned members society is quick government intervention to resolve the contractor's disputes, return the contractor to site and hasten the long-overdue completion of the project.

44-Year-Old Rabiu Ali Not Ready To Retire At Kano Pillars

BY TAIYE TAIWO

Rabiu Ali, the oldest player and highest-scoring player in the Nigerian Premier Football League, has no plans to retire at age 44. He continues to shine for Kano Pillars, targeting titles and continental qualification. With the influence of Ahmed Musa and Shehu Abdullahi, the team is on the rise in the league.

The oldest player and highest-scoring player in the Nigeria Premier Football League history, Rabiu Ali has confirmed he is not considering saying goodbye to professional football just yet at age 44.

Ali has been in blistering form for Kano Pillars this season and his hard work in the middle of the park combined with his fine scoring talents put him among the best scoring players in the Nigeria top-flight this season.

He has scored eight goals in 10 games so far this term, with four of them coming from free-kicks and he is just a goal behind leading top scorer, Anas Yusuf of Nasarawa United.

Ali is the oldest player in the Nigeria top-flight and he has been playing for Kano Pillars since 2009, scoring in all 14 league seasons he has featured in, including Pillars' brief stint in the second division.

The 44-year-old has no plans to slow down and he is looking to maintain his physical and mental fitness beyond this current campaign.

Rabiu Ali Has No Plans to Retire Yet

When asked about retirement at age 44, Ali told SportsBoom.com: "Not now, I'm yet to decide without injury. I will continue with my football career since I can maintain my mental and physical fitness levels.

"The motivation is that I'm happy with my family, I see them cheering me up together and also the prayers from friends and my fans."

Ambitious Kano Pillars on the rise

Kano Pillars, in November, made a bold statement of intent after playing four match-



es without defeat. After defeating Plateau United and Bendel Insurance, they settled for back-to-back 2-2 draws against Heartland and Lobi Stars.

Usman Abdallah's men are positioned eighth in the NPFL table with seven points behind league leaders, Remo Stars.

When quizzed about Kano Pillars' target for the 2024-25 season, Ali disclosed: "We are hoping for the two titles in Nigeria, the NPFL and the President's Federation Cup. We also have the target to secure a slot to qualify for either the CAF Champions League or CAF

Confederation Cup for next season."

Ahmed Musa & Shehu Abdullahi's influence

Pillars' campaign for silverware has been boosted with the return of former players, Ahmed Musa and Shehu Abdullahi earlier this season.

The duo have contributed to the team's performance, with Musa bagging three goals already in eight appearances while Abdullahi has been solid with defensive duties.

Musa's return has made Ali give the former Super Eagles captain the armband, a decision

the 44-year-old described as a no-brainer.

He said: "The return of Ahmed Musa and Shehu Abdullahi has clearly boosted our team with the positive results we are recording. We are training together as teammates, we guide and motivate the young players and we are cheering one another as teammates."

Next up for Ali and his Kano Pillars teammates, is a league trip to Port Harcourt where they will battle Finidi George's Rivers United for three points on Sunday, December 1.

Clarification regarding Inima Tobin's medical treatment



Grafton Entertainment, the esteemed organizers of the Amanyanabo Football Tournament, wishes to address recent claims made by footballer Inoma Tobin concerning his medical treatment following an injury sustained during the tournament on December 2nd, 2023.

Immediately following the incident, Mr. Tobin was promptly attended to and received initial medical care at St. Charles Hospital, Bonny Island. Our CEO, Mr. Tonye Ibama, personally visited Mr. Tobin at the hospital alongside sponsor's representatives

to ensure he was receiving the best possible treatment. Contrary to recent accusations, Grafton Entertainment made every effort to facilitate and provide access to comprehensive medical care for Mr. Tobin.

However, Mr. Tobin chose to leave the hospital against medical advice and opted to pursue alternative local treatment. While this was a personal decision, it is disheartening to see unfounded accusations of neglect directed toward our organization. Grafton Entertainment acted in good faith at all times, prioritizing Mr. Tobin's health and recovery.

Members of the Local organising committee where also sent at 2 different occasions to reach out to Mr Tobin even after he went with alternative medicine and he was evasive to allow them meet with him. We have it on record that Mr Awo Stowe and Stephen Hogan members of the tournament organising committee reached out to show care

We urge Mr. Tobin to refrain from making baseless statements that misrepresent the facts and tarnish the reputation of Grafton Entertainment. While we remain committed to supporting the welfare of athletes and pro-

moting fairness in sports, we will not hesitate to seek legal recourse if further defamatory statements are made against our organization.

We encourage Mr. Tobin to utilize appropriate channels to address his concerns constructively and professionally. Grafton Entertainment stands firm in our dedication to the athletes, fans, and communities we serve, and we thank the public for their understanding and support.

Signed,
Grafton Entertainment