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Nigerian Army Captain Allegedly Defraud Police Officer, Others Over Recruitment Job

By Our Correspondent

I sent N170,000 to him for my son -Police officer alleges

A father of an applicant seeking for recruitment into the Nigerian army who's a Police officer has alleged that he sent N170,000, to a Nigerian army Captain braring Yakubu who promised to help his son to be recruited

into the army, Zaria.

Mr. Haruna, the applicant's father who gave his son's name as Haruna Peter Joshua also disclosed that Capt. Yakubu later demanded for more, but he declined, on condition that Yakubu failed to fulfill his ear-

lier promised to put his son in depot immediately he paid the initial N170,000.

Narrating the ugly trend to our correspondent on phone, Mr. Haruna explained that he paid the money into an account bearing Simon John Adaji, sent

to him by Capt. Yakubu for the recruitment of his son into the army depot in Zaria in 2024.

According to police officer Haruna, the son has traveled to Zaria more than four times but yet to be recruited into the Nigeria army as

promised by Capt. Yakubu, and money yet to be returned to him as last week when he again clarified our correspondent.

Although Capt. Yakubu has denied knowing Simon John Adaji, the owner of the bank account number sent

to Mr. Haruna, the father of the applicant, when contacted by our reporter on phone.

Capt. Yakubu however cut off his call few second after our reporter introduced himself as journalist, and refused to pick calls put to him subsequently for further

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Awujale of Ijebu land, Oba Sikiru Kayode Adetona (right), during his visit to President Bola at his residence, in the Ikoyi, Lagos, to express his appreciation to the President for the conferment of the second highest honour on him, during the celebration of his 90th birthday anniversary and 64th anniversary on the throne



2027: Kwankwaso Denies 4 Years Agreement With Atiku, 8 Years For Obi

By Achadu Gabriel, Kaduna

● Say's APC finished Nigeria, PDP dead

National leader of the NNPP and former Governor of Kano state, Senator Rabiu Kwankwaso, has denied reaching any agreement for himself and Atiku Abubakar to serve for four years as president each, while Peter Obi will do eight,

ahead of 2027 presidential election.

Kwankwaso disclosed this while expressing displeasure at the way some few northerners, "who declared themselves as the leaders of the North" were interfering in the selection of presidential

candidates processes.

He said it was wrong for such people to claim they represents the region, in a BBC Hausa interview.

The former Governor said that their action was causing division in the community, and hinder-

ing democracy, by electing leaders who were not qualified.

In the interview with BBC Hausa, Kwankwaso said that events that unfolded in the previous elections should make the leaders refrain from anything related to the selec-

tion of candidates, and allow the people to choose who they really want to be President.

"This oppressive thing they are doing is causing discord in the community.

"Whatever you do, do it based on the truth. It

should not be said that the elders, some of them are our parents and some of them are brothers, especially in this area here in the North and West;

"They shouldn't show favoritism in bringing out candidates," he said.

He added that "many of them come to spread lies, gather people and tell

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Cultism Is So Strong In The Nigerian Music Industry -Orits Wiliki

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CIG Ends Year 2024 In Grand Style With A Superlative Gig

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Unity or Division? The Politics of Our Time

In a nation as diverse as Nigeria, the concept of unity is both a necessity and a challenge. As the country stands at a pivotal moment in its political history, questions about whether the current political climate is fostering unity or deepening division loom large. With general elections on the horizon and a population increasingly polarized by ethnicity, religion, and economic disparity, the stakes have never been higher.

Recent years have seen an escalation in political rhetoric that appeals to tribal sentiments and religious identities. Politicians, in their quest for power, often exploit these divides, leaving the electorate fragmented and distrustful. This strategy has not only eroded public confidence in leadership but also hindered the collective progress needed to address critical issues such as insecurity, unemployment, and economic instability.

The youth, who make up a significant portion of Nigeria's population, are vocal in their demand for a more inclusive political system. Social media platforms have become arenas for heated debates, with hashtags and movements advocating for justice, equality, and transparency. However, the same platforms have also been weaponized to spread misinformation, fueling animosity among different groups.

Analysts argue that the politicization of ethnicity and religion distracts from the real issues facing the nation. "Our politics should be about ideas and solutions, not identities," says Dr. Funmi Adebayo, a political analyst. "Until we shift the narrative from division to unity, we will continue to struggle as a nation."

There are, however, glimmers of hope. Civil society organizations are stepping up efforts to promote dialogue and understanding among diverse communi-



ties. Grassroots movements are challenging the status quo, emphasizing the shared aspirations of Nigerians regardless of their backgrounds.

As the 2027 elections approach, the choices made by both leaders and citizens will determine whether Nigeria moves towards greater unity or succumbs to deeper divisions. The call for unity is not just a political necessity but a moral imperative for a nation striving to realize its immense potential.

Speaking on this issue, Immaculate Owosso, a Political Analyst told The

Abuja Post that, "the question of whether Nigeria's politics is steering us towards unity or deepening divisions is a complex one. On the surface, it may appear that our political leaders are prioritizing national cohesion. Yet, a closer look reveals a troubling reality: the deliberate exploitation of our ethnic and religious diversity for political gain."

According to him, "in recent years, we have witnessed a disturbing trend where political actors manipulate identity politics to secure votes, often at the expense of national har-

mony. This tactic undermines our collective progress and sows seeds of distrust among citizens. Unfortunately, this approach distracts us from the critical issues that truly matter—such as economic stability, infrastructure development, and security."

However, he continued, "the problem is not entirely with the political class. As citizens, we bear a shared responsibility for the current state of affairs. Too often, we allow ourselves to be divided by narratives that pit one group against another. This cycle of division serves no one but those who thrive on our disunity."

"Despite these challenges, I remain optimistic. There is a growing awareness among the youth and civil society organizations about the need for a new political direction. Social movements and advocacy groups are pushing for policies that prioritize inclusion and equity over parochial

interests." He noted.

Continuing, he pointed out that, "for Nigeria to achieve true unity, we must demand leaders who are genuinely committed to national development rather than regional or personal interests. We must also reject political rhetoric that divides us and instead focus on building bridges across our differences."

"The politics of division has only led us to a cycle of stagnation. It is time to chart a new course—a politics of unity that reflects the strength of our diversity and the shared aspirations of every Nigerian. This is not just an ideal but a necessity for the survival and prosperity of our nation." He added.

The question remains: will Nigeria rise above its divisions to forge a united future, or will the politics of our time continue to pull us apart? The answer lies in the hands of every Nigerian, as the nation collectively charts its course forward.

2027: Kwankwaso Denies 4 Years Agreement With Atiku, 8 Years For Obi

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them that the North has agreed on its candidates, and all these people are not more than two or three".

"Instead of going to Port Harcourt or going to Abuja to go and promote us who are their children, they go and show favouritism," Kwankwaso added.

He recalled that during the 2019 election seven candidates came from the North-West.

According to him, "Even if you are a former governor, you are there. If you are a former minister, you are there, whether you want to be tall or short."

"But in the end that's how they went and dumped us and did what they wanted", he stated.

No agreement "On the rumors making the rounds that an agreement had been reached between him and the former presidential candidates, Atiku Abubakar of PDP, and Peter Obi of LP, he said he was not aware of such arrangements."

Although, he said, he learned that the Atiku group was holding meetings with local leaders, including Mallams, ahead of 2027.

"This issue really hurts me. It is said that the elders are lying, they are saying things that have not been done."

"I was told that about 45 mallams were gathered, and they are telling

the people. But there is no such thing. I am not at all happy about this thing."

"They were told that I agree that Atiku will serve for four years, I will also serve for four, and Peter Obi will serve for eight years", vanguard reported.

"This pact does not exist, it has not been made," Kwankwaso said



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clarification on other allegations.

But Mr. Haruna insisted that he's keeping in his custody, SMS of Simon John Adaji's Zenith Bank Account number 2080721594, sent to him by Capt. Yakubu as evidence.

Details interview and conversation with Capt. Yakubu as well as Mr. Haruna read in parts: "Do you know Simon John Adaji? (Journalist). Who's Simon Adaji? (Capt. Yakubu). You don't know him? (Journalist). I don't know him (Capt. Yakubu)."

OK, there's an allegation against you Capt. Yakubu that 'you wanted to help the family of one Mr. Haruna to get their son Peter Haruna, into recruit in Nigeria Army (Journalist). Yakubu immediately cut off the call on hearing the allegation leveled against him from our correspondent and could neither picked his calls nor respond to messages.

Earlier, the recruit victim's father, Mr. Haruna, had complained to a Human Right Activist, Rev. Kallamu Musa Ali Dikwa, that he paid

N170,000 to one Captain Yakubu, to help his son get into Nigeria army through recruitment in Zaria.

The Activist also told our correspondent that there were some other applicants complaining of paying over N300,000, to N400,000, but could not be recruited into the Nigeria army among those currently on training.

Mr. Haruna further said "I sent the money through POS to one Simon John Adaji bank account number. The Captain send the account number to me. I told him you send me another name with of another person for the account number", he stated.

When informed that Capt. Yakubu denied knowing Simon Adaji, Mr. Haruna expressed shocked and asked: "Yakubu said he don't know Simon Adaji, and he denied?"

Mr. Haruna further expressed shocked and asked: "How can he deny. Capt. Yakubu send the account number to me. How I get to know Captain Yakubu. My son Peter, work for someone, a big man in Abuja. My house and his Oga

house near each other.

"They call him Igwe, his in Abuja. He has company where my son is working. My son apply for the recruitment but did not get it. The big man call me and say his own son is in Air Force and is a friend of your son."

"Send your son to them, let them give you the phone number of my friend (Capt. Yakubu), we leave together for Maiduguri, Maimalali barrack, but now in Zamfara. During recruit he comes to Kaduna. He's helping people. Send your son to them from Abuja to Kaduna", Mr. Haruna said.

Mr. Haruna who's fluent in English continue, "I Carry transport give my son, he go there, meet him. He collect NIM number from my son. The Oga son, Daniel who is the friend of my son Peter, give me his number (Capt. Yakubu). I call him and introduce myself. I say son of Igwe send me your number. I told him my problem, my son like soldier."

"He said OK I'll him, send his details to me. Inform my son who went their give his NIM number to Capt. Yakubu. He call me and we

agree. I'm talking about the people currently in recruitment training now in Zaria.

"He send an account number to me, and said send me the money this night, your son go enter depot immediately. I said how much, he say N170,000. Around 5:30-6pm, I go and send the money. After I send the money I waited, I call me son if he has enter depot he say no."

"I call the next day Yakubu no pick. After two days I call again, he say we get problem. They put eyes on us, "Kaza, kaza, kaza", so, so and so on. I call him and say why are u doing like this. In our talk he promise that around this time he'll help put my son in depot as recruit."

"I say why doing like this. You say I should give u money, and up till now you no recruit him. I don't know you, somebody give me your number. Daniel, friend of my son give me Yakubu number", Mr. Haruna lamented.

Mr. Haruna told our reporter that Daniel is a friend of the son of the big man in Abuja, who own the company was working.

Mr. Haruna also said he has been living in Borno state for years, but an indigene of Adamawa state. I'm above 20 years now in Borno, we're neighbor with Borno.

"My son bear Peter Haruna Joshua. Haruna Peter Joshua. This boy go Zaria four times, he did not enter depot. I said go to school and read but he say baba I like soldier."

"This thing happens in the month they recruit the people in training now in depot. The last time we discuss Capt. Yakubu said I should send N70,000 for a form, but i say no, I cannot send. I know I'll give u money. The one you ask to give you to recruit my son has not been done."



"I said if you recruits this boy now, I can give you even more than N70,000 because I'll be happy that you recruit my son. If not I'll not send N70,000 to you, even kobo. Since then we no speak again. I'm a police man", Mr. Haruna narrated.

Also contacted through call and SMS, the spokesman of army depot Zaria Major Ochienta promised to get back but never did until





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Recent Plane Crash Sparks Urgent Call For Global Aviation Sector Overhaul

Stories by Paul Onehi

The aviation sector has always been considered one of the safest modes of transportation, with strict regulations and protocols in place to ensure the safety of passengers and crew. However, the recent plane crash that occurred has raised serious concerns about the overall safety and security of the aviation industry. This incident has highlighted the need for a drastic transformation across the aviation sector in order to prevent such tragedies from happening again in the future.

The Azerbaijan plane crash which occurred last week Wednesday that claim the lives of 38 people and injuring 29 others and that of South Korea that also killed 179 people on Sunday, has brought to light the various challenges and issues that the aviation industry is currently facing.

The recent events have brought forward a harsh reality, the lack of proper regulation and oversight in the aviation industry has become a pressing issue and a major contributor to plane crashes. While it is true that strict safety protocols and standards are in place to ensure the safety of passengers and crew, it is the responsibility of the authorities to diligently enforce them. Unfortunately, in many countries, lax enforcement of regulations has become the norm, resulting in compromised safety measures.

Moreover, with the rapid growth of the aviation industry, the incident has also shed light on the need for better training and education for pilots and air traffic controllers. It is essential for all individuals working in the aviation industry to undergo regular training and education in order to stay updated on the latest safety protocols and procedures. This will help to ensure that all individuals involved in the aviation sector are well equipped to handle any emergency situations that may arise.

It is unfortunate that in many coun-

tries, lack of enforcement of aviation regulations has become a norm. This has resulted in a lack of accountability and negligence, which can have grave consequences. In some cases, airlines may cut corners to save costs, putting the safety of passengers at risk. Additionally, pilots and other crew members may not undergo thorough training or follow standard operating procedures, leading to human error.

The consequences of inadequate regulation and enforcement are not limited to aviation accidents alone. They

can also have a significant impact on the reputation and trust of the aviation industry.

In addition, the incident has also highlighted the need for improved technology and infrastructure within the aviation sector. The use of advanced technology such as radar systems and communication devices can help to improve the overall safety and efficiency of air travel. Investing in better infrastructure and technology can help to prevent future incidents and ensure the safety of all individuals involved in the aviation industry.

As the world reflect on the recent plane crash, it is clear that a significant transformation is needed across the aviation sector. Governments, regulatory bodies, and airlines must work together to address the issues and implement necessary changes. This includes strict enforcement of safety regulations, prioritizing the well-being of pilots, and investing in sustainable practices.

Overall, the recent plane crash has served as a wake-up call for the aviation sector to make significant changes and improvements in order to prevent such tragedies from occurring in the future. It is time for a collective effort to bring about a positive change and ensure a safe and sustainable future for air travel. Let us honor the lives lost in the recent plane crash by taking necessary steps towards a brighter and safer future for the aviation sector.



Court Grants Canadian Financier Right To Repossess Arik Air Aircraft Under Cape Town Convention

Nigeria's Federal High Court in Lagos has ruled that Export Development Canada (EDC), a Canadian financier, can repossess an aircraft leased to Arik Air, marking the first application of the Cape Town Convention in the country.

The ruling, issued on November 27, 2024, by Justice Alexander Oluseyi Owoeye, follows the issuance of Nigeria's Federal High Court (Cape Town Convention and Aircraft Protocol) Practice Direction on September 12, 2024.

This new practice direction establishes legally binding rules that reinforce Nigeria's commitment to the Cape Town Convention, instructing courts to apply its provisions in relevant cases without interference from other legal provisions.

The court granted EDC the right to reclaim and dismantle the CRJ1000 aircraft, which had been grounded by Arik Air.

The disclosure, first reported by aviation on Thursday, was shared the same day by Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, on his official X page, endorsing the news and affirming its authenticity.

"First victory in court in Nigeria courtesy of the Cape Town Convention. The courts applied the CTC to the fullest and allowed instant repossession of an aircraft," Keyamo's tweet read.

This ruling marks a pivotal moment for Nigeria's aviation sector, highlighting the country's growing commitment

to international leasing standards, particularly those of the Cape Town Convention.

The applicants in the case were Captain Samuel Caulcrick, the local repossession agent appointed by part-out firm Merchant Express Cargo, and Captain Isiaka Oyeshina Akinfenwa, CEO of the firm. Merchant Express Cargo

had the CRJ teardown contract.

In previous hearings, both men had criticized the tactics of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Arik shareholder and founder, Johnson Arumemi-Ikhide.

Among other findings, Justice Owoeye's ruling revealed that EFCC officials had harassed, threatened,

questioned, intimidated, detained, and threatened to detain the applicants during their attempts to repossess the aircraft.

The court granted EDC the right to repossess and dismantle the aircraft and issued an order preventing EFCC officials from interfering with the process.

The CRJ1000 remains in storage at Lagos airport.

The aircraft, a 2013-built regional jet, was leased to Arik Air in 2014 by JEM Leasing Limited, with EDC helping finance the aircraft's acquisition and holding a mortgage over it.

In December 2022, JEM Leasing moved to deregister and repossess the aircraft after Arik Air defaulted. At the same time, JEM entered into an agreement with Alberta Aviation Capital Corporation to sell the CRJ1000, with EDC retaining the mortgage.

Arik Air had stopped operating the aircraft in 2019.

Arik Air, which had grounded the CRJ1000 in 2019, had been struggling financially, leading to its receivership under Nigeria's Asset Management Corporation (AMCON) in 2017.

The aircraft had been deregistered in 2022, but efforts to repossess it were blocked by the EFCC, citing concerns about the legality of the sale.

The Federal High Court's ruling clears the way for EDC to proceed with the repossession, marking a significant step forward in the enforcement of international aviation laws in Nigeria.



Bank Of Industry Shatters Records With €1.879 Billion Capital Raise

By Anyanwu Theresa Ijeoma

The Bank of Industry (BOI) has achieved a historic milestone by successfully raising €1.879 billion in 2024, the largest sum ever secured by any Nigerian or African development financial institution (DFI). This capital infusion is set to significantly enhance BOI's operational capacity, bolster its balance sheet, and support critical developmental projects across Nigeria. Let's dive deep into the details of this remarkable achievement and its implications for Nigeria's economic landscape.

Background and Significance

The Bank of Industry (BOI) is Nigeria's foremost development finance institution, established to provide long-term financing and support to various sectors of the economy. Its primary mandate is to promote industrialization, economic growth, and job creation by providing financial assistance to businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The successful capital raise of €1.879 billion in 2024 marks a significant milestone in BOI's history. This achievement is not only a testament to the bank's robust governance and strategic direction but also reflects the confidence of international investors in Nigeria's economic potential. The capital raise was facilitated through a syndication process that attracted a diverse range of international investors, particularly from the Middle East and Asia.

Enhancing BOI's Balance Sheet: The capital infusion is poised to enhance BOI's balance sheet, expanding it by approximately N3.3 trillion, bringing the total to N7.1 trillion from N3.9 trillion recorded in 2023. This substantial increase in the bank's balance sheet will enable BOI to undertake more significant developmental initiatives and address Nigeria's pressing annual financing gap of over \$35 billion.

The newly raised funds will primarily target critical developmental projects, particularly in infrastructure finance—a sector that necessitates long-term and high-value financing. By addressing infrastructure challenges that inflate operational costs for manufacturers, BOI aims to enhance the competitiveness of Nigeria's real sector.

The capital will also facilitate access to sector-specific funds aimed at gender equality, youth empowerment,

micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), agriculture, and sustainability initiatives.

Innovative Dual-Layer Guarantee Structure: One of the key factors contributing to the success of the capital raise was the innovative dual-layer guarantee structure employed by BOI. This structure leveraged support from the Africa Finance Corporation (AFC) and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to optimize risk-sharing. The syndication was oversubscribed by 187.9 percent, underscoring the robust confidence in BOI's governance and strategic direction.

Infrastructure development is a critical component of Nigeria's economic growth strategy. The newly raised funds will enable BOI to support long-term, high-value infrastructure projects that are essential for sustainable development. By addressing infrastructure challenges, BOI aims to reduce operational costs for manufacturers and improve the overall business environment in Nigeria.

Supporting MSMEs and Vulnerable Sectors: A significant portion of the capital raised is earmarked for MSMEs, which are crucial players in Nigeria's economic landscape. BOI's strategic plan for 2025-2027 includes initiatives to provide low-interest loans with extended tenures to MSMEs, thereby enhancing their productivity and competitiveness. Additionally, the funds will support gender equality, youth empowerment, and sustainability initiatives, ensuring that vulnerable sectors receive the necessary financial assistance.

Risk Management Perspective: From a risk management perspective, the newly raised funds will enable BOI to mitigate credit risks associated with longer payback periods while fostering partnerships that will expand financial access to underserved demographics. The capital infusion will also strengthen BOI's liquidity by establishing a robust funding base to support its financing operations. This will contribute to stabilizing inflation, foreign exchange, and overall economic conditions in Nigeria.

Performance Indicators and Global Confidence:

The year 2024 stands out as a landmark year for BOI, marked by unprecedented achievements that solidify its reputation as one of Nigeria's best-managed government institutions. The bank has maintained investment-grade ratings from Fitch and Moody's since 2015, reflecting its sound management practices and global confi-

dence in its developmental mandate. The successful capital raise further enhances BOI's credibility and positions it as a trusted partner for international investors.



Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, BoI, Olasupo Olusi

Recognized for its sound management, BOI has consistently maintained investment-grade ratings by Fitch and Moody's since 2015, underscoring its reputation as one of Nigeria's best-managed government institutions. This achievement reflects the quality of BOI's governance, its financial management and the global confidence in its development mandate.

According to the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the BoI, Olasupo Olusi, the favourable terms associated with this funding will provide much-needed low-interest loans with extended tenures to Nigeria's burgeoning private sector. This aligns with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's vision for economic growth and stability.

A significant portion of this capital is earmarked for MSMEs—crucial players in Nigeria's economic landscape. The inclusion of BOI in President Tinubu's New Year message as a key promoter of the National Credit Guarantee Company (NCGC) is expected to further secure resources mobilised from international markets by sharing risks associated with lending to MSMEs.

The €1.879 billion syndication not only drew remarkable interest from a diverse array of international institutions across various countries but also attracted over 10 new international investors, particularly from the Middle East and Asia.

The 187.9 per cent oversubscription of the syndication highlights the innovative financing achieved

through a dual-layer guarantee structure, leveraging support from the Africa Finance Corporation (AFC) and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) for optimal risk-sharing.

This structure allowed BOI to secure much lower interest rates than those typically applied to Nigerian debt instruments, resulting in savings of approximately 3.6 per cent per annum (or an estimated N295.7 billion over the three-year tenor). These favorable terms will reduce the cost of borrowing for the real sector making it more competitive.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Vision

The capital raise aligns with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's vision for economic growth and stability in Nigeria. In his New Year message, President Tinubu commended BOI for its leadership role in strengthening Nigeria's credit delivery system and expanding access to credit for individuals and crit-

"To this end, BoI has developed a comprehensive gender strategy that will guide our efforts over the coming years. As part of this bold vision, we are committed to allocating at least 15% of our risk assets to WMSMEs, clearly demonstrating our commitment to expanding financial access and supporting the growth of women entrepreneurs across the country, in alignment with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda,"

ical sectors of the economy.

The federal government's establishment of the National Credit Guarantee Company (NCGC) will further support BOI's efforts by expanding risk-sharing instruments for financial institutions and enterprises.

According to President Tinubu, The Company—expected to start operations before the end of the second quarter—is a partnership involving various government institutions alongside private sector entities and multilateral organizations.

President Tinubu stated that this collaboration will enhance confidence in Nigeria's financial system, expand credit access and support underserved demographics such as women and youth, ultimately driving growth and improving living standards across the nation.

BOI's strategic plan for 2025-2027 includes a focus on digital transformation and innovation. The newly raised funds will support the implementation of internal strategies aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and customer experience. This includes investments in digital technologies and platforms that will streamline processes and improve service delivery.

Green, Climate, and Environmental Financing: Green, climate, and environmental financing have become central to BOI's new strategic focus. The €1.879 billion raised will enable the bank to deepen its engagement in these vital areas, supporting projects that promote sustainability and environmental stewardship. This aligns with global trends and underscores BOI's commitment to sustainable development.

The successful capital raise of €1.879 billion by the Bank of Industry is a historic achievement that will have far-reaching implications for Nigeria's economic landscape. The capital infusion will enhance BOI's balance sheet, support critical developmental projects, and address Nigeria's pressing financing needs. By leveraging innovative risk-sharing structures and fostering international partnerships, BOI has demonstrated its capability to mobilize significant resources for sustainable development.

The funds raised will support infrastructure development, MSMEs, gender equality, youth empowerment, and sustainability initiatives, ensuring that vulnerable sectors receive the necessary financial assistance. From a risk management perspective, the capital

infusion will strengthen BOI's liquidity and contribute to stabilizing Nigeria's economic conditions.

As BOI continues to implement its strategic plan for 2025-2027, the focus on digital transformation, innovation, and green financing will further enhance its operational capacity and impact. The successful capital raise underscores the confidence of international investors in Nigeria's economic potential and positions BOI as a trusted partner for sustainable development.

Commitment to Gender Equality

Olusi believes that the formal adoption of the We-Fi Code in Nigeria represents the Bank of Industry's (BoI) collective commitment to gender equality, economic empowerment, and financial inclusion for women-led enterprises.

As a key proponent of this initiative, BoI remains dedicated to empowering Women-owned Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (WMSMEs) by providing them with the necessary resources, access, and opportunities for success. Women play a crucial role in driving innovation and economic growth across various industries in Nigeria. However, they often face significant barriers in accessing finance, which has hindered their full potential.

Through its Gender Desk, BoI offers tailored support to address these challenges. As of December 2023, the bank has financed 833 women-owned or women-led businesses, disbursing a total of N99 billion to help these businesses grow.

Looking ahead, BoI recognizes the importance of gender development and has made it one of its six key focus areas.

"To this end, BoI has developed a comprehensive gender strategy that will guide our efforts over the coming years. As part of this bold vision, we are committed to allocating at least 15% of our risk assets to WMSMEs, clearly demonstrating our commitment to expanding financial access and supporting the growth of women entrepreneurs across the country, in alignment with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda," Olusi explained.

Through the We-Fi Code, BoI is taking concrete steps to break down the barriers faced by women by using data and bringing together key stakeholders. The goal is to ensure a more equitable distribution of financial resources.

025 Budget: FG Allocates ? 17.3 Billion For Group Life Assurance Cover For MDAs, Corpers, and Others

By Anyanwu Theresa Ijeoma

The Federal Government of Nigeria has allocated a substantial sum of N17,313,619,734 in the 2025 budget for the provision of Group Life Assurance coverage for employees of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), as well as members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC).

This allocation includes funds for both the insurance

coverage itself and the administrative and monitoring costs to ensure effective implementation of the policy.

Group Life Assurance is a mandatory policy in Nigeria under the Pension Reform Act of 2014. The policy mandates employers in both the public and private sectors to provide a death benefit of at least three times an employee's annual salary in the event of their untimely demise.

The government's allocation of N17.3 billion highlights its commitment to the welfare of its workforce, offering a financial cushion for the families of deceased employees. This coverage will extend across all MDAs, including critical security agencies like the Department of State Services (DSS), as well as other public institutions. Furthermore, the policy will also cover NYSC members, reflecting the government's recognition of their contributions to national development.

The N17.3 billion allocated will not only fund the life assurance policies but will also cover the administrative and monitoring costs associated with managing the policy. This inclusion of operational costs underscores the government's desire for transparency and efficiency in the disbursement and application of the funds.

A Departure from 2024 Allocations
In 2024, the Federal Government approved N9.6 billion for the insurance coverage of its workers.

According to the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, the sum was allocated to 12 local insurance firms to cover federal workers in case of unforeseen events, such as death or severe injury. The Minister emphasized that this was a standard annual policy that insurance companies offer to workers, ensuring that the families of workers are not left to suffer in the event of tragedy.

According to the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF), the Federal Government had previously appointed insurance companies and brokers to provide coverage to federal government employees from February 9, 2023, to February 8, 2024. In 2022, the OHCSF resolved 648 backlogged death benefits to the families of deceased officers.

CBN Attributes Exit of 1,000 Staff To Digitisation, Operational Restructuring

By Anyanwu Theresa Ijeoma

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has confirmed that 1,000 staff members voluntarily resigned as part of its ongoing restructuring process, which is being driven by the adoption of digital technologies. This move is aimed at streamlining operations and addressing redundancies caused by the shift to a more technology-driven banking model.

Bala Bello, a deputy director representing the CBN Governor, Yemi Cardoso, made this announcement during an appearance before a House of Representatives ad hoc committee investigating the matter. The committee was formed following concerns over the large number of resignations and the ? 50 billion compensation payout to the departing employees.

"You are very much aware, chairman, that the entire world is going through a process of digitising its operations. When that happens, a lot of opportunities are created, just as redundancies are equally created," Bello explained.

The CBN's restructuring efforts are also influenced by the lack of vacancies at the managerial level, which has led to stagnation for many staff members.

"It gets to the level where you have, for example, 30 departments in the Central Bank. You cannot have 60 directors manning 30 departments. It's not going to work. So, once those vacancies are filled, some people—despite being highly qualified, very able, and very willing—find there are no vacancies. Then they get to a level where they are stagnated for a period of time," Bello added.

Interestingly, some of the departing staff members have expressed plans to start their own banks, with the CBN offering its support.

"A lot of opportunities are out there. Among the people who have left, there are three or four who are going to set up a bank. We have assured them that if they need the support of the Central Bank, we will provide it," Bello revealed.

Bello clarified that the programme was not imposed on the staff, but rather a response to requests from staff members seeking career alternatives.

"In this particular case, based on a popular request—and I came with the union leader of the bank—the staff requested that a similar opportunity should be extended to other categories of staff," he explained.

He further emphasized that the process was entirely voluntary, with no coercion or intimidation involved.

"This is the first time in the over 60-year history of the bank that an early exit programme has been extended to all willing staff members. It is not mandatory, and no one is forced to leave," he added.

The House of Representatives, chaired by Bello Kumbe, is currently investigating the programme to ensure transparency. Kumbe assured the CBN of a fair



L-R: Seed Coach, Stanford Seed, Mark Phelps; Regional Director, Emmanuel Kitcher; Minister of Industry Trade and Investment, Dr. Jumoke Oduwole; President, Stanford Seed, Transformation Network, Nigeria, Omololami Ajani and Network Manager, Stanford Seed, Kwame Dadson during the Cohort 14 Induction and End of year party organized by Stanford Seed Transformation Network.

Corporate Tax, VAT Boosted Federation Account To N6.86tn – CBN

By Anyanwu Theresa Ijeoma

Receipts into the federation account grew by 7.48 per cent to N6.86 trillion in the third quarter of 2024, the latest Economic Report by the Central Bank of Nigeria has revealed.

According to the report, the increase in the gross federation account earnings was driven by higher receipts from corporate tax and value-added tax.

The Federal Internal Revenue Service describes corporate tax as a tax levied on the profits made by companies operating in Nigeria. It is regulated by the Companies Income Tax Act under the

supervision of the FIRS, while VAT is a tax levied on the consumption of goods and services.

The non-oil revenue was N5.56tn, as oil revenue made up the balance.

The CBN report said, "Gross federation account earnings improved, occasioned by higher receipts from non-oil revenue. At N6.86tn, the provisional gross federation account receipt was 7.48 per cent above the level in the preceding quarter but 23.71 per cent short of the benchmark."

"The increase was due largely to higher receipts from corporate tax and value-added tax. The composition of gross federation revenue showed that non-oil

revenue remained dominant, accounting for 81.00 per cent, while oil revenue constituted the balance.

"Non-oil revenue, at N5.56tn, was 19.48 and 50.36 per cent above the levels in the preceding quarter and target, respectively. The increase relative to the preceding quarter was driven largely by higher collections from corporate tax and value-added tax. The increase relative to quarterly targets reflects improved revenue collection relative to budget expectations."

The apex bank revealed that in the quarter under review, oil revenue, however, fell by 24.72 per cent to N1.30tn, relative to the level in Q2 2024 on account of

lower receipts from petroleum profit, taxes, and royalties.

It was also 75.39 per cent short of the quarterly target due to shut-ins arising from ageing oil pipelines and installations.

Meanwhile, from the federally collected revenue of N6.87tn, about N3.92tn was distributed to the three tiers of government.

The federal, state, and local governments received N1.27tn, N1.36tn, and N0.99tn, respectively, while the balance of N0.30tn was allocated to the 13 per cent Derivation Fund for oil-producing states.

IMF Warns \$1 Trillion In Undisclosed Debt Threatens Economic Stability Of Low-Income Nations

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has raised an alarm about the growing risk posed by undisclosed public debt, which is estimated to total \$1 trillion globally. This hidden debt is particularly concerning for low-income nations, which are already facing significant fiscal challenges.

In a blog post shared on

its official X account on Thursday, the IMF highlighted that undisclosed government debt undermines accountability and increases the risk of corruption. The IMF explained that "hidden debt" refers to borrowing that a government is liable for but does not openly disclose to its citizens or creditors. While this debt is often

kept off the official balance sheet, it remains a real and growing concern.

The IMF noted that, while global public debt exceeds \$91 trillion, undisclosed liabilities, though smaller in comparison, have a disproportionate impact on developing economies. These countries are already struggling with rising debt

and escalating refinancing needs, compounded by higher interest rates.

The IMF emphasized that low-income nations, in particular, are vulnerable, with their annual refinancing needs having tripled in recent years. The situation is worsened by slow economic growth and the ongoing high-interest-rate environ-

ment.

The IMF stressed the risks posed by a lack of transparency in borrowing, noting that without clear information about the extent of debt, corruption becomes more likely, and the potential for fiscal crises increases. The IMF's latest research, titled "The Legal Foundations of Public Debt Transparency:

Aligning the Law with Good Practices," examined the legal frameworks of 60 countries, revealing vulnerabilities that facilitate hidden debt. These include narrow definitions of public debt, insufficient disclosure requirements, confidentiality clauses in contracts, and weak oversight mechanisms.



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As Nigeria Begins the Year

As the calendar resets and a new year dawns, Nigeria finds itself at a pivotal juncture. The year ahead offers an opportunity to redefine priorities, address long-standing challenges, and unlock the vast potential that lies within the nation. It is a moment for reflection, recalibration, and resolute action.

The economic terrain remains a pressing concern. With inflation stubbornly high, unemployment figures worrying, and an uncertain global economic climate, Nigeria must focus on fostering economic stability. This will require bold fiscal and monetary policies, support for small and medium enterprises, and the promotion of a business-friendly environment. The diversification of the economy, a refrain often repeated but insufficiently realized, must transition from rhetoric to tangible results. Sectors like agriculture, technology, and tourism hold promise for sustainable growth if properly harnessed.

The security challenges that have plagued the country for years also demand urgent attention. From insurgency in the northeast to banditry and kidnappings in other regions, the human and economic toll is incalculable. As Nigeria begins the year, there is hope that a more cohesive and strategic approach to security can restore stability and instill confidence in citizens. Collaboration between state and federal governments, alongside community involvement, is crucial in achieving this goal.

Governance, too, must take center stage. Nigerians are yearning for leadership that is transparent, account-

able, and responsive to the needs of the people. As the political landscape evolves, the government must prioritize policies that address poverty, healthcare, education, and infrastructure deficits. The youth, whose potential remains untapped, should be empowered through job creation, skills development, and inclusion in decision-making processes.

Nigeria, as Africa's largest economy and a regional leader, must assert itself more effectively in global affairs. Strengthening diplomatic ties, boosting trade partnerships, and playing a constructive role in addressing regional conflicts are essential for projecting Nigeria's influence.

Despite these challenges, there is cause for optimism. Nigerians have shown remarkable resilience and innovation in the face of adversity. From the bustling markets of Lagos to the tech hubs in Yaba and the farms of Benue, the determination to forge ahead is evident. The private sector, civil society, and the diaspora also continue to contribute meaningfully to the nation's development.

As Nigeria begins the year, the road ahead may be fraught with challenges, but it is also filled with opportunities. With collective effort, visionary leadership, and a commitment to the common good, 2025 can be a year of progress and transformation. It is a chance for Nigeria to take meaningful steps toward becoming the prosperous, united, and dynamic nation its people aspire to see.

Let this year mark the beginning of a new chapter—a chapter defined by hope, action, and the unwavering belief that Nigeria's best days lie ahead.

As Nigeria begins the year, the road ahead may be fraught with challenges, but it is also filled with opportunities. With collective effort, visionary leadership, and a commitment to the common good, 2025 can be a year of progress and transformation. It is a chance for Nigeria to take meaningful steps toward becoming the prosperous, united, and dynamic nation its people aspire to see.



Peter Obi Declared Nigeria's Top Opposition Leader



Peter Obi

The presidential candidate of the Labour Party in the last election, Peter Obi, has been named as Nigeria's number one opposition figure.

This declaration is coming ahead of the 2027 general elections, where Obi is expected to contest again after coming third in the last polls in 2023.

Reno Omokri, a former media aide to ex-president

Goodluck Jonathan and a member of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) made the declaration in a statement on social media.

Omokri, a popular commentator had previously worked for former Vice President Atiku Abubakar in previous presidential elections. However, in a sharp turnaround, Omokri has now thrown his weight behind Obi, stating that

any other politician who thinks they are a bigger opposition figure is simply deluded.

In a Facebook post on Friday, Omokri revealed that he admires Obi's determination and resilience in the face of obstacles. "Peter Obi is currently the Number One opposition figure in Nigeria. Bar none. Anybody in any opposition party who thinks that

he is bigger than Obi right now is just deluded," Omokri stated.

Omokri also took a swipe at some politicians in opposition parties, saying they have already been "retired" by Obi, but are being kept on "political life support" by their wealth. He, however, cautioned Obi to be less Igbo-centric, appeal to his supporters to use persuasive language, and apol-

ogize for his previous comment on religious war.

"If only he could be less Igbo-centric, appeal to his Obidients to use persuasive rather than abusive words and admit, then apologise for his 'Yes Daddy' religious war' comment against the Muslim Ummah, he would go far," Omokri added.

'Assassination Attempt': Kaduna APC Denies Complicity, Says Senator Not Cooperating With Police

The Kaduna chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC) says it is not involved in the alleged assassination attempt on Senator Lawal Usman.

On January 1, the senator representing Kaduna central reportedly escaped an assassination attempt while visiting his constituency for the New Year celebration.

The PDP had subsequently accused the APC of complicity and called for an investigation of the incident.

Reacting in a statement on Saturday, Kaduna APC described the accusation as "false and absurd".

Yahaya Pate, the Kaduna APC secretary, said the police disclosed that the senator was yet to file a formal complaint or cooperate with the authorities.

"Despite repeated attempts by the police to reach him, he remains unresponsive. It is, therefore, baffling how the PDP arrived at its baseless conclusion implicating the APC in this alleged incident," the statement reads.

"Failure to do so would lend credence to suspicions that the alleged assassination attempt is nothing more than a fabrication aimed at maligning the APC, creating unnecessary tension, and derailing the peace and progress currently enjoyed in Kaduna state.

"The APC strongly suspects that certain conflict entrepreneurs are using the PDP to disrupt the remarkable strides achieved under the peace initiatives of Senator Uba Sani's people-focused and inclusive administration."

Rivers No Longer Has Political Party – Tonye Cole

Tonye Cole, a former APC governorship candidate in Rivers State, has said that there is no longer any political party in the state.

Cole stated this during an interview on Channels TV's Politics Today.

He said that a card-carrying member of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the state can be a member of the All Progressives Congress (APC) or vice versa.

He added that the very foundation of the political parties in the country had been eroded.

Cole said, "I wish Rivers State is being talked about regarding progressives development, inventions and innovations; things that are progressing Nigeria and putting it forward. We just seem to be talking all the time about the political crises that seem to be unending.

"There were a lot of anti-party activities going there. Everybody saw that.

The sad news for me in this anti-party thing is that it has eroded the whole foundation of all political parties. Today what you see is that political parties don't exist for who they are; anybody can be anywhere. You are in the PDP but running for the APC; you are in the APC but running for the PDP. That is totally wrong.

I suspect that what Rivers is doing today is showing the entire nation that this kind of thing can't continue. At some point, they have to stand for something.

Truly the way we look at political parties in Rivers State is that there is no political party anymore. Everybody is just pushing for a single political interest. And they can stand wherever that interest is going to pay them. You can truly be a card carrying member of the PDP and you are moving in Rivers State with the APC and it's okay Nobody will say anything.



Divisional Traffic Officer (DTO), Divisional Headquarters Police, Ikotun, SP Grace Ogbonoko; Auditor, National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), Lagos State, Com. Sunday Ojo Ogunleye; Area Commander, Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Badagry, Deputy Corp Commander (DCC), Sikiru Aduloju; Executive Chairman, Igando-Ikotun Local Council Development Area (LCDA) Alimosho Local Government Area (LGA) Comr. Lasisi Ayinde Akinsanya; Chief Route Commander, FRSC Unit Ikotun, CRC Emma Ekwo; Superintendent of Corps, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Ikotun Unit, SC Anayo Uchebulam, at FRSC Ember months Town Hall Meeting at Ikotun, Lagos recently.

FIRS Boss Adedeji Speaks On Contesting Oyo Governorship Election In 2027

The Executive Chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Zacch Adelabu Adedeji, has put to rest speculations about his intention to contest the Oyo State governorship election in 2027.

Adedeji, who had previously served as the Commissioner for Finance in Oyo State from 2011 to 2015, has been touted as one of the prominent personali-

ties likely to succeed Governor Seyi Makinde.



Zacch Adelabu

Makinde's two terms as governor will end in 2027. However, Adedeji has said that he has no intention of joining the governorship race. He emphasized that he wants to focus on his current task as the head of FIRS, a position he has held since his appointment by President Bola Tinubu in September 2023.

"I want to use this

opportunity to respond to the numerous requests and speculations about my intention to contest the governorship election in Oyo State in 2027," Adedeji said. "I, Zacch Adedeji, will not contest for the governorship election in 2027. I know a lot of people would not be happy about this, but everybody knows the responsibility and grace that God has given to us."

You can't kill Me, Tinubu Not like You – Wike Tells Odili

The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, FCT, Nyesom Wike, has declared that the former Governor of Rivers State, Dr. Peter Odili, cannot kill him.

Wike made this remark while accusing Odili of disobeying President Bola Tinubu regarding the Rivers peace deal, following the ongoing rift with Governor Sim Fubara of Rivers State.

Speaking during a New Year luncheon he organized at his country home in Obio-Akpor on Friday, Wike dismissed calls by some Rivers State elders for him to apologize to Odili over his recent comments.

According to Wike, he had done nothing wrong and vowed to resist being

bullied by anyone.

He said: "They said I should apologize; for what? That there is no law that says their daughter should not, but I said as an elder statesman, should you have given what belongs to your nephew to your daughter?"

"Did I say that there is a law that says your daughter should not be something? But you said somebody is converting Rivers State to his personal estate. It's not correct. The man who is converting Rivers State to a personal estate is you, and to crown it up, you are now the general overseer.

"I didn't say anything wrong, so you cannot kill me for what I didn't say. Tinubu is not like you. If you are a good person, Tinubu called

Rivers people. As an elder statesman, he wanted you to make peace, but you came home. Ordinarily, what you should have done was to call Mr. President back and tell him how you have tried to implement some of them. Is there any way we can do the rest? Rather, you disobeyed.

"They said elders said I should apologize. Apologize



Nyesom Wike

for what?

"I said that I heard and I read that somebody who should be our elder statesman said this thing today and said a different thing tomorrow, and I said no. No elder statesman should say that. And the elder statesman didn't say, 'I didn't say so.' If he had said he didn't say that, I would have apologized. But he didn't deny the statement.







"I didn't abuse anybody. I said our elder statesman was the one telling people the kind of mansion and castle I built for him. I didn't say I said so. It is not me who said it. It is the man who is supposed to be an elder statesman that said so. You are the one going about telling people what I did."



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Mother Arrested In FCT For Abandoning Newborn Over Financial Hardship

By Nathaniel Gubniba

The Federal Capital Territory Police Command has arrested a woman, Khadija Ali, for allegedly abandoning her newborn baby.

Ali was reported to have dumped the baby along a bush path near Crush Rock, behind the uncompleted Red Bricks Market in Mpape, Abuja.

A statement released on Sunday by the Command's Public Relations Officer, SP Josephine Adeh, revealed that the baby, believed to be just a day old, was discovered at about 10am on January 3, 2025 after police operatives from the Mpape Division's Juvenile and Women Care Section responded to a distress call.

Adeh stated that the infant, wrapped in a cloth, was rescued and taken to the Mpape Primary Health Care Centre for medical evaluation.

She added that, following an examination, medical personnel confirmed the child was in stable condition.

The statement partly read, "On 3 January 2025, at about 10:00 a.m., police operatives from Mpape Division's Juvenile and Women Care Section responded to a distress call and found the baby wrapped in a cloth. The child was promptly rescued and

taken to Mpape Primary Health Care Centre, where medical evaluation confirmed the baby is in stable condition."

Adeh disclosed that acting on a tip-off from concerned residents, police apprehended Khadija Ali, who confessed to abandoning her baby.

"Following a tip-off from the community, the baby's mother, Khadija Ali, was arrested. During interrogation, she confessed to abandoning the baby, citing her inability to care for the child following her husband's abandonment," Adeh said.

Condemning the incident, Adeh described it as a grave violation of the rights of the child.

She added that Ali would be charged to court for allegedly violating Sections 14 and 16 of the Child Rights Act, 2003.

"The FCT Police Command vehemently condemns this act of child abandonment and reassures the public of its commitment to protecting the most vulnerable members of society.

"The rescued baby will be handed over to the Department of Social Welfare for proper care, while the mother will face prosecution according to the provisions of Sections 14 and 16 of the Child Rights Act, 2003, upon the conclusion of investiga-



L-R: Site Medical Adviser, Agbara Factory, Unilever Nigeria, Dr. Oludare Adeyemi; Senior Medical Adviser, Unilever Nigeria, Dr. Taiwo Akinoso; The Alagbara of Agbara Kingdom (Olute III), HRH Oba (Barr.) Lukman Jaiyeola Agunbiade; Manufacturing Director, Unilever Nigeria, Mr. Abayomi Alli and Head of Corporate Affairs and Sustainable Business, Unilever Nigeria, Godfrey Adejumo during a community medical outreach organized by Unilever Nigeria at Agbara, Ogun State today

FCT Police Recover Abandoned SUV In Abuja, Urge Owner To Come For Verification

Operatives of the Federal Capital Territory, FCT, Police Command have recovered an abandoned Toyota Prado Land Cruiser Jeep, a Sport Utility Vehicle, SUV in Abuja.

The Police Public Relations Officer of the command, SP Josephine Adeh said in a statement on Friday that the vehicle was

recovered on December 31, 2024 during a routine patrol along David Ejoor Street, opposite Adisa Estate, Apo-Gudu.

The PPRO stated that upon inspection, it was discovered that the vehicle had no registration number.

She noted that one silver-colored eagle insignia, some video/audio cables, one car stereo remote were

recovered from the vehicle after a search was conducted.

"Further investigations revealed that the sticker showing the engine and chassis numbers near the driver's door had been removed, and the windscreen appeared to have been recently replaced.

"The vehicle has since been towed to the FCT

Police Command Headquarters in Garki II", SP Josephine said.

The statement called on members of the public who may have cases of missing vehicles matching the description of the recovered Toyota Prado Jeep "to visit the FCT Command for verification and possible recovery".

TCN Announces Rationing Of Power Supply In FCT

By Nathaniel Gumniba

The Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) has announced that it will ration power supply to parts of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) from January 6 to 20.

The rationing is due to the Federal Capital Development Authority's (FCDA) road dualisation project along the Apo axis.

According to TCN's General Manager, Public Affairs, Mrs Ndidi Mbah, the project requires the relocation of eight 132kV and 33kV towers along the Kukwaba/Apo 132kV line.

This will result in a planned power outage from

9am to 4pm daily, affecting areas such as Kubwa, Karu, Maraba, Nyanya, Masaka, Keffi, Kukwaba, and Apo Mechanic.

Other areas to be affected include parts of Lugbe, Trademore Estate, Pyakasa, Sabon Lugbe Chika, and Alaita axis.

TCN apologises for the inconvenience and assures customers that power supply will be restored as soon as the towers relocation and cable stringing are completed.

"This relocation work will necessitate a planned power outage from 6th to 20th Jan from 9am to 4 pm daily, which is the estimated duration for the dismantling and construction of the towers.

"It will also allow for the restringing of the power cables that will enable resumption of bulk power supply to the Apo Transmission Substation from Gwagwalada Substation.

"While the relocation of the transmission towers is a necessity for the road completion project, TCN apologises for the inconvenience this planned power outage will cause," she said.



Mrs Ndidi Mbah

Gov Zulum Approves Construction Of Water Works, Roads Rehabilitation In Bama Overruns By B/Haram

By Achadu Gabriel, Kaduna

Borno State Governor, Babagana Umara Zulum, has approved the construction of a major water works in Bama Local Government Area of the state to address problems of portable drinking water.

Bama was overrun by Boko Haram militants in 2014 before it was liberated by the Nigerian military in

March, 2015, a statement signed by SSA on new media Abdurrahman Bundi, has revealed.

The Governor announced the approval on Thursday when he paid homage to the Shehu of Bama, Dr Umar Kyari Umar Elkanemi, at his palace in Bamatown.

"Zulum's administration constructed nine mega water projects across the state, including those in

Ngarannam, Moramti, Pulka, Chibok, Azare, Madinatu, and Shokwari in Jere, Gowza, Hawul, Chibok, Konduga, and Maiduguri metropolis.

"In addition to the water projects, Zulum announced a plan to rehabilitate Bama township road networks to ease transport and facilitate movement.

"Bama is one of the communities worst hit by Boko Haram insurgency; the

destructions were unimaginable. However, we have made significant progress in our rebuilding efforts in Banki, Darajamal, Mayenti and a host of other settlements," Zulum said.

"The governor also ordered that a high Islamic college be established in Bama to streamline formal education with non-formal education and provide certification for Almajiri education.

"Before his visit to the Shehu of Bama, Zulum also visited Abbaram town, a village located east of Kur Mohammed military barracks to assess the destruction caused by Boko Haram militants.

"The visit was to facilitate the resettlement of people displaced for over one decade from their communities due to the insurgency.

"The governor was accompanied by the senator representing Borno Central, Kaka Shehu Lawan, and members of the House of Representatives, Bukar Talba and Abdulkadir Rahis", the statement added.



Gov Zulum

Tinubu's Aide, Nweze Seeks Support Of S-East Govs To Unite, Dev. Region

By Chijioke Njoku, Abakaliki

The senior special assistant to the president of the federal Republic of Nigeria on Community Engagement, South East, Mrs Chioma Nweze at the weekend vowed to champion the development, unity and progress of the region.

Nweze, however

revealed the preparedness of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration to tackle all the economic and developmental challenges facing the south east region.

She made this known in 2025 new year message to the citizens of the south east region, which was signed and issued to newsmen in Abakaliki capital of Ebonyi State.

The statement reads in part: "As we step into the New Year, I extend warmest greetings to the resilient and vibrant people of the South East. May this year bring us renewed hope, strength, and unity.

"The past year has presented its challenges, but together, we have demonstrated our capacity for resilience and determination. As

your Senior Special Assistant to the President on Community Engagement, I reaffirm my commitment to amplifying your voices and championing the development of our beloved region.

"We will continue to work tirelessly to address the unique challenges facing our region. From infrastructure development to economic empowerment, education,

and healthcare, we are dedicated to creating opportunities that benefit all.

"In continuation of our pursuit of regional development, I will maintain a strong partnership with leaders and stakeholders across the South East. This includes collaborating with the five esteemed Governors of our zone, as well as engaging with respected leaders of

thought, student organizations, and other critical stakeholders.

"Through these collaborative efforts, we aim to harness the collective wisdom and energy of our people to drive progress and prosperity. I urge you all to remain united in our pursuit of a brighter future for the South East.



President Bola Tinubu (right), with Enugu State Governor, Dr. Peter Mbah, during his first official visit to Enugu where he commissioned several projects, describing Governor Mbah as a focused and result-oriented leader, in Enugu State

President Tinubu Rehabilitating S-East Roads - FERMA Board Member, Ugbala

The Board member representing South-East zone in the Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA), Dr. Kenneth Ugbala, has revealed the committed efforts of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in rehabilitating the deplorable roads in the south east region.

He said that the South East roads are currently receiving great attention under the President Tinubu's administration.

Dr Ugbala who revealed this in Abakaliki during a press conference, noted that the vision of FERMA in South East is to make sure that roads built by the federal ministry of works are being maintained and that is they cure mandates

The FERMA commissioner, however, revealed that work is seriously ongoing in Abakaliki, Abia, Enugu and some part of Anambra.

He called for more collaboration with South East Governors and relevant stakeholders from the zone to achieve the best in the roads maintenance in the south East zone

According to him, "We need to work seriously in our maintenance culture because it is not only to build road but to maintain the road

and you can bear me with that when you build a road without maintaining it, you will know that we are losing it. President Tinubu has given us matching order to make sure that all the road in the nation are being attended to.

"If you watch from Abakaliki to Afikpo you will see that road maintenance is going on by FERMA because where are not there by then in budget and we not being appointed by then president but minister and those in authority took it that everything is being maintained.

"If you go to Abakaliki, Abia, Enugu and some part of Anambra state, in fact, South East states roads are receiving attention but this year, we want to improve on what we have been doing, a lot of road can be accommodated in our budget our resources may not be enough online with our demands but we are concerned in making sure that there is transparency and we play value for money in what we do because it is not easy battling with contractors and we look for collaboration with South East Governors and relevant stakeholders from the zone to achieve the best for our people" He said.

Chuba Okadigbo Airport Records Safe Landing Of 22 Flights In One Month

.....as Israel Abia, Oguja pilgrims to be lifted in Ebonyi, February

The Chuba Okadigbo international airport, Onueke Ezza South local government area has in one month recorded a safe landing of twenty two flights operations.

It was reported that the leadership of the Nigeria Christian pilgrims commission, NCPC, visited the Chuba Okadigbo's international airport and promised to lift Israel pilgrims in Ebonyi airport by February 2025.

The commissioner for Aviation and transport technology, Mrs Ngozi Obichukwu made this known while addressing the former governor of Ebonyi State and minister of works, David Umahi among other stakeholders during a Christmas Homage at his country home in Uburu community Ohaozara LGA.

She expressed gratitude to the former governor, David Umahi for the establishment of the Chuba Okadigbo airport, and as well, to the state governor, Francis Nwifuru for the rehabilitation of the airport

runway to be of international standard, which according to her paved the way for the safe landing of 22 flights in the state.

According to the commissioner, Obichukwu: "The truth must be said, all the regulatory bodies in avia-

tion have attest that the Chuba Okadigbo airport is the best and safest airport in Nigeria.

"We are here to tell you that we are grateful, those of us that you employed, about six hundred of them including the guards, cleaners are

all here to say thank you.

"Our promise is that we will maintain the safety in the airport. You will not see us wonton. The only thing we are begging is for you to help us also, so that we will be having night flights.

Ohanaeze to Tinubu: Write Your Name in Gold By Releasing Nnamdi Kanu

The apex Igbo socio-cultural organisation, Ohanaeze Ndigbo, has said that President Bola Tinubu would write his name in gold if he orders the release of the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra, (IPOB), Mazi Nnamdi Kanu.

President-General of the group, Fidelis Chukwu, made this known in Enugu while welcoming the President ahead of his official visit to Enugu State today.

In a statement made available to by the National Publicity Secretary of Ohanaeze, Alex Ogbonna, Chukwu also

commended Tinubu over what he described as the gradual attitudinal change of the federal government towards the Igbo.

"This can be seen with the inauguration of the South East Economic Commission, the appointment of Vice Admiral Emmanuel Ikechukwu Ogalla, as the Chief of Naval Staff, Sen. David Umahi as the Minister for Works, inclusion of some eminent Igbo in federal boards and parastatals," he said.

Ohanaeze however, hoped that with his Enugu visit, President Tinubu will write his name with gold in the hearts of

Ndigbo and all the well-meaning Nigerians by ordering for the release of Kanu.

The group also commended the Enugu State Governor, Peter Mbah, for his disruptive, innovative and massive infrastructural developments in the state within a short period of his administration.

During his visit, the president is expected to inaugurate some of the numerous projects executed by Governor Mbah's administration, including the 30 completed and equipped Enugu Smart Green Schools out of 260

under construction across the 260 wards in the state, 60 completed and equipped Type 2 Primary Healthcare Centres out of the 260 under construction across the 260 wards in the state.

Others are the completed multi-auditorium and multi-functional Enugu International Conference Centre, 90 completed urban roads in Enugu City, state-of-the-art Command and Control Centre as well as 150 patrol vehicles fitted with AI-embedded surveillance cameras.



Nnamdi Kanu

Zulum Subsidises Petrol At N600 For Farmers In B/Haram Affected Communities

By Achadu Gabriel, Kaduna

Borno State Governor, Babagana Umara Zulum, has announced that the state government will subsidise the cost of petrol to farmers in communities affected by Boko Haram insurgency. Zulum announced the

subsidy on Friday evening in Bama town when he flagged off the distribution of farm inputs to over 5,000 farmers hitherto displaced by Boko Haram insurgents, according to released by the media aide Abdurrahman Bundi on Saturday.

According to the governor, a litre of petrol sold between N1,000 and N1,200

in Maiduguri will be subsidised to the farmers for N600. "This is aimed at alleviating the financial burdens faced by farmers in communities that have suffered economic and infrastructural destruction due to years of conflict" he stated.

Zulum emphasised that a similar initiative implemented in Damasak, Mobar

Local Government Area, last year has significantly increased food production and improved livelihoods.

"One of the major challenges that are facing the farming communities here as regards irrigation farming is the increasing cost of fuel, as a result, I want to announce to the general public that government will procure petro-

leum products and sell to the farmers at a subsidised rate.

"A litre of petrol is being sold in Maiduguri at the cost of about N1,200 but 'in'shAllah', henceforth for irrigation farmers this season a litre of petrol will be sold at the rate of N600," Zulum said.

The governor also said, "The Commissioner for Agri-

culture will work with the Brigade Commander to ensure the delivery of the petroleum products to farmers in Bama town as soon as possible."

In addition to the petrol subsidy, Zulum distributed farm inputs, including 2000 bags of blended NPK fertiliser, 1000 units of water pumps, and 620 units of gasoline pumps.



Gov Zulum visit to Barma community area overruns by B/Haram

Tax Reform Bills: Bauchi Govt Urges Constructive Engagement Of Stakeholders By FG

By Samuel Luka, Bauchi

The Government of Bauchi state has appealed to the Nigeria's Presidency to constructively engage stakeholders on the controversial tax reform bills rather than profiling well-meaning Nigerians who have raised concerns just to distract the public from the unpopular move of the federal government.

The Special Adviser to Governor Bala Mohammed of Bauchi state on Media and Publicity, Comrade Mukhtar Mohammed Gidado stated this in a press release on Tuesday.

He said that the Presidency's assertion, juxtaposing the developmental challenges of Bauchi State against what it claims to be humongous federal allocations received under Governor Bala Mohammed's administration is both misleading and unfair.

The press release further noted that under Governor Mohammed, over 5000 classrooms have been constructed across the state to provide a conducive learning environment for students.

Comrade Gidado who took time to mentioned numerous developmental projects and programmes executed by Mohammed's

administration, recalled that thousands of qualified teachers have also been recruited, with regular capacity-building workshops to enhance the quality of education.

According to him, rather than resorting to selective profiling of some well-meaning Nigerians like Governor Bala Mohammed, and the unproductive name calling aimed at distracting the public from the unpopular Tax Reform agenda, the Presidency should engage in constructive dialogue with all stakeholder groups.

The press release reminded the Presidency that there could not have been any stronger recognition of the Bala Mohammed Administration's achievements than the awards of best performing governor in rural infrastructure and in urban renewal bestowed on him by two APC-led federal administrations, in 2022 and 2024 respectively.

"Despite the avoidable misunderstanding generated by the proposed tax reform due to its poor handling, we want to assure the Presidency that, in keeping with his reputation as a nationalist and statesman, Governor Bala Mohammed remains committed to collaborating with the Federal Government to address all national challenges, including the Tax Reform Bill in its present unacceptable form, for the overall growth and development of our dear Country", Comrade Gidado pointed out.

The Bauchi state government advised the Federal Government to shed its present aversion to constructive criticism, an unhealthy and unhelpful posture that cannot foster either good governance or the much needed stakeholder buy-in in Nigeria's highly plural society.

Comrade Gidado noted that the Bauchi State Government is satisfied that the citizens stand firmly behind Governor Mohammed whose achievements speak volumes about his dedication to constitutionalism, progress and all-inclusive people-oriented service.

Bauchi Governor Inaugurate 500 Road Traffic Officers, Cautions Against Corruption, Unprofessionalism

By Samuel Luka, Bauchi

Senator Bala Mohammed, the Governor of Bauchi state has during the weekend, inaugurated not fewer than 500 cadets and traffic marshalls of the Bauchi State Road Traffic Agency (BAROTA).

Whole speaking at the Passing Out Parade of the trained cadets and traffic marshalls, Governor Mohammed sternly warned the officers against indiscipline, corruption, and abuse of power.

He described them as a disciplined and dedicated individuals representing a new generation of leaders committed to improving road safety and traffic management in Bauchi state.

He said that the BAROTA will play a crucial role in addressing road transport challenges, enforcing traffic laws, ensuring safety, and managing traffic flow.

The Governor assured of his administration's commitment to supporting the agency by providing resources, infrastructure, among other necessary needs.

Governor Mohammed who hinted his administration's plan to expand the

workforce to 2,000 personnel, further assured that the personnel will maintain highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and compassion as a guide to their operations.

Bala Mohammed while cautioning that corruption, unprofessionalism, among others will not be tolerated, however assured the officers of their operational autonomy.

The Governor who encouraged the officers to remained focused on their

responsibilities, directed all the 20 local councils of the state to establish BAROTA Offices within their domains to enhance the Agency's efficiency.

Governor Mohammed who further called for collaboration between the BAROTA and the local government areas, commended the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Ministry of Works and Transport, and the Speaker of the Bauchi State House of Assembly for recognizing

BAROTA's pivotal role in promoting road safety and orderliness in Bauchi.

In a welcoming remarks, the Director General (DG) of the Agency, Ahmed Tijjani Baba Gamawa assured that the agency's road marshalls will operate within the ambit of the law.

He said that the training and knowledge impacted in the Road Traffic personnel was of international standard and in compliance with global best practice.

2025: Be Agents Of Positive Change, Christian Group Urges Nigerians

By Samuel Luka, Bauchi

Nigerians, particularly the youth, have been urged by a Christian faith-based group known as United Christian Youths Progressive Forum (UCYPF) to play active role in the process of making Nigeria achieve the needed positive change to reshape the country to a better perspective.

President of the Forum, Joniga Edward made this call while interacting with newsmen at Bishara Baptist Church,

Bauchi yesterday.

While congratulating Christians for a successful Christmas celebration and Nigerians for witnessing the first day of the year 2025, Edward called for collective effort in the process of change required in the society.

Edward who pointed out that without collective effort, the desired positive change in Nigeria will not take place, decried that times are hard with things increasingly becoming difficult to afford.

According to him, "all hands must be on deck to contribute and make the

desired change in the society. That is the only sure way to get out the present pitiable situation."

Edward further described life as a circle of contribution which requires that all have to contribute for a better society.

"Whatever you are enjoying today, is someone else's contribution. Whatever you are lacking today, is because someone who supposed to contribute didn't", he said

Edward stressed that every person on earth is expected to contribute to make the world a better

place, noting that instead of complaining, people should contribute.

"Instead of destructive criticism, contribute. When we do this, the society would be a better place to leave. We will all be happy to interact with each other and savour a peaceful atmosphere", he emphasized.

Edward assured that the NGO will continue to be engaged in Christian Youths mobilization for a better society, as according to him, the youth are expected to be role models.

Warri Refinery: Niger Delta Group Urges Full Operations, Youth Employment

The Niger Delta Youth Council, a sociopolitical group in the South-South region, has urged President Bola Tinubu and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited to ensure that the newly revamped Warri Refining & Petrochemicals Company operates at full capacity.

Commending the president for resuscitating the once-moribund refinery, the group highlighted the economic advantages of consistent production at local refineries.

"It will be a great boost for the nation's economy and the Niger Delta region if the 60,000 barrels-per-day old Port Harcourt Refinery and the 125,000 barrels-per-day Warri Refinery could produce consistently to meet the country's energy demand and eventually push down the price of petroleum products," the group stated.

In a statement signed by

NDYC President Bene Youkore Mamamu, and distributed to journalists in Warri, Delta State, on Sunday, the group praised NNPC Group Chief Executive Officer Mele Kyari for his commitment to restoring operations at the Niger Delta refineries.

The NDYC emphasised the need for full-capacity production, stressing that "full capacity operations at the refineries, including the loading of premium motor spirit (PMS) for consumption, will add much-needed value to the Nigerian economy."

The statement further read, "If the four refineries in the country are restored to full operational capacity, the issue of economic hardship would be addressed to an appreciable extent."

"More importantly, the refinery's potential to create employment opportunities for thousands of youths, particularly in the Niger Delta region, is something worth celebrating.

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"More importantly, the refinery's potential to create employment opportunities for thousands of youths, particularly in the Niger Delta region, is something worth celebrating.

"And we demand job opportunities for Niger Delta youths in the refineries."

While applauding the achievement, the group also called for attention to other

critical issues affecting the Niger Delta, including environmental degradation, unemployment, and fair resource allocation.

In a related development, Chief Morrison Olori, an elder statesman and key leader of the All Progressives Congress in Delta State, commended President Tinubu for the refinery's revival.

Speaking at his Ughelli residence, Olori remarked, "With the resuscitation of the Warri Refinery, the President has yet again proved critics wrong by demonstrating that he can make Nigeria work again."

Olori emphasised the economic benefits the refinery would bring to Delta State, stating, "With the Warri Refinery coming back to operation, the socio-economic life of the people in Uvwie, Warri, and other parts of Delta State will significantly improve."



Fubara Dismisses Wike Says Peter Odili Is "The Beginning And The End Of Rivers Politics"

Rivers State Governor, Sir Siminalayi Fubara, has sidelined his predecessor and estranged political mentor, Nyesom Wike, in the hierarchy of influential figures in the state.

During the 2025 New Year State Banquet at Government House, Port Harcourt, Governor Fubara lauded former Governor Peter Odili as the alpha and omega of Rivers politics.

Addressing prominent political figures and stakeholders, Fubara assured Rivers people of his administration's commitment to good governance and its determination to thwart any attempts by detractors to disrupt the government's agenda.

In a statement released by his Chief Press Secretary, Chukwudi Nelson, Governor Fubara expressed gratitude for the support of key political figures, including former governors Peter Odili and Sir Celestine Omehia, former Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives Sir Austin Opara, and former deputy governor Sir Gabriel Toby.

He credited them and others with laying the foundational structures of Rivers politics and emphasized their continued influence in shaping the state's future.

"This year, we will protect the integrity of this state at all costs. We won't allow anybody to take this state for a ride. It doesn't matter the approach I will use. It's not going to be a fight; we will address issues firmly," Fubara stated.

Fubara dismissed his opposition's capacity to challenge his administration effectively, saying: "The beginning and the end of politics in this state is Sir Peter Odili. If he is with us, alongside other respected leaders, who do they have?" he questioned.

The governor described Odili as the "right face and image" of Rivers State, commending his contributions and those of other distinguished leaders in shaping the state's legacy.

He criticized the opposition for relying on superficial displays of support, contrasting it with the organic backing his administration enjoys.

Complainant Allegedly Abducted, Detained For Winning Court Cases Against Cross River gov

The traditional chief of Esuku-Otu Ikot Ansa, Calabar, Chief Maurice Omin Iso who won court cases involving lands and chieftaincy issues, against the Cross River State government, was reportedly abducted from his home since 21 December 2024.

Reports had emerged that following outcry, Iso was moved from secret detention to a DSS facility in Calabar.

In a petition to the State attorney general and commissioner for Justice in the state, a lawyer and public activist, Okoi Obono-Obla explained that Iso's only offense "is his recent legal victory in a land case against the Government of Cross River State and certain politically influential individuals from the Ikot Ansa community in Calabar Municipality rose and threatened Iso, the complainant."

"These individuals made threats to use their connec-

tions within the government to intimidate and retaliate against him."

Appealing to the attorney general to intervene, Obono-Obla, the former presidential aide to ex-President Muhammadu Buhari, noted that Iso has been kept away from his family, legal representatives, and loved ones for two weeks.

He said such abduction and detention has raised serious concerns about the rule of law and human rights in Cross River state.

"It is crucial for Mr. Iso to be released by those holding him unlawfully without delay."

"His detention is a violation of his rights and undermines the principles of democracy and the rule of law."

"It is imperative that he be released immediately and that those responsible for his unlawful detention be held accountable."



BUA Refinery In Akwa Ibom Not 90% Complete, Management Clarifies

The management of BUA Group has refuted a purported report claiming that the BUA Refinery and Petrochemicals in Akwa Ibom state is at 90 per cent completion.

A statement issued by the management on Saturday clarified that the 200,000 barrels per day refinery is not yet near completion.

However, the company is committed to meeting the completion timeline for the refinery.

The statement read: "Contrary to a misleading report stating that our 200,000 barrels/day refinery is at 90% com-

pletion, BUA wishes to advise the public to disregard such misleading reports that did not emanate from us.

"As we make remarkable strides on our Akwa Ibom refinery project, we are proud to share that construction is progressing steadily. Whilst the refinery is not at 90% completion, we are however on track to meet our delivery timelines in collaboration with our partners. This BUA Refinery & Petrochemicals project represents a major milestone in strengthening Nigeria's refining capacity and energy security."

The management

added that the company's other energy projects including a mini Liquefied Natural Gas plant, are also undergoing upgrades.

"Our other energy projects, including the construction of a mini-LNG plant and several new hybrid power plants across the country to add additional capacity to our over 1,000MW installed captive power generation capacity, are also progressing rapidly."

It advised members of the public to verify any news relating to the company through its official channels and platforms so as not to be misled.

At BUA, we remain committed to transparency and excellence. As we have consistently done with over 12 of our completed mega industrial projects worth over \$ 3.5 billion in the past 10 years, we will continue to keep you updated with verifiable and accurate information only where necessary, and as milestones are achieved. We appreciate the public's interest and enthusiasm for this transformative project as we work together in building a stronger industrial and manufacturing base for a self-reliant Nigeria," the statement concluded.

Keep Fit Lagos: Participants Lauds Govt Efforts To Prioritise Physical, Mental Wellness

The monthly fitness programme, "Keep Fit Lagos", organised by the Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Sports, Damilare Orimoloye, in collaboration with the Lagos State Sports Commission, has been widely commended by participants for promoting a healthy lifestyle and enhancing physical and mental well-being.

The December edition, themed "Celebrate Lagos", doubled as the programme's first anniversary, held at the Mobolaji Johnson Arena in Onikan since its launch. The event emphasised the programme's mission to inspire Lagosians to embrace physical fitness as a way to improve their overall well-being and quality of life. The Senior Special Assis-

tant to the Governor on Sports, Damilare Orimoloye reaffirmed the state government's commitment to sustaining the Keep Fit Lagos initiative. He emphasised that the programme continues to serve as a platform to encourage residents to embrace healthy lifestyles.

Participants engaged in physical and aerobics sessions led by fitness instructors and experts. Attendees

also benefited from free medical check-ups and wellness education provided by health professionals.

The initiative, spearheaded by the SSA on Sports, aligns with the state government's efforts to promote active living among Lagosians. According to Orimoloye, investing in sports and fitness translates to improved public health and reduced healthcare

costs.

Highlighting Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's unwavering support since the programme's inception a year ago, Orimoloye noted that the fitness and aerobics sessions have consistently attracted hundreds of participants across the metropolis.

He also appreciated key stakeholders, including the Commissioner for Youth

and Social Development, Mobolaji Ogunlende; the Chairman of the House Committee on Youth, Sports, and Social Development, Hon. Abiodun Orekoya; the Director-General of the Lagos State Sports Commission, Lekan Fatodu, as well as partners and sponsors, for their contributions to the success of the initiative.

Sanwo-Olu, Makinde Mourn Ondo SSG

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, and his Oyo State counterpart, Seyi Makinde, have mourned the late Secretary to Ondo State Government, Temitayo Oluwatuyi.

Oluwatuyi died on Saturday, about three weeks after being hospitalised following a road accident he had along the Ife-Ibadan Road on December 15, 2024.

The Ondo State Government, had while announcing his demise, described Oluwatuyi as a committed politician who made great contributions to the development of the state.

In a statement, Sanwo-Olu commiserated with his Ondo counterpart, Lucky Aiyedatiwa over the death, describing the incident as a great loss.

He also sympathised with the Ondo State Government, the family of the deceased, and the people of Ondo State, offering prayers for strength and comfort during this difficult time.

"The late Hon. Tayo Oluwatuyi was a patriot who gave his all to the service of Ondo State and its people. His contributions to the development of the state will not be forgotten," the governor said in a statement by his spokesman, Gboyega Akosile.

He also recalled the late Oluwatuyi's previous role as Chairman of Akure South

Local Government Area and as SSG to the late Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu.

Similarly, Governor Makinde said he received the news with pain and shock and extended his condolence to Aiyedatiwa.

"I commiserate with Ondo State Governor, Mr Lucky Aiyedatiwa, on the unfortunate death of the Secretary to the State Government, Mr Tayo Oluwatuyi. I equally express my condolences to the state government, the family of the deceased, and the people of Ondo State," Makinde said in a statement by his spokesman, Sulaimon Olanrewaju.

"This death is shocking and painful, but we can only submit to the will of God, who gives and takes life. I encourage Governor Aiyedatiwa and the family of Mr. Oluwatuyi to be strong and courageous. It is my prayer that God will grant them the fortitude to bear the loss."



Makinde



L-R: Wife of Lagos State Deputy Governor, Mrs. Oluremi Hamzat, Deputy Governor, Dr. Obafemi Hamzat; the Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu; the First Lady, Dr. (Mrs.) Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu and her Mother, Mrs. Bankole, during the Lagos State government new year Annual Thanksgiving Service, at the Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos...yesterday

Gov Adeleke Promises Not To Abandon God, His People, As He Gets Second Term Endorsements.

It was a galore of endorsements for the second term ambition of Governor Ademola Adeleke with adoration to God as Osun people gathered at the 2025 annual inter-religious prayer held at the Government Secretariat to give thanks to God.

The event, attended by top religious leaders, leading traditional rulers and workers of the Osun state government witnessed several cycles of prayers for the Governor, his team and the entire state for delivery of good governance beyond

2026 to 2030.

One after the other, leading Muslim and Islamic leaders rolled out the many good things happening to Osun state under Governor Adeleke and followed it up with fervent prayers to God for continuity of Adeleke governorship beyond 2026.

The President of the League of Imams and Alfas in Osun state, Sheikh Musa Animasahun who led other religious leaders declared that the good delivery of services by Governor Adeleke has ordained him by God for

second term, urging mass support for continuation of better life in Osun state.

The workers union led by the state Chairman of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Comrade Christopher Abimbola Arapasopo openly endorsed the Governor for second term amidst singing and dancing, citing his expensive attention to the needs of workers and pensioners.

The market women and men in the state led by the Iyaloja General of Osun state, Chief Oyebode Mary in

her prayers for the state conveyed the endorsement of the Governor for second term, listing ease of doing business among other achievements.

The former Governor of Osun state, Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola in his remarks prayed to God to continue to strengthen the Governor in his ongoing good performance, drumming support for the administration.

The Okuku Prince repeated his earlier endorsement of the Governor while featuring on a Rave FM interview, telling the audience that "nobody changes a medication and medicine that is working."

"Mr Governor's medicine is working for Osun people. And so he will continue for a second term", the former Governor noted in Yoruba language.

The Ooni of Ife, His Imperial Majesty, Enitan Adeyeye Ogunwusi while rounding up the prayer session conducted a special prayer of empowerment and approval of all the individual prayers by the clerics, workers and others, seeking divine protection and enablement for the Governor and his team.

Lagos APC Announces Council Elections in 57 LGAs, LCDAs for 2025

Olayemi Akinwunmi

The All Progressives Congress (APC) in Lagos State has confirmed that council elections will take place in all 20 Local Government Areas and 37 Local Council Development Areas (LCDAs) in 2025. This announcement was made by Lagos APC Chairman, Pastor Cornelius Ojelabi, in a press release recently.

According to Ojelabi, the LCDAs have played a crucial

role in bringing development to the grassroots level since their creation. He highlighted the various infrastructural projects undertaken by the LCDAs, including road construction, drainage, market development, schools, housing, primary education, and health facilities.

The APC chairman emphasized the party's commitment to the LCDAs, citing their contributions to the state's socio-economic

development. He also acknowledged the collaborative efforts between the LCDAs and the state government on refuse disposal, drain clearing and security.

Lagos APC Chairman, Pastor Cornelius Ojelabi, stated this in a press release.

He said, "We wish to inform all and sundry that the Local Government elections will hold across the state in the 20 Local Government Councils and the 37 Local Council Development

Areas in the year 2025."

According to him, since their creation, the LCDAs have not only been the closest to the grassroots but also brought the desired developments across the state.

He said that the party had observed with keen interest the debates on the desirability of the existence of the LCDAs and the need to hold elections in their political offices.

Ojelabi added: "Our position as a progressive party is

that we cannot discountenance the contributions of the LCDAs to the overall political and socio-economic development of the state.

"Our landscape is dotted by several infrastructural projects by the LCDAs which include road, drainage and market construction, school and housing projects, primary education and health facilities and various social service interventions among others.



Nigerian and British Professional Boxer Anthony Joshua (middle), flanked by Mr. Segun Erewa (left) and his wife, Chairman/CEO Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM), Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, during the hosting of the two times World heavyweight Boxing Champion, Anthony Oluwafemi Joshua, by the couple, in Lagos

Kaduna: Dead Body Of 33-Yrs-Old Found Near Baptist Seminary School - Family Source

By Achadu Gabriel, Kaduna

A 33-yrs-old boy, Amos Jatau, reportedly killed by elements suspected to be bandits or assassins in Kaduna state, has been found.

The lifeless body of the deceased was found on the way to Baptist theological Seminary School located along Yakowa way on 31st December 2024.

A Cousin of Amos Jatau, Gbagyi by tribe, who spoke to our reporter Friday, at the family house, at Nassarwa road, U/Boro old Market area of Sabon Tasha, Chikun LGA of the state, said the late was going for prayer when the sad incident occurred.

He further explained that Amos body found was kept in seminary school premises, with his bed pillow, Bible and some of his clothes before he was reportedly taken to mortu-

ary. In a clarification interview, Amos Jatau family member said "We receive call in the evening of 31 December 2024 to come to the mortuary at U/Boro to confirm the dead body found at the Baptist theological seminary. When we went there, we confirmed it was Amos Jatau.

He was buried on Friday, 2nd January 2025. We gathered that his body was found at the place of prayer at the seminary. We're yet to know whether he was killed in the area or killed and brought to the place and dump.

"His properties found around him include his pillow he went with, to the prayer place, his Bible and some of his clothes. From police report and those who took him to police, said some sticks were found around his dead body, indicating he was beaten to death.

"The seminary conveyed the body to the mortuary and report to the police. He went there alone to pray. Is an open place. Individuals and group use to go for prayers there.

"There are some bushes around the seminary area located off Yakowa road, behind a Jaruwa community, Chikun LGA of Kaduna state. He sometimes go there to pray. He leave in a place not too far from the Baptist seminary.

"He went for his marriage introduction on 20th of December 2024 in preparation for his marriage. Family house located in Nasarawa street u/boro old market.

"Police were unhappy and promised to tight up security in the area of the seminary when it was reported to them, including the seminary people too.

Neighborhood and friends attested to the fact that Amos Jatau was a com-

plete gentle person and does not hot fly.

"Amos is a complete gentle person and does not hot fly. Is a builder and keep to his promises, his friends in church testifies his gentility", the family said.

On whether Amos Jatau had issue with anyone previously or could it be bandits? the cousin explained "We're not aware of him having any issue with anyone or group, but as human, someone could have issue with him.

Kaduna state has insecurity problem and it may not be far from bandits because I saw a post someone did that a community was invaded in southern Kaduna, Ekwa church was burnt.

"So it could be, but we're yet to have any information to that regard. No body injury sustained except little swollen face and not part of the body missing to suspect ritual.

El-Rufai Storms Prison, Meet His Ex-Chief Of Staff In Remand On Alleged Money Laundering

By Achadu Gabriel, Kaduna

Former Governor of Kaduna State, Mallam Nasir El-Rufai, Thursday reportedly stormed Kaduna prison and met his former Chief of Staff, Mohammed Bashir Sa'idu, been remanded at the Correctional Service Facility on charges relating to alleged money laundering.

The immediate past Kaduna Governor however refused to speak with newsmen on his mission after the visit.

Reports had it that, the visit by Mallam El-Rufai came just hours after Sa'idu, who was also a former Commissioner of Finance and Local Government in Kaduna state, during his tenure was remanded in a Correctional Facility over allegations of corruption and money laundering while in office.

The former Governor reportedly sought audience with the embattled Sa'idu who was arrested on Monday and taken to a Magistrates' Court at Rigasa, which ordered that he be remanded in prison custody.

Reports also said Mallam el-Rufai, accompanied by three key figures and former Commissioners during his tenure, arrived at the facility around 10:19 am and left about 30 minutes later around 10:47 am.

The former, in the brief visit was accompanied by the former Commissioner of Education, Jafaru Sani; former Commissioner of Human Services and Social Development, Hafsat Baba; and former Commissioner for Environment, Ibrahim Hussaini.

However, Nasir El-Rufai, donning a green cap and light green Agbada, subtly rebuffed attempts by journalists to have a word with him on his visit to the Correctional Centre.

Coming out of the facility

with a straight face, the one time Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) during former President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration, quickly boarded one of the Prado vehicles that escorted him and immediately sped off.

Meanwhile, a BBC Hausa report monitored on Thursday evening, said El-Rufai also went to the office of Operation Fushin Kada, but couldn't meet the security operatives.

However, the media was not privy to the former governor's discussions with officials at the Police Command as he still maintained stoic silence over the matter.

In confirming his arrest, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) said Bashir Sa'idu was picked up over allegations of money laundering, criminal breach of trust, and misappropriation of public funds.

According to Police insiders, ongoing investigation of Bashir Sa'idu followed a petition accusing him of laundering N3.96 billion and misappropriating N244 million while serving the Kaduna State government between 2015 and 2023.

Other allegations include the sale of \$45 million in State-owned foreign currency at an undervalued exchange rate of N410 per dollar, instead of the parallel market rate of N498 per dollar, causing a loss of over N3.96 billion to the government.

Furthermore, the insiders hinted that this transaction breaches Section 18 of the Money Laundering (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022.

Additionally, the former aide is accused of failing to account for proceeds from the sale of government houses in Marafa Estate, Kaduna, amounting to approximately N244 million. This constitutes a breach of trust under Section 300 of the Penal Code of Kaduna State, 2017.

Terrorism Allegation Tension: Northern Group Tackles Niger Rep President, Demands Apology

By Achadu Gabriel, Kaduna

Following the continues rising tension, two prominent Northern groups, the Arewa Youths Coalition for Peace and Political Development and Northern Elders Progressive Group, has condemned terrorism allegations levelled against the Nigerian government by General Abdourahmane Tchiani, Military Head of Niger Republic.

The Military Junta who

spoke in the Hausa language in a viral video recently accused the Nigerian government of fostering an unholy alliance with France to establish a terrorist base in northern Nigeria, a development that has displaced a lot of Nigerians.

Reading a text of Communique issued after their joint 8th meeting held at a hotel in Kaduna on Thursday, the Coalition strongly rejected Niger Republic President's allegation against Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu,

describing it as "irresponsible, and lacking in decorum and un-presidential".

The group, therefore, called on the President of Niger Republic to tender an immediate apology to Nigeria and stop creating tension between the two countries which have a long time history of harmonious brotherhood.

They also criticized some Nigerian clerics for abandoning their moral character molding and exemplary wisdom, and instead becoming entertainers who spread mis-

information and create unnecessary tension.

The communique read in part: "The leadership of the Northern groups above commended the efforts of the Federal government under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu towards sustaining the fight against insecurity challenges bedevilling some parts of the northern region.

"To us, it is time for our political leaders, elites and those in authority who are of the northern extraction to come together and bring lasting solutions to the numer-

ous challenges facing the region.

"Unarguably, the development has retarded our collective progress, unity, cohesion and development; because unity, peace and development of our dear North must be non-negotiable and sacrosanct to ensure cohesion and political understanding amongst all Nigerians.

"There must be a way to bring all our political leaders together, united and committed to the development in the best possible way.

Together, we should set aside political, religious and ethnic differences in matters affecting our region and country.

"It is very painful that some of our clerics have discarded the moral character of the teaching, abandon exemplary wisdom of preaching the truth, by becoming more like entertainers in discussing matters affecting political unity, security and survival of the country without recourse to reality.

Gurara Waterfalls Cultural Festival Aims At Promoting Peace Among Gabyi people

ADIGUN TUNDE --+ MINNA.

Niger State deputy governor Comrade Yakubu Garba, has stressed the need to sustain the annual Gurara Waterfalls Cultural Festival (GUWACFEST)

Held on Saturday, January 4, 2025, at Gawu Babangida, headquarters of

Gurara Local Government, the festival was organized by Big Brother Association.

He expressed delight that the festival was aimed to promote cultural harmony, peace, and unity among the people of Niger State.

Comrade Garba commended the organizers for upholding the cultural identity of the Gabyi people and

urged them to sustain the tempo.

The Deputy Governor emphasized the importance of education and agriculture, encouraging parents to enroll their children in school as well key into the agricultural revolution of the Governor Mohammed Umar Bago.

He also highlighted the government's gains in the

fight against insecurity.

The State Commissioner for Culture and Tourism, Hajiji Fatima Adamu, was represented by the Overseeing Director of Tourism Madam Rakiya Tiffi, was also in attendance.

This year's edition marked the 9th anniversary of the festival, which showcases Niger State's abundant natural resources and

rich cultural heritage.

The festival has become a significant event in the state's cultural calendar, attracting visitors from across the country.

The Deputy Governor's attendance and Honourable commissioner of Information and strategy Hajiji Binta Mamman, at the festival demonstrates the state

government's commitment to promoting cultural development and preserving the state's rich heritage.

Highlights of the event, crafts and art Exhibition, Ragatta, Dance by different groups and awards of Excellence to the Deputy Governor and commissioner of Information and strategy among others



A frontline Politician, Businessman and former Presidential Candidate, Dr. Gbenga Hashim (right), during his goodwill tour as he led a delegation to visit former President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, at his residence in Minna, Niger State, to convey New Year greetings.

Obi Condemns Exclusion Of North Central From 2025 Budget

By Paul Onehi

Former Anambra State governor, Peter Obi, has condemned the non-inclusion of the north central development commission in the 2025 budget estimates.

In a statement, yesterday, Obi said, "The exclusion of the North Central Regional Commission from the budgetary allocations provided to other Regional Commissions in the 2025 proposed budget is deeply troubling."

Obi, who also called for the immediate reversal of the decision, said, "Such an anomaly does not make for even development and peace that is needed for progress in the country."

He explained that a total of N2.493 trillion had been allocated to five regional development commissions, with the North Central Regional Commission glaringly omitted.

According to the Labour

Party leader, "The North Central region requires special attention due to the severe challenges it faces today. Relentless terror attacks and banditry in Plateau, Benue, Kogi, and Niger States have caused immense suffering, resulting in significant loss of lives and forcing countless families into internally displaced persons (IDP) camps.

"These persistent tragedies have made the North Central one of the most affected and vulnerable regions in Nigeria."

He added that, the North Central "Known as the agricultural backbone of the nation, the North Central region deserves robust support to enhance security, stability, and development for the benefit of the entire country."

"I, therefore, call on the government and National Assembly to urgently review and rectify this decision that will impact negatively on the region and area most needed for the development of the country."

Nasarawa governor dissolves cabinet

By Paul Onehi

The Nasarawa State Governor, Abdullahi Sule, has dissolved his cabinet, including the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), in what his chief press secretary describes as a "normal exercise" in the state's political

culture.

This move comes just three days after the governor suspended the chairman and board members of the Nasarawa State Teachers Service Commission due to alleged unauthorised recruitment of over 1,000 teachers.

According to Ibrahim

Addara, the chief press secretary, the dissolution affects the state's commissioners and the SSG, but not other appointees.

The reason for the dissolution was not disclosed by the governor.

Mr Addara wrote in a Friday statement that dissolving cabinets is a normal

practice in Nasarawa State, allowing the governor to make adjustments and restructure his cabinet.

The governor's decision can be seen as a strategic move to reorganise his administration and address pressing issues in the state, Mr Addara added.

Kogi Gov, Ododo, Grieves Over Death Of Prof Nuhu Yaqub

By Paul Onehi

Kogi State Governor, Ahmed Usman Ododo has expressed grief over the death of Professor Nuhu Omeiza Yaqub, former Vice Chancellor of the University of Abuja.

In a condolence message dated January 5, by his spokesman, Ismailia Isah, the Governor described Professor Yaqub's death as a sad loss of one of the influential voices of the people of Kogi State and Nigeria.

He said the late Professor was one of the few that used to speak truth to power and against oppressive tendencies.

The Governor sympathized with the Ohinoyi of Epira land, Alhaji Ahmed Tijani Muhammed Anaje,

the people of Kogi State and the immediate family of the late Professor Yaqub.

Governor Ododo prayed for the peaceful repose of the



Gov, Ododo

late Professor Yaqub and for Allah to grant the family the fortitude to bear the loss.

Also, in his condolence message, the former minister of Digital Economy, Professor Isa Ali Pantami sympathized with the family, friends, relatives and associates of Professor Nuhu. O. Yaqub.

He prayed to Allah to admit the late former Vice-Chancellor of University of Abuja 2004-2009) into Jannah.

This came even as the immediate past President of De Noble Club 10 Kogi Central, Alhaji Abdulrazak Onivehu Leramoh, on behalf of the Club, consoled with the family of the departed Professor.

He recalled that Professor Nuhu Yaqub delivered a keynote address at its orga-

nized lecture session in Okene, Kogi State on December 26, 2024.

Born on the 3rd of March, 1951, in Okene, Kogi State, the late Professor Nuhu Yaqub served as the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Abuja from June 2004 to May 2009 and went on to serve as the pioneer Vice-Chancellor of Sokoto State University from 2012 to 2017, and as the Dean of the School of Postgraduate Studies at Nile University of Nigeria, Abuja, from 2017 to 2019, among other academic leadership positions.

He died January 4, in Abuja at exactly three months to his 74th birthday after a brief illness. His and remains were buried at Gudu cemetery in Abuja the same day according to Islamic rites.

Popular Newspaper Distributor In Niger State, Alhaji Abdullah Bayero is dead

ADIGUN TUNDE -- MINNA.

The Chairman Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Niger State Comrade Abu Nmodu, has condoled with the family of the popular newspaper distributor Malam Abdullah Bayero who died recently.

In his condolence message, Comrade Abu Nmodu, described the late Malam Abdullah Bayero, as a complete gentleman, a pious Muslim and a friend of NUJ who for many years has discharged his duties diligently.

The Statement signed by the State Secretary of NUJ Comrade Usman Chiji recalled how the deceased has earned his legal means of livelihood through newspaper distribution adding that, he will be greatly missed for his

passion for the job and matured manner in which he interacted with customers and journalists.

The statement noted that the history of journalism in Niger State would not be completed without the name of Malam Abdullah Bayero, as he has been in the job of newspaper distribution since the commencement of the profession in the State.

He pointed out that the late Malam Abdullah Bayero was an integral part of NUJ since newspaper distribution is said to be another channel of information dissemination.

Comrade Usman Chiji then prayed Allah to forgive the deceased his sins, grant him Aljanatu Firdausi and the family as well as members of the association of newspaper distributors the strength to bear the loss.

Cultism Is So Strong In The Nigerian Music Industry -Orits Wiliki

Orits Wiliki known as Koleman Revolutionarie is one of the legends of the Nigerian music industry. A former vice president of PMAN, he is currently the Chairman of the Music Copyright Society of Nigeria, MCSN, a collecting society for creative artiste. Samuel Orji chatted him up on issues concerning the music industry in this exclusive interview.



Orits Wiliki

After close 41 years in the industry you are not slowing down, you came out with two albums at the same time after 10 years. Why?

I am endowed with many songs in my head and if I don't pull out as many as I can, I will be doing a lot of injustice to myself. When I decided to do double album in my 30 years anniversary, there came a change and I decided to switch to full reggae gospel music. Was I not playing gospel before? Yes, I was, but I realized that after 30 years; it will be nice to concentrate all my efforts in glorifying God because he is the one that gave me the gift and made me all that I am.

You switched to gospel because you became born again or because the market was shifting to other genre of music?

No. I have always been born again; moreover, the market is not shifting. I think it was God's time to open my eyes to him. If I cannot do that in my life time, then I am doomed because he is the giver of the talent, the voice and the inspiration. Since that switch there is no going back.

There was a time reggae artistes came together in Badagry to seek for a way to resuscitate reggae, how far have you people gone in achieving this?

Few of us came together and acknowledged that the spotlight is not on the traditional root reggae because reggae has evolved to dance hall and others. So, the hard core traditional reggae music as people know is no longer popular on our radio stations because they no longer play it, as a

result; you can't be popular as you used to be. You see that's where we lost it as a society because when a genre like reggae dominated the airwaves, there was less of cultism and drug abuse.

Talking of drugs, you know that reggae artistes are associated with hard drugs like marijuana?

No! We don't do drugs, not just me alone because this is a misconception. By the time we started coming out, I was doing braids and I saw the discrimination by the society against the people wearing braids. When they see you with dreadlocks they consider you as dirty. Our people on the other hand, did not help matters because they were actually dirty looking, so people also assumed that once you wear dreadlocks, you must smoke hemp; but that's not correct. Those of us that were popular that time, I, Peteside Ottong, Mandators and Ras Kimono, including Andy Showman and Isaac Black, none of us smoked.

What of Majek Fashek?

I am coming to that. Seven of us that were dominantly in the realm at that time were not smoking. We wanted to carve that niche and change the narrative that reggae artistes were hemp smokers and that helped us a lot. When I decided to wear my dreadlocks, I spend money to keep it clean, same with Ras Kimono and Mandators.

We became the bride because with such posture, we were able to discuss and entertain important people. One of the biggest concerts I played was performing before 17 heads of states for the South African liberation. We were able to change the narrative and that's why we went deep in our message.

There was content that was inspiring, there was something to listen to and the youths that were listening followed suit and were able to change the narrative. There was no cultism or drug addicts like you are witnessing now. We were forced to do a particular program with the creative industry group, CIJ.

Nigeria is lost. Look at what our youths are doing even in secondary schools and you are talking about leaders of tomorrow, what leaders? It's what they listen to that gingers them. They play these unhealthy contents on air that talk about buddy, dollars, drugs, drinking and smoking, etc, definitely that's what the youths are listening to. They are playing so much of it on the airwaves as against the good music that has content.

Are you assertive that there is cultism in the music industry?

Of course there is and it's too strong.

But somebody said this is not true, it's just a gang thing. You belong or don't belong to my group? You are in this country and see what is going on in the internet. If you don't belong to those cult groups you can't excel. We cannot continue to deceive ourselves that there is no cultism and there are no drugs. Look at Mohbad's story, can you say all those things he said are lies.

Reggae reigned for a while before other genre of music took over, what led to the gradual phase out of reggae in the Nigerian music scene?

There are three reasons why it happened. At a point, everybody jetted out and the scene became empty. Now a new music evolved which was Suku's, I was then the vice president of PMAN and we never believed

Suku's will leave this country again. The way the music came and affected Nigerians that even choirs and churches started creating that kind of music to worship God.

Nigerians were losing business because all the big hotels that had band playing were employing Congolese and Zairians. We had no business anymore, the airwaves were dominated by this kind of music and it got to a point Charly Boy and I, said, we have to do something. As PMAN excos, we started a campaign and worked underground to ensure that Nigeria songs were played more on air. We visited the NBC on a number of occasions and eventually it was agreed that the play time should be 80/20 instead of 60/40 it was before. That's 80 per cent for Nigerian songs and 20 per cent for foreign.

The second reason was that having left the scene for a while, people were getting tired of the songs: give us water, no light, no road, no transportation and others. I think the message became saturated and they wanted to hear a new thing because as much as we shouted; nothing was changing, so what was the point listening to this kind of music. Fela shouted his own until he died, same with Ras Kimono, but how much did this impact on the people?

Then another genre of music came up, it came first as hip hop; kudos to Kennis Music and the others who turned the whole thing around. We stated hearing a lot of pop music on our airwaves. It was selling and from there we entered the afro beat and you saw a lot of people that came under that platform that were doing well. Remember, music comes in circles like fashion, if you are think-

Continued on P.22



Colonialism and Its Effects on African Political Systems: The Way Forward

By Paul Onehi

Colonialism, defined as the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically, has had a profound impact on the political systems of African countries.

One notable leader who has spoken out about the effects of colonialism on African political systems is Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana. Nkrumah famously stated, "The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it, is in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty." This quote by Nkrumah highlights the lasting effects of colonialism on African political systems, particularly in terms of economic control and political influence. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.

The legacy of colonial rule continues to shape the political landscape of many African nations, influencing governance structures, economic policy, political institutions, and power dynamics.

One of the key effects of colonialism on African political sys-

tems is the imposition of artificial borders that divides ethnic groups and created nations with diverse populations and conflicting interests. European colonial powers drew arbitrary boundaries without regard for existing tribal or cultural boundaries, leading to the creation of multi-ethnic states that struggled to maintain unity and cohesion. This legacy of colonial borders has contributed to ethnic tensions, political instability, and conflicts in many African countries.

The consequence of artificial borders is the exploitation of resources and wealth in Africa. The colonial powers established structures that facilitated the extraction and export of natural resources to their own countries, leaving African nations with little to no benefit.

This exploitation has had a lasting impact on the economic development and stability of African nations, as they continue to struggle with poverty and underdevelopment.

Speaking further on issues, Mr Sunday Fatoki, 76 years of age explained that, "The division of ethnic groups and the formation of new nations resulted in diverse populations with different interests and aspirations. This has led to ongoing conflicts and power

Another important way forward is to invest in building strong and accountable institutions that can promote transparency, rule of law, and good governance. This includes reforming electoral systems, strengthening the judiciary, and combating corruption at all levels of government.

struggles within countries, as different groups vie for control and resources.

Furthermore, colonialism also introduced Western political institutions and systems that were often ill-suited to the cultural and social realities of African societies. European colonial powers imposed centralized, authoritarian forms of government that marginalized traditional leadership structures and undermined indigenous governance systems. This legacy of colonial rule has contributed to the prevalence of autocratic regimes, corruption, and lack of accountability in many African countries.

In addition, colonialism also had a profound impact on the economy of African nations, leading to the exploitation of natural resources, the displacement of indigenous populations, and the disruption of traditional livelihoods. The legacy of colonial economic policies continues to shape the economic development of African countries, contributing to poverty, inequality, and dependence on foreign aid.

Despite the challenges posed by the legacy of colonialism, there are potential ways forward for African countries to address the effects of colonial rule on their political sys-

tems. One key strategy is to promote inclusive governance that recognizes and respects the diversity of African societies. This includes decentralizing power, strengthening local governance structures, and promoting dialogue and reconciliation among different ethnic groups.

Another important way forward is to invest in building strong and accountable institutions that can promote transparency, rule of law, and good governance. This includes reforming electoral systems, strengthening the judiciary, and combating corruption at all levels of government. By building strong institutions, African countries can create a more stable and inclusive political system that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of their citizens.

In all, colonialism has had a lasting impact on African political systems, shaping governance structures, political institutions, and power dynamics in many countries. The legacy of colonial rule continues to pose challenges for African nations, but there are potential ways forward for addressing these challenges.

The Urgent Need for Accountability in Nigerian Politics

By Godwin Anyebe

Nigeria, often referred to as the "Giant of Africa," stands at a critical juncture in its democratic evolution. With over two decades since the return to civilian rule, the nation has witnessed an interplay of political resilience and systemic challenges. Among these challenges, the persistent lack of accountability in leadership has emerged as a fundamental impediment to national development. For Nigeria to realize its potential, a redefinition of leadership, underscored by transparency and accountability, is imperative.

The Nigerian political landscape is replete with examples of leaders who have failed to deliver on their mandates. Public office, instead of being a platform for service, is often perceived as a gateway to personal enrichment. Reports of mismanagement of public funds, opaque budgetary processes, and a lack of consequences for corrupt practices have eroded public trust. Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index consistently ranks Nigeria poorly, a reflection of systemic issues that thrive in the absence of accountability mechanisms.

The impact of unaccountable leadership is evident in

Nigeria's socioeconomic indices. From decaying infrastructure to poor health and education systems, the consequences of misgovernance are stark. Public resources, meant to drive national progress, are frequently diverted, leaving critical sectors underfunded and millions of citizens underserved. Furthermore, the culture of impunity perpetuates inequality, as those in positions of power operate above the law while the average citizen faces the full brunt of systemic inefficiencies.

Redefining leadership in Nigeria requires a paradigm shift towards accountability as a non-negotiable standard. This involves instituting mechanisms that compel public officials to be answerable for their actions. Legislative reforms, such as strengthening anti-corruption laws and ensuring the independence of oversight institutions, are essential. Agencies like the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) must be empowered to act decisively, irrespective of political affiliations.

Equally critical is the role of technology in fostering accountability. Digital platforms can provide real-time monitoring of government projects, allowing citizens to track

the allocation and utilization of resources. E-governance initiatives, such as open budgeting systems, have proven effective in other countries and should be adapted to Nigeria's context.

The Role of Civil Society and the Media

Civil society organizations (CSOs) and the media are indispensable in the quest for accountable governance. By advocating for transparency

and exposing malfeasance, these entities hold leaders to higher standards. However, their work must be safeguarded against political interference and intimidation. A free and independent press, coupled with active citizen engagement, creates an environment where leaders are less likely to act with impunity.

Ultimately, accountability starts with the electorate. Nigerians must recognize their power in holding leaders accountable through the ballot box. Educating citizens about their rights and the importance of participatory governance is crucial. Voting based on competence rather than ethnic or partisan considerations can shift the political culture from one of patronage to performance.

The urgency of redefining leadership in Nigeria cannot be overstated. Without accountability, the cycle of corruption, inefficiency, and public distrust will persist, undermining the nation's progress. By embracing a culture of transparency, fostering institutional reforms, and empowering citizens, Nigeria can set a new standard for political leadership in Africa. It is a long road ahead, but the journey toward a more accountable political system begins with decisive action today.

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Bridging the Divide: Tackling Nigeria's Pressing Socioeconomic Challenges

By Godwin Anyebe

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation and largest economy, is a country of immense potential. Yet, it remains trapped in a web of socioeconomic challenges that hinder its progress. The glaring divide between the wealthy and the impoverished, the urban elite and rural dwellers, and the politically connected and marginalized citizens continues to widen. Bridging this divide requires bold reforms, inclusive policies, and the active participation of all stakeholders.

One of Nigeria's most visible challenges is the yawning wealth gap. While a small percentage of the population thrives, the majority struggle to make ends meet. According to the World Bank, over 40% of Nigerians live below the poverty line, a troubling statistic in a country with abundant natural and human resources. To address this, Nigeria must focus on job creation, especially in sectors like agriculture, technology, and manufacturing, which have the potential to absorb millions of unem-

ployed youth.

Quality education and accessible healthcare are vital to bridging socioeconomic

divides. Unfortunately, Nigeria's education system is underfunded, with dilapidated infrastructure and inadequate

teacher training. Similarly, the healthcare system struggles with poor funding, a lack of facilities, and the brain drain of medical professionals. Investing in these sectors is non-negotiable. Policies that ensure free or subsidized education and healthcare for the underprivileged can significantly level the playing field.

The disparity between urban and rural areas is stark, with rural communities lacking basic amenities like electricity, clean water, and good roads. Infrastructure development must be a priority, with a focus on connecting remote areas to economic hubs. Projects like improved road networks, rail systems, and renewable energy solutions can stimulate rural economies and foster national cohesion.

Corruption remains a major obstacle to equitable development. Billions of naira meant for public projects often disappear into private pockets, leaving citizens to bear the brunt. Strengthening anti-corruption agencies and ensuring transparency in governance are crucial steps in redirecting resources to where they are

most needed.

For Nigeria to bridge its divides, governance must be inclusive. Policymakers must actively engage with diverse communities and prioritize policies that address the unique needs of various groups. Women, youth, and marginalized communities must have a seat at the decision-making table.

Bridging Nigeria's socioeconomic divides is not the sole responsibility of the government. The private sector, civil society, and citizens all have roles to play. Corporations can invest in social impact initiatives, NGOs can advocate for marginalized groups, and individuals can contribute by holding leaders accountable.

Nigeria's journey toward socioeconomic equity is neither simple nor swift. However, with deliberate actions, inclusive policies, and a collective commitment to change, the nation can bridge its divides and unlock its full potential. The time to act is now, for a divided Nigeria cannot stand, but a united one can soar.

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Real Housewives Of Lagos Returns For An Unforgettable Season 3

Fans of glamour, drama, and high society, get ready! The highly anticipated third season of The Real Housewives of Lagos is set to premiere on 12 January 2025. This season promises to be bigger, bolder, and even more extravagant, as it showcases the unparalleled luxury, lifestyle, and culture of Lagos.

Returning to light up your screens are three fan favourites: Laura Ikeji Kanu, the ever-vibrant entrepreneur and social media personality; Mariam Timmer, the bold and charismatic PR expert; as well as Carolyn Hutchings, entertainment aficionado and savvy businesswoman. These women are back and ready to share more of their dynamic lives, friendships, and fabulous events.

Joining the cast this season are three exciting new faces who bring their own unique flair to the show:

Dabota Lawson, a celebrated beauty entrepreneur and former beauty queen, known for her glamorous lifestyle and business acumen.

Adeola "Diiadem" Adeyemi, an accomplished beauty mogul and influencer who redefines ambition and elegance.

Sophia Momodu, a



media personality and humanitarian, celebrated for her charm and advocacy work.

This season dives deeper into the lives of these six extraordinary women as they navigate the intricate balance of family, friendship, and business in one of Africa's most vibrant cities. From opulent parties to heartfelt moments and inevitable clashes, The Real Housewives of Lagos Season 3 is set to deliver unmatched

entertainment and authenticity.

The Executive Head, Content & Channels, West Africa, MultiChoice, Dr. Busola Tejumola, expressed excitement about the forthcoming season: "For two seasons, The Real Housewives of Lagos has continued to bring us premium entertainment, giving fans a front-row seat to the glitz and glamour that makes Lagos a cultural hub. This new season, we have a few sur-

prises up our sleeves that we're sure fans of the show would love."

Hannah Mabruk, VP, Format Sales for NBCUniversal Formats added: "We are delighted to see The Real Housewives of Lagos return for a third season, showcasing the dynamic, vibrant, and luxurious lifestyle that Lagos has to offer. This season continues to push the boundaries of what viewers can expect from the franchise, and we're eager

for fans to see the new faces and fresh drama that will keep them hooked from start to finish."

The Real Housewives franchise is distributed internationally by NBCUniversal Formats, which is part of Universal International Studios, a division of Universal Studio Group.

The Real Housewives of Lagos Season 3 will premiere on Africa Magic Showcase (DStv Channel 151, GOtv Channel 8) on 12

January 2025, with new episodes airing every Sunday at 8 pm.

New episodes will also be available as a fast-follow release from Monday, 13 January on Showmax. Fans can binge-watch seasons 1 and 2 of The Real Housewives of Lagos on Showmax.

Make sure to mark your calendars for a front-row seat to all the luxury, laughter, and drama!

CIG Ends Year 2024 In Grand Style With A Superlative Gig

It was a night to remember for all the attendees at the maiden edition of the end of the year shindig, organised by the Creative Industry Group to reward and appreciate committed members who have contributed immensely towards the growth of the creative group. Leading the pack of those honoured at the party was CIG's Projects and Events Director Hon. Diva Obukome Ibru, who was honoured for her immeasurable contribution to the group since inception.

The star studded end of the year shindig had in attendance; media gurus and creative industry top guns like actor Kalu Ikeagwu, singer Righteousman and wife, Chief Ann Njemanze, Kunle Onime, media impresario Azu Arinze, Legendary Soji Omotayo, Mr Tosin - MDATS Show, Olorogun Gloria Ibru, Elvina Ibru, top Nollywood actors, OAP's and creative industry personalities.

The performance turbine was ignited by Lady Zara and her Exquisite band who serenaded the audience to her Afro-juju gospel medley, to set the stage for CIG dance-centric rising stars.

Other up and coming acts like G3 Ogiji, Blaqsoulphyl, Prophet Franklin, One More Nite, Bob Rolex, SuperDon, Chet Marj, Vanasse Ekee, Diva Jodia, Swaggu, Pjay and Amed O, spiced up the night with their grilling performances

Another outstanding performance was from Gloria Ibru, who took the guests on a rollercoaster of the Caribbean experience with her songs. She was backed up singer Stanley and wife, who also had a splendid performance to make the night memorable.

Ace comedian Alarm Blow, was on hand to tickle the guests with his jokes

The high-points of the celebration was the introduction of the CIG Anthem, the CIG 2024

Documentary which highlighted all the activities of the group throughout the year and the recognition in honour of CIG Director of Projects and Events, Hon. Diva Obukome Ibru.

Diva Ibru was supported by friends and family as she mounted the podium to receive the award. Her entourage included: Olorogun Glo-

ria Ibru, Chief Anne Njemanze, Elvina Ibru, ACP. Vera Ameh, CSP Charity Enebeli, CSP Uduak Edet, Mrs Ochei Imanche, Mr AB. Ibiang, Mr. ND Okpani, Mr. Jude Bidokwo and Mrs. Winnie Bossey among others

The CIG Service Reward segment of the event had gift packs presented to legend Manny

Eke aka Music Chef, Head CIG Music Sector, Legend Kunle Adediji, Head CIG Media, Diva DJ FARO, most outstanding female Judge CIG Flash or Lash show, Legend Shedrach John, most outstanding male Judge, CIG Flash or Lash show, Queen Jairo and Diva DJ Maureen who also received gift packs for their consistent input as CIG OAPs.

The chief hosts of the event Amb Felix Duke, CIG President and his amiable wife Lady Capriz, could not hide their excitement as they thanked everyone for their individual and collective roles in lifting CIG to its current status, urging all to take their various inputs in the group to the next level as we step into year 2025.

Amb Felix Duke also reiterated the need for all CIG members to be duly registered so that they can benefit from some of the welfare packages put in place for bonafide members no one knows what tomorrow holds.

The epoch making event took place at the Duke- Duchess Hotel and Suites located at the Abule Egba area of Lagos State.

On ground to cover the event were prominent broadcaster AIT's Music Plus, ATS Show up which airs on AIT, CIG blog and City Express blog among many other media outfits.



Cultism Is So Strong In The Nigerian Music Industry -Orits Wiliki

ing that afro beat will be there forever, its a lie. If new sound that people love comes out thats what will hold sway again.

Lets talk about your victory over Premier Music and why you took them to court.

Its a battle I believe was deservedly won because all these years artistes could not stand up against their record labels. It was like a master slave relationship. A lot of bad contracts were signed because the artistes were desperate to record and 90 percent of them did not have lawyers to guide them through.

The record companies knew that these artistes were desperate and they wrote the contract in such a way it will favor them (Record Labels). My contract was signed with PolyGram Records not Premier music and it was three years, three albums. Moreover; I was not like an artiste moving about with demos looking for a production company.

I started my record in Paris, France, with a company called Alanche' de' Lamour. I had an international manager then, I had to complete the production with Lemmy Jackson after I moved back to Lagos. I and Lemmy Jackson were running a company called Lemmy Jackson Music. I was a producer, himself and Sam Okhua, we were doing a lot of productions. We had people like Alex O. grooming voices because a lot of the artistes we were recording could not sing, so it was a complete studio.

Already, Alex O. was signed on to PolyGram Records and we were doing his job. So, we took his job to the MD then to show that we are through, so that he could listen to it. When we got to the MDs office, Lemmy Jackson slot in the cassette for him to listen, incidentally the side he played was my side because I have just finished my work and it was the Ten Commandments that was playing.

Lemmy wanted to stop it, but the MD said no that he likes the song, he asked who was the artistes and Lemmy pointed at me and he said, he was interested in me. The MD listened to about four more tracks before it was now changed over to Alex O songs.

He asked and I told him that my recording company was in France, but we can give them the marketing deal to promote the album in Nigeria. That was the deal. I finished my master tape before I brought it to PolyGram Records. The following album was Conqueror; I sponsored it myself and brought the master tape to them. The third one was, What This, What Dat and by this time, PolyGram Records had gone and Premier Music had taken over.

In the contract, the copyright gives them the power to explore the copyright for 25 years exclusively. So, you cannot do anything with any company with that music, you dont have any right at all until after 25 years. Beside that how much were we getting? 20- 30 kobo per an album and that was in 1989. The entire contract from that period which was tenable was 25 - 30 Kobo because nobody was getting 50 kobo per album. Assuming you sign a contract for 30 kobo per album, its your wish that you explode because 30 kobo multiply by 500,000 copies is a lot of money; however, here is the danger.

Assuming they started your job from the scratch, they will tell you that the money they spent to record you, for the production of the master tape, the video, the promotion and any other money they spent on you must be recouped from the 30kobo you are earning. By the time they remove all these, they will tell you that you owe the company about ? 5m or ? 10m.

They will now collect ? 10m from the 30kobo you earn per album. That's why you see that no artiste was getting royalties. A few artistes like us that were getting royalties were those that were able to sell in high quan-

tity. We were like slaves and the only money that we made by the grace of God was during tours, concerts or endorsements.

After the three albums, I told them I was not going to renew the contract that was when I formed Cowrie Music as my label and every other job from then was released on my label. When PolyGram was in charge, one of the clauses in the contract says they must give me a statement of account every 90 days. Whether they owe or you owe, the record must come to you; to know how much they have sold, how much your royalty ought to be, what should be recouped from what you owe. Thats what PolyGram was doing and they were religious about it.

So, when PolyGram Records left and Premier Music took over, for eight years we never had any statement of account. I called them, what's going on? They said they were over whelmed with the change and every-

thing. They now sent me ? 100,000 cheque, for eight years. I asked what the money is for because there is no statement backing it, but they said they were working on it, that they were going to send it later. Six year after, I did not hear from them.

On the 15th year, I wrote to them that I was no longer interested in the contract. They said no, until I finish the 25 years that even if I want to go, let it be clear that I cannot do any other thing with those music until after the 25 years of their exclusivity expires.

I said okay, we still have 10 years to go; but am not interested in this contract again because you have bridged it. You are not respecting the contract and you have not been paying me my royalties. My town man was the Managing Director; I called and told him that I don't want to disappoint him, that's why I am not taking them to court for now. He assured me that things will be

sorted out.

They wrote another letter and explained that they were actually overwhelmed. Later, they sent me ? 45,000 and I told my account officer to return the money to them because there was no statement backing the money up.

I now told my lawyer to write them officially that this contract is dead. In fact, they now said that after the 25 years they still own the contract for my music for life.

But you have a copy of the contract?

Yes, its clearly in most of the contracts a lot of artistes sign. I told them that I have a little knowledge about how copyright works. There is no copyright thats for life. Copyright is contractual and you have limit of time that you can maintain the exclusivity especially when you did not sponsor the recording. I sponsored all my recordings; you did not sponsor any of them.

After the MD died, I wrote and told them that I really wanted to go; they said no they are ready for any action I want to take. I told them that the contract is even inconsistent. I know that any contract that is inconsistent is null and void. Even if we signed it, you said three years, then 25 years and from that you said life. Thats why I took them to court.

To God be the glory, what we asked for was ? 100m, but the court through their discretion brought it down to ? 50m. If I knew what I know now, I would have sued them for ? 500m.

Do you know that they also became my publishing company outside the shores of this country? The contract I signed with you was not worldwide, but you were selling my music world wide. I never signed any contract with you to be my publisher. Your job was to market, promote and distribute my job in Nigeria and then you became my publisher: signing out my jobs to several companies abroad, collecting foreign exchange and you never told me.

A company wrote me and said they were interested in my song, fight the fire. That was the beginning of this case. I said okay, however, they also wrote to Premier Music because it was published by Premier Music, so they wrote them because Premier Music claimed to be the publisher. Premier Music replied the company and the company copied me and said, is that true; I said, its not so. Through the company I was able to get other information I never knew was existing. Everything was what we presented as evidence in the case.

What of if they appeal?

Its their discretion. It will be nice if they appeal because it will deepen the copyright fight in Nigeria and open up a lot of things. My name is already written in gold and my case will be cited in the weekly law reports. Its like a victory for the industry not just for Orits Wiliki.

Why did you choose to honor some industry veterans during your 40th year anniversary celebration onstage?

Today, in Nigeria, they only recognize you when you have died. This is the only country they dont appreciate you when you are alive, I felt this cannot happen in my time and so, every end of the decade I must give thanks and celebrate myself. If no one celebrates me, it will be nice for me to celebrate myself.

The 30 years anniversary was big and the 40 years was bigger. I said, I cannot celebrate myself alone, let me celebrate my constituency also. That was the idea behind celebrating my senior colleagues and others.



How Sports Shape Youth Development: Exploring The Impact

Stories by Paul Onehi

Sports play a significant role in the development of youth, impacting various aspects of their physical, social, and emotional well-being. Engaging in sport activities as a youth has a lot of benefits.

The benefits of sports are numerous and can impact lives in profound ways. Sports participation promotes health and wellbeing, builds confidence, and can help maintain mental health. But often, youths don't engage in sport, probably because most youth think they are not good enough for the sport that they engage themselves in. Nevertheless, sports can provide many benefits for youths, because positive experiences that sports bring play an important role in a young person's life.

One of the key benefits of sports on

youth development is the promotion of physical health and fitness. Engaging in sports activities helps young individuals to stay active, improve their cardiovascular health, and develop strong muscles and bones.

Speaking on this issue, a medical doctor Friday Edoh notes that, participation in sports during adolescence is associated with lower levels of obesity and a reduced risk of chronic diseases later in life.

"Mental health, sports reduced stress, improved mood, increased self-esteem and confidence, and a sense of accomplishment." Participating in sports can be a healthy outlet for emotions and a source of resilience," said Edoh.

Sports are a fun way to increase a youth's physical activity level and develop lifelong habits for good health, to develop self-control, persistence, and accountabil-

ity. It helps the youth reach his or her fitness goals and maintain a healthy weight.

They also encourage healthy decision making such as not smoking and not drinking. It also has health benefits such as lowering the chance of osteoporosis or breast cancer later in life.

Furthermore, sports also contribute to the social development of youth by fostering teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. Through participation in team sports, young individuals learn how to work collaboratively with others towards a common goal, resolve conflicts, and communicate effectively.

Participation in sports requires the youths to learn vital time management skills, and offers them a range of appealing challenges. Physical activities provide young people healthy opportunities to learn skills, take risks, and achieve goals.

In addition to physical and social benefits, sports also play a crucial role in the emotional development of youth. Engaging in sports activities helps young individuals to build self-confidence, resilience, and a sense of accomplishment.

In all, the impact of sports on youth development is multifaceted, encompassing physical, social, and emotional aspects. Knowledge is power, when youths don't have the knowledge of the benefits of sports, they will continue to refuse being part of sport activities. It's our mandate as parents, educators, or individuals who understand the value of sports to ensure the youths naturally incorporate exercise into their life. It will also require us to provide knowledge by being examples, doing sports together, keeping it fun and encouraging them by provide opportunities for young individuals to engage in sports activities.

Transfer: Nottingham Forest Shows Interest In Signing Super Eagles Star, Osimhen



Nottingham Forest have taken a bold step in their pursuit of a striker as they consider signing Victor Osimhen.

Osimhen's whose name has been on the lips of top European clubs and the world following an impressive start of the season.

The Nigerian striker, who joined Galatasaray on a loan deal, has been nothing but exceptional for the Turkish champions with 13 goals and 5 assists.

The Super Eagles star has drawn interest from the likes of Chelsea, Arsenal, PSG and Manchester United in the transfer window. Osimhen has reportedly been included in a list of names Nottingham Forest are looking to sign in January.

The reports indicate that, the English club sees Osimhen as a good fit for

the club but could be too costly due to economic meltdown. Nottingham, who are now third in the Premier League table and already have Nigerian players like Ola Aina and Taiwo Awoniyi in their team, are looking to fortify their squad in January.

All that is known at this time is that Osimhen will continue to be loaned to Galatasaray through June 30. However, according to reports, the Turkish team is attempting to scrape together enough cash to make an offer to Napoli at the end of the season, relying on revenue from foreign sponsors.

Meanwhile, Manchester United, who are also in the race to sign the forward, are proposing a swap deal for the Nigerian star.

Barcelona 'Will Go To Court' Over Dani Olmo Registration Issue As La Liga Make Final Decision

La Liga have made their final decision over Dani Olmo's Barcelona registration. Olmo, who joined Barca from RB Leipzig for £51 million last summer, was registered as a special exemption only for the first half of the season as the club could not meet La Liga's wage cap restrictions.

A court rejected their attempt to re-register Olmo recently, with La Liga and the Spanish Federation coming to a joint decision over the situation.

According to Fabrizio Romano, La Liga and the Spanish Federation have REJECTED the registration of Olmo for Barca following intensive meetings.

That means he will not be able to play for the Catalan giants again for the remainder of the season.

The 26-year-old has made 11 league appearances this season, scoring five goals. But he won't be adding to his tally this campaign after failing to complete his La Liga registration.

Barca will go to court over the decision and a successful appeal could see

the attacking midfielder become available for Hansi Flick this season.

Olmo's teammate Pau Victor has also not been registered.

Olmo has been linked with a move away from the Camp Nou amid his registration issues, with Manchester United thought to be keeping an eye on his developments.

But the player's agent, Andy Bara, has dismissed all the transfer interest.

Asked about recent links to Man United, he told Give Me Sport: "To be honest, I feel calm.

"It could feel strange but I believe in [Barcelona] president Laporta, Deco and I feel they will find a solution for Dani. It's a massive club.

"We are not negotiating with any club. Dani is Barcelona player and he wants to be a Barcelona player. He has made a big effort in his life to be at Barcelona. It was his desire for a long time.

"Barcelona is the first and last option! Dani, his father, family, me, we're not thinking about other options."

