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The Cost of Governance: Who Really Pays the Price?

By Godwin Anyebe

In a nation brimming with potential yet grappling with economic and social challenges, the cost of governance remains a contentious topic. Nigeria, Africa's largest economy and most populous nation, has long been criti-

cized for the staggering expenses tied to its political system. The question is: who truly bears the brunt of these costs?

From lavish government expenditures to bloated bureaucracies, the resources allocated to sustain Nigeria's political elite have raised eyebrows both

locally and internationally. Reports indicate that a significant portion of the national budget is consumed by recurrent expenditures, with little left to address critical areas like infrastructure, healthcare, and education.

Ordinary citizens, meanwhile, face the conse-

quences. Rising taxes, increased fuel prices, and inflation serve as reminders that the cost of governance is not borne by the leaders alone—it trickles down to the masses. For many Nigerians, the struggle to make ends meet is compounded by the perception that public

resources are being mis-

managed. The legislative arm of government, often cited as one of the most expensive in the world, continues to operate with high allowances and perks. At the same time, state and local governments mirror similar inefficiencies, contrib-

uting to a system where public funds often fail to translate into tangible development.

Civil society groups and policy analysts argue that this pattern is unsustainable. Calls for fiscal responsibility, reduced govern-

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L-R: Director, Search and Rescue, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Air Vice Marshal Kennedy Nataluwo; Senator representing Niger North Senatorial District, Senator Abubakar Sani-Bello and Director-General, NEMA, Hajija Zubaida Umar, during the visit of NEMA DG to families of the Diko Petrol Tanker explosion, at Gurara LGA, Niger State



Expelled PDP Vice Chairman To Pay N100M Damage To Nine Persons In Ebonyi

Chijioke Njoku, Abakaliki

A Federal High Court sitting in Abakaliki, Ebonyi State has awarded N100,000,000 (one hundred million)

damages against the expelled National Vice Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Southeast Zone, Ali Odefa.

20 members of PDP, including Executives of

the party in Oguduokwor Ward in Onicha Local Government Area of the state had approached the court in Suit No: FHC/AI/CS/FHR/197 between: Hon. Herbert Onyedikachi, Hon Anoke,

Egbe, Njoku Nwagu, Moses Idika, Ogbonnaya Idika, Obinna Chukwu, Chief John Igboke, Mrs. Ijeoma Nome, Okorie C. Okorie and nine others as Applicants and Odefa, the Commissioner of

Police Ebonyi State and the Inspector General of Police for the enforcement of their fundamental human rights over allegations against them by Odefa.

Odefa had accused

them of forging documents purporting his suspension as the National Vice Chairman of PDP, South East.

Ruling on the suit, the

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12 Years Of Agony:
Abdullahi Iliya's Struggle
For Survival With Untreated
Burn Wounds And Tragic Losses

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**Clash Over Nigeria's Oil
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Take Interest In
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**Destiny Etiko builds
'Africa's biggest
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mobile app**

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Expelled PDP Vice Chairman To Pay N100M Damage To Nine Persons In Ebonyi

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presiding Judge, Justice Hilary I. O. Oshomah held that Odefa had "maliciously" used the police against the defendants by making criminal accusations against the applicants in a civil political

matter.

The court held that Odefa who had alleged in his statement to the police that the defendants forged documents to suspend him as a member of the PDP in Ogeduokwor Ward failed to show proof of any form of forgery in the court to support his

claims.

The court, therefore, issued an order restraining Odefa and the police from harassing, arresting or in any form intimidating the defendants on the issue of his suspension from the PDP, Ogeduokwor Ward.

It awarded damages

in the sum of N5, 000, 000 (five million naira) to each of the 20 defendants totaling N100, 000,000 (one hundred million).

The court further ordered that the cost must be paid within seven (7) days of the judgement, failure to pay, according to the court will attract 10%

daily interest.

At the ruling, the OC Legal of the Nigeria Police, Ebonyi State Command, Benson Emenike was in the court to represent the Commissioner of Police, while Odefa's counsel was absent despite receiving earlier sitting notice from the court.

Odefa was expelled from the PDP on December 12, 2024 by the Executives of PDP Ogeduokwor Ward after a disciplinary committee of the party recommended his expulsion having found him guilty of sundry anti-party activities.

The Cost of Governance: Who Really Pays the Price?

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ment overhead, and more transparent use of public funds grow louder with each passing year. Yet, significant reforms remain elusive.

Ultimately, the cost of governance isn't just measured in naira and kobo. It's reflected in the opportunities lost, the dreams deferred, and the widening gap between the government and the governed.

As Nigerians brace themselves for another fiscal year, one question lingers: will leaders finally prioritize the people over politics, or will the cycle of wasteful spending continue unchecked?

It's time for accountability, transparency, and a shift in priorities. The price of governance should never outweigh the value of good governance.

Speaking on this issue to The Abuja Post, a

Political Analyst, Richard Oigochi said; "the cost

of governance in Nigeria is not just a financial issue; it is a reflection of our priorities as a nation. When you look at the size of our government, from the executive to the legislative arms, it's clear that we have created a system that prioritizes the comfort of the political elite over the welfare of the people."

According to him, "Nigeria's political structure is riddled with inefficiencies. The recurrent expenditure, which accounts for the bulk of our budget, is primarily used to fund salaries, allowances, and perks for government officials. Yet, these same officials preside over a nation struggling with poverty, unemployment, and failing infrastructure. How do we justify such a mismatch?"

"What's even more troubling is the trickle-down effect on ordinary Nigerians. The average citizen pays the ultimate price for this unsustainable system—through higher taxes,

reduced social services, and worsening living conditions. Every naira diverted to fund excessive government spending is a naira taken away from critical sectors like education, healthcare, and power." He noted.

Moreover, he continued, "the absence of accountability fuels this crisis. Corruption and wasteful spending thrive in the absence of stringent checks and balances. Without transparency, citizens are left in the dark about how their taxes are being used, and leaders face little pressure to act responsibly."

To change this narrative, he pointed out that, "we need bold reforms. Reducing the size of government, cutting down on allowances, and implementing stringent fiscal policies are necessary steps. Equally important is fostering a culture of accountability where public officials are held responsible for their actions."

"Ultimately, the cost of governance isn't just about money—it's about lost opportunities for millions of Nigerians. Until we address this imbalance, the gap between the government and the governed will continue to widen, leaving citizens to pay a steep price for a system that serves only a privileged few." He added.

Also speaking, a Public Affairs Analyst, Samuel Eze, said; "the cost of governance in Nigeria has reached an unsustainable level, and the burden falls squarely on the shoulders of ordinary citizens. While the political elite enjoy the perks of oversized bureaucracies, excessive allowances, and lavish lifestyles, the masses are left to grapple with the fallout—rising inflation, inadequate social services, and dwindling opportunities."

According to him, Nigeria's political system, designed to serve the people, has instead become an

apparatus for personal enrichment. The allocation of a significant portion of the national budget to recurrent expenditures, including the maintenance of public offices, security votes, and unnecessary committees, leaves little for capital projects. The result? Poor infrastructure, failing healthcare systems, and a deteriorating educational sector."

According to him, "what is particularly troubling is the lack of transparency and accountability. The average Nigerian cannot fully comprehend how much is spent on governance because the process is shrouded in secrecy. Meanwhile, the political class justifies these expenditures by citing the complexity of governing a diverse nation. But should diversity come at such a staggering cost?"

"Let's also talk about the human cost. Unemployment is rising, youth restiveness is increasing,

and many Nigerians are unable to afford basic necessities. This is the hidden toll of a governance system that prioritizes political survival over national development." He said.

Speaking about solutions, he pointed out that, "solution lies in bold reforms. We need to reduce the size of government, streamline administrative processes, and cut down on wastage. More importantly, we must demand transparency and accountability from our leaders. Governance must shift from being a burden to becoming a tool for sustainable development."

"If this systemic waste continues unchecked, the gap between the government and the governed will only widen, creating a nation where a few thrive at the expense of the majority. The time for action is now." He added.

Zamfara gov employs 16 nurses who completed studies in Sudan

Zamfara State Governor Dauda Lawal has offered automatic employment to 16 nursing graduates of Sudan International University.

These graduates were among the 66 students sponsored by the Zamfara State Government to study in Sudan but faced an abrupt disruption due to the ongoing conflict in the country. In 2023, they were evacuated back to Nigeria, where the governor's swift intervention ensured they could complete their final exams.

Governor Lawal presented the nurses with their employment letters and certificates at a ceremony held at the Government House in Gusau. He praised their resilience and determination despite the challenges they faced, urging them to serve as ambassadors of the state and contribute

to improving healthcare delivery.

This move aligns with the governor's broader

efforts to revitalize Zamfara's healthcare sector, which include the construction and rehabilita-

tion of hospitals and clinics across the state. He also reaffirmed his administration's commit-

ment to education, emphasizing its importance in building a stronger, more prosperous soci-

ety.

By providing these graduates with automatic employment, Governor Lawal is not only addressing the critical shortage of healthcare professionals in the state but also instilling a sense of hope and purpose among the youth.

His administration's focus on education and healthcare has been evident from the onset, marked by a declaration of a state of emergency in the education sector. Supporting these nursing students affected by the Sudan crisis underscores his commitment to empowering the next generation and ensuring the well-being of Zamfara's people.

As the state faces its challenges, Governor Lawal's proactive leadership and vision for progress continue to shine as a beacon of hope for a brighter future.



Zamfara governor Dauda handing letter of employment to one of the nurses



Delta State Commissioner for Finance, Sir Fidelis Tilije (left) and his Works counterpart in charge of Rural Roads and Public Information, Mr Charles Anlagwu addressing journalists during a press briefing in Asaba recently.

Kaduna Primary Teachers Decry Hardship Over Non-Implementation Of Minimum Wage

By Achadu Gabriel, Kaduna

Primary School Teachers (PTS) in Kaduna State have cried out for severe hardship over non implementation of new minimum wage in the state

They disclosed this in an open letter addressed to President Bola Ahmad Tinubu, dated Thursday 23rd January, 2025, and made available to journalist in Kaduna.

"We, the primary school teachers of Kaduna State, humbly write to bring to your attention the ongoing hardship we face due to the non-implementation of the new minimum wage in our state.

"Despite the federal government's progressive step to increase the national minimum wage to N70,000, we, the teachers responsible for shaping the future of our nation, have been excluded

from its benefits.

"Primary school education forms the bedrock of Nigeria's development, yet the failure to adopt the new minimum wage in Kaduna State leaves us struggling to meet basic needs and demotivated in carrying out our duties.

"The impact of this neglect extends beyond our personal lives, as it compromises the quality of education we provide to the children entrusted to our care.

"Your Excellency, we appeal to you as the leader of our great nation to intervene and ensure that the Kaduna State government fulfills its obligation to implement the minimum wage for all primary school teachers", the letter stated.

Signed by Concerned PSTs of Kaduna State, (for fear of victimization), the teachers recommend three actions for immediate

Implementation amongst others, including urging federal government to Issue a directive to the Kaduna State government to immediately implement the new minimum wage for all primary school teachers.

Titled: "Dear Mr. President: Non-Implementation of New Minimum Wage in Kaduna State", PST also urged for timely payment when implemented and ensure that teachers' salaries are paid regularly to alleviate financial strain and foster a motivated workforce.

Accordingly, they also called for Accountability Mechanism Enforce and accountability for local government chairmen to ensure compliance with the federal directive.

"Additionally, we suggest the following consequences for non-compliance: Sanctions: Impose administrative or financial penalties on local

government officials who fail to implement the minimum wage.

"Leadership Review: Replace any local government chairman who consistently neglects this responsibility, ensuring that committed and capable leaders are in office.

"Mr. President, your intervention will not only alleviate our financial burdens but also restore our confidence in the federal government's dedication to justice and equity.

"By addressing this issue, you will reaffirm the critical importance of education and the teachers who provide it in building a brighter future for Nigeria.

"We remain hopeful and trust in your commitment to ensuring a fair and prosperous Nigeria for all.

Thank you for your attention and timely action on this matter", it stated.

NYSC: Gov Bala Welcomes Batch C Members, Tasks Them On Scheme's Objectives

By Samuel Luka, Bauchi

Bauchi state Governor, Bala Mohammed has on Friday enjoined the batch C Stream II National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) deployed to the state to strive towards ensuring that the objectives of scheme is achieved.

The Governor who made the call while welcoming the Corps members to the state at Wailo Orientation Camp, tasked them on ensuring national unity and development.

The Governor noted that those who served before have established a solid foundation, hence the need for the serving members to build upon the legacy left behind.

Represented by his dep-

uty, Rt. Honourable Auwal Jatau, the Governor reminded the corps members that the primary aim of the NYSC scheme is to promote national unity and integration.

The Governor pointing out that the orientation course was aimed at assessing and harnessing

their physical, psychological, mental, and intellectual capabilities.

Governor Mohammed who noted that the people of Bauchi are in support of the goals and objectives of the NYSC Scheme, commended the spirit of patriotism and enthusiasm of the Corps members for reporting to the orientation camp promptly.

"I urge you to sustain and be guided by this spirit dur-

ing the orientation exercise and throughout the period of your primary assignment. The NYSC programme being a catalyst for accelerated national development, I wish to once again urge you to be totally committed towards the realization of the noble objective of the



Bala Mohammed

scheme", he said.

Bala Mohammed said that the ongoing comprehensive renovation and construction of new facilities at the Bauchi State NYSC Permanent orientation camp at Wailo is to provide a conducive environment for effective orientation exercises.

He further called on them to take advantage of Bauchi's hospitable, friendly, and accommodating environment to gain a deeper understanding of the people of the state.

On her part, the State NYSC Coordinator, Rifkatu Daniel Yakubu explained that the orientation course marks the beginning of their journey towards greater achievements and future accomplishments.

Alleged N33.8bn Fraud: How I Received More Than N22bn From Power Ministry-BDC Operator

By Our Correspondent

The trial of former Minister of Power, Saleh Mamman continued on Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at the Federal High Court, Abuja, presided over by Justice James Omotosho with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC presenting its 8th witness, PW8.

The witness, PW8 Abdullahi Suleman, a bureau de change operator, narrated how more than N22 billion was allegedly siphoned from the Federal Ministry of Power while Mamman was Minister. He said the naira equivalent of the money was exchanged for United States dollars through his business accounts.

Mamman is being prosecuted by the EFCC on a 12-count charge bordering on conspiracy to commit money laundering to the tune of N33,804,830,503.73 (Thirty-three Billion, Eight Hundred and Four Million, Eight Hundred and Thirty Thousand, Five Hundred and Three Naira, Seventy-three Kobo).

At Wednesday's proceedings, Suleiman, while being led in evidence by prosecution counsel, Rotimi Oyedepo, SAN narrated that about 12 of his business accounts received money from the Federal Ministry of Power without carrying out any service, contact or project. His companies; Prymint Investment Limited, Strong Field International Projects Limited, Mintedge Nigeria Limited, First Class Construction and Project, Silverline Ocean Ventures, Golden Bond Nigeria Limited,

Sipikin Global Enterprise, Spinhills Biz International limited, Fullest Utility Concepts Limited, Platinum Touch Enterprises, Breathable Investment Limited and a company owned by his brother named Gurupche Business Enterprises were used for the transactions.

"I know Alhaji Maina Goje, we are in the same business, sometimes in 2019, Maina Goje met me that he has transaction that I should give him some of my account numbers, the first account I gave him was Fullest, he will send money and I will give him dollars, he started asking for more accounts, he will tell me what to do with the transactions, I will get the dollar and give him and sometimes I will do a transfer to other accounts. We have been working together since then till 2024. From my rough calculations, the amount I have received through the transactions will be more than 22 billion naira. Also Maina used to send someone called Musbhu anytime he was not available, he would send him and give me instructions on what to do with him, we do call him Yaro Minister because he is from Saleh Mamman", he said.

Continuing, "I also know Mr Mustapha Muhammed, Goje told me that he is his oga, I didn't know him before until Maina Goje introduced him to me, then I learnt he works with Federal Ministry of Housing and instructed that anytime they can't reach him, I should give him the amount of dollars he requested"

NEMA Wins NIPR's Outstanding Crisis Communication In Government Award

The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) Lagos State Chapter has recognized the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) with the award of most Outstanding Crisis Communication in Government for the Agency's flood preparedness and Response Campaign in 2024.

The award was presented by Chairman of the State Chapter of NIPR, Mrs Comfort Obot Nwankwo, to the Director General NEMA, Mrs Zubaida Umar, in Abuja on Wednesday.

In her remarks, the NIPR Chairman said the selection of NEMA was arrived after a rigorous assessment in which it was found that the Agency's "campaign stood out for its innovative and effective communication strategies, utilizing digital platforms, public engagement, and timely

updates to educate the public and coordinate responses during Nigeria's annual flood seasons."

Responding, the Director General NEMA, Mrs Zubaida Umar, appreciated the NIPR for the award and dedicated it to staff of the Agency across the country for their commitment to work.

She reiterated the commitment of the Agency to continue to enhance its public sensitization on the dangers of common disasters in the country and promote risk management among the people.

Acknowledging that there is still work to be done to curtail the occurrence of avoidable disasters, she also expressed the readiness of the Agency to continue to partner with professional bodies like the NIPR and the media to foster public awareness in the country.

The Abuja Post

AWARDS 2025

RC 7678018

The Abuja Post Newspapers Limited is set to host its Award. The Award is meant to celebrate Leadership in Governance of some selected individuals and organization who have made impact in 2024 through their Leadership Experience in different Endeavors. The Award brings together Top Government functionary and High-ranking Government Officials in Nigeria. The Selection of the winner will be done by the Board of Editors of **The Abuja Post Newspapers Limited**.

NOMINATIONS ARE NOW BEING INVITED FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE ABUJA POST NEWSPAPER IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

MAN OF THE YEAR

The individual who profoundly shaped the events and narratives that defined 2024. A symbol of influence, leadership, and impact in a year of transformation.

WOMAN OF THE YEAR

The woman whose remarkable influence and contributions shaped the defining moments of 2024. A beacon of inspiration and change in a transformative year.

BANK OF THE YEAR

The institution that has driven growth through innovation, technology, and financial inclusion, enhancing earnings and delivering exceptional value to shareholders.

BANKER OF THE YEAR

The visionary leader whose transformative impact and leadership redefined the banking landscape for lasting progress.

GLOBAL BANK OF THE YEAR

The institution with the greatest global influence on Nigeria's financial landscape.

BRAND OF THE YEAR

The brand that has left an indelible mark through its powerful impact and unforgettable experiences.

COMPANY OF THE YEAR

A highly respected company that has made the most significant impact on the lives of Nigerians.

PRODUCT OF THE YEAR

A groundbreaking, life-changing product with a value proposition that surpasses all others in the marketplace.

MINISTER OF THE YEAR

The minister who stands out in the cabinet as a driving force of change, demonstrating exceptional leadership and impact in their field.

GOVERNOR OF THE YEAR

The governor who combines vision, passion, and dedication to the betterment of his state, with unwavering courage to improve the lives of his people.

SENATOR OF THE YEAR

The senator whose legislative contributions have had a profound impact, driving positive change for the greater good.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR

The House member whose legislative efforts have made a significant impact, fostering positive change for the greater good.

GOVERNMENT AGENCY OF THE YEAR

The government agency whose leadership and initiatives have exemplified exceptional service to the people of Nigeria.

INVESTOR OF THE YEAR

The investor whose contributions have had the greatest impact on the lives of the people of Nigeria.

YOUNG GLOBAL LEADERS OF THE YEAR

Ambitious, driven, and daring leaders under 40 who are shaping the future of the world, as seen from Nigeria's perspective.

SPECIAL CATEGORIES:

- Technocrat of the year
- Innovation in Public Governance Personality
- Civic Service Personality

STATES AWARD CATEGORIES

- Fastest Growing State Economy
- Best State in Tourism Development
- Transparency in Governance State and Local Government
- Rural and Urban Infrastructure Development State
- Best State in Healthcare Development
- Best state in Security Management
- Best State in ICT Development
- Best State in Solid Minerals Development

PLS NOTE:

Nominations close on 27th of January 2025; Winners will emerge on 31st January 2025, Awards Ceremony in 31st of January, 2025 in the City of Abuja where global leaders and legends will gather to celebrate the best of Nigeria.



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L-R: National Chairman, Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN), Alhaji Abubakar Shetima; Newly sworn in Western Zone Chairman of IPMAN, Chief Oyewole Akanni; his predecessor, Alhaji Dele Tajudeen and IPMAN coordinator, National Supplies, Alhaji Zarma Mustapha, during the swearing in of chief Akanni, at the Annual General Meeting/Elections 2025 of IPMAN, in Ibadan



Why Tinubu Will Have No Rival In Niger Delta In 2027 - Youth Ccoalition

By Nathaniel Gubniba

A coalition of over twenty youth groups in the Niger Delta has said that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu will have no rivalry in 2027 with Dr. Samuel Ogbuku as the Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)

The youths, who met in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, observed that the president was already gaining massive support from the region because of the outstanding performance of the NDDC's current leadership.

Over 20 youth groups in the Niger Delta, including the Crusaders for Niger Delta Community Development (CNDCD) and the Niger Delta Youth Coalition for Peace and Progress (NDYCPP) attended the meeting. They assessed the achievements of the commission under the current board.

The youths said they had toured most of the projects undertaken and completed by the current board, including ongoing and inherited projects, and were impressed with the board's performance.

In a communique issued at the end of the meeting, the youths commended Dr. Ogbuku and his team for the people-oriented projects they had implemented across the region, saying they had made life more meaningful for the people.

Amb jointly signed the communique. Jesse Ese, the National Coordinator of Crusaders for Niger Delta Community Development (CNDCD); Pastor Jude Teidor Olayinka, the National President of Niger Delta Youth Coalition for Peace and Progress (NDYCPP) and Tonbra Kingdom Yeri, Chairman, Council Of Organisational Leaders (COOL) among others.

Reading the

communique, Pastor Jude Olayinka of NDYCPP thanked President Tinubu for the appointment of the current leadership of the board, describing it as a round peg in a round hole.

The youths said for the first time since the formation of the NDDC, the commission was meeting the developmental and human capacity needs of the people of the region.

The communique said: "When you talk of transiting from transaction to transformation, it means that policy framework, programmes should be laid in such a way that it makes greater room for continuity and effective and efficient service delivery on the part of the institution that is driving it.

"If the institution has no solid foundation on the ground, it will create room for inefficiency, ineffectiveness, laxity, and all other vices, but the current NDDC board has laid a very good foundation, first of all for management, and then the workers – in line with internationally accepted standards and policies; setting the pace for regional prosperity, educational improvement and advancement, economic growth, health, infrastructure, and every other thing, and these are things everybody can see.

"Look at the scholarships in the educational sector, foreign scholarship. The processes to gain the scholarship are very fair, credible, and transparent encouraging healthy competition for people to thrive.

"Look at his programmes with the first lady. So, even in the primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions, they are trying to touch lives, and don't forget that it is only recently the federal government is approving their budget."

"So, with this budget being released, you can see

that a good foundation has already been laid and development will now come in, so this is an A team, and everybody from the MD to the least are all seasoned technocrats."

"Look at the robust engagements with all stakeholders..., and it is not just engagement like a tea party affair, all the ideas and resolutions brought in by stakeholders are what the NDDC is using to work, and so the people now have a say on how they want their areas to be developed – these are the things endearing people to this Tinubu's government.

"Don't forget, people were thinking the NDDC would be run based on political party affiliation – where it is just a party thing and only members of the APC will benefit, but Ogbuku is carrying everybody along irrespective of their political parties.

"Look at their relationship with the state governors, even those who are not members of the APC, it is very robust, and everyone can see the healthy engagement that they have. You can see the humility of the current leaders of the commission.

"Also, look at the stakeholders, the ethnic nationalities – the Ogbuku-led NDDC is touching every facet of the society, none is left behind. Even the youths, none is left behind – all shades of the youth bodies are being carried along."

The communique added: "Now, look at it, the youth internship scheme is meant to train 10,000 youths, but you see a situation where over 3 million people are applying – meaning about 2,990,000 people will not be selected, and the process is very credible, so it's going to take time, and those that are not selected will be agitated, you know, but they should give the board more time.

"The bottom line is that

they are focused, and they have the ambition and political will to do it. And so far, everyone can see that the team has a very tall vision to translate the Renewed Hope Agenda of the president to every nook and cranny of the Niger Delta.

"This has caused massive regional love and support for the Tinubu-led government, because, the government they see is the one close to them which is the NDDC Board representing the Federal Government at the communities with palpable impact, and that is the way the government operates.

"The superb performance of the NDDC is towards giving democratic dividends to the good people of Niger Delta, and that is causing Niger Delta Youths, Elders, Women, and politicians (across party divide) to support the federal government.

"So, as long as the NDDC and the Niger Delta people are concerned, Tinubu is working very effectively, it means Tinubu is working very well in that sector, and for us in the Niger Delta, the only sector that is working is the NDDC.

"So, if you ask the average Niger Delta stakeholders and the common man who are benefiting from the programmes and projects of the NDDC, they will tell you President Tinubu is on the verge of making history in the Niger Delta and that is true."

"Because as the NDDC is engaging the people, it is Tinubu's government that is engaging the people, and they are engaging with their agenda, and that is what governance is all about, policies that have a direct bearing on the people. Things that the people see feel, and enjoy, and with that, they know that these people are working.

Court Grants EFCC's Move to Amend Charges Against Agunloye Over The \$6b Fraud Allegations

Justice Jude Onwuegbuzie of the Federal High Court, FCT sitting in Apo, Abuja on Thursday, January 23, 2025 granted the prayers of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC to amend charges brought against a former Minister of Power, Olu Agunloye and make him take his plea.

Agunloye is standing trial by the EFCC on seven-count charges, bordering on official corruption and fraudulent award of Mambilla Power Project contract to the tune of \$6 billion (Six Billion United States Dollars).

Earlier on July 1 2024, Prosecution Counsel, Abba Mohammed, SAN, drew the attention of the court to the amended charge, urging the court to accept same and cause the defendant to take his plea, relying on the provision of Section 216 and 217 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, 2015.

However, defense counsel, Adeola Adedipe, SAN objected to the plea arguing that the leave of the court must be formally sought and obtained before the EFCC can amend its charge.

Responding, the court

directed parties to furnish the court with authorities in support of the argument canvassed to which the EFCC made reference to the Court of Appeal's decision in *Bovoa v FRN & Anor* (2017)

During Thursday's ruling, the judge held that amendment was not intended to overreach the defendant and cause injustice to him and that a court may permit an alteration or amendment to a charge or framing of a new charge at any time before judgment is pronounced.

"In the court's final decision, the arguments of the learned counsel to the defendant are hereby discounted and therefore hold that the application is liable to succeed accordingly, I so hold, subsequently the application is hereby granted as prayed on the face of the motion paper and the defendant is hereby ordered to take his plea on the altered or amended charge, this is the ruling of the court".

Justice Onwuegbuzie adjourned the matter to February 3, 2025 for the defendant to take his plea.

FCCPC Insists Telecom Tariff Increase Must Be Commiserate To Service Improvement

The Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) notes the announcement by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) approving a 50% adjustment in telecommunications tariffs. While the FCCPC acknowledges the economic pressures faced by telecom operators, including increasing operational costs, we unequivocally state that consumer interests remain paramount.

The FCCPC acknowledges the intense pressure faced by the NCC over the years to approve tariff increases due to the rising operational costs experienced by telecom operators, which became more pronounced in recent times. We commend the NCC for adopting a deliberate and measured approach by rationalising the tariff adjustment and linking it to commensurate improvements in service quality while implementing measures to mitigate the impact on consumers. The NCC's approval of a 50% adjustment, which is lower than the over 100% increase initially proposed by operators, demonstrates a thoughtful effort to balance

industry sustainability with consumer protection.

We are also pleased with the NCC's directive to operators to ensure that, henceforth, tariffs are clear, straightforward, and free of hidden charges or complexities. Operators are now required to disclose all key details upfront, including the cost, validity period, and the specific inclusions of a plan. Consumers can also expect a mandatory disclosure table from their service providers, enabling them to make informed decisions without worrying about unexpected charges or surprises.

Consumers have consistently expressed the desire for measurable improvements in the quality of service before any tariff increases are implemented. Issues such as network congestion, dropped calls, inconsistent internet speeds, unusual data depletion, and poor customer service have remained prevalent concerns. It is, therefore, crucial that tariff adjustments directly translate into demonstrable and tangible service enhancements for consumers.5

Guinness Nigeria Plc Records N20.1 Billion Pre-Tax Profit For Q2 Ending December 31, 2024

Anyanwu Theresa Ijeoma

This marks a significant turnaround from the pre-tax loss of N8.2 billion in the same quarter of the previous year and is the first quarterly profit since September 2023, when the company posted a profit of N3.8 billion.

The profit boost follows Tolaram Group's takeover of operations from Diageo in June 2024. Within six months, the company recorded its first quarterly operating profit. The second-quarter profit increased half-year pre-tax profits to about N4.1 billion, marking the first half-year profit since December 2022.

For FY 2024, the pre-tax profit stood at N4.1 billion, a substantial recovery from the loss of N4.4 billion in the previous half-year. The company reported revenue of N133.7 billion for the quarter, bringing the year-to-date figure to N259.6 billion, an 82.06% increase compared to FY 2023.

Key Highlights (2024 vs. 2023 FY): Revenue: N259.6 billion, +82.06% YoY Cost of Sales: N200.5 billion, +107.54% YoY Gross Profit: N59 billion, +28.45% YoY Other Income: N159 million, -93.67% YoY Marketing and Distribution Expenses: N31.6 billion, +33.00% YoY Operating Profit: N11.2 billion Finance Expenses: N71.1 billion, +197.75% YoY

Finance Income: N63.9 billion, +1993.90% YoY Pre-tax Profit: N4.1 billion Post-tax Loss: N302.7 million

Surge in Revenue Boosts Margins: Guinness Nigeria Plc reported revenue of N259.6 billion for FY 2024, representing an impressive increase of 82.06% compared to FY 2023. Domestic sales accounted for 98.5% of total revenue, while export sales contributed the remaining 1.5%. Despite strong revenue growth, the cost of sales surged by 107.54% year-on-year, rising from N96.6 billion in the previous year to N200.5 billion in 2024.

However, the company recorded a gross profit increase of 28.45% year-on-

year, reaching N59 billion, compared to N45.9 billion in FY 2023. Marketing and distribution expenses also increased significantly, rising by 33.00% to N31.6 billion from N23.7 billion in the prior year.

With rising operational expenses, operating profit declined to N11.2 billion, down from N16.3 billion reported in the previous year.

Analysts observed that the primary driver of Guinness Nigeria's profitability was a surge in topline revenue, which hit a record N133.7 billion this quarter—the highest ever recorded by the company. The revenue surge helped mitigate cost pressures,

delivering an operating profit of N18.1 billion.

Guinness reported an operating loss of N6.8 billion at the end of September 2024, its first quarter of the current financial year. Operating profit margins, however, rebounded to 13.2%—the highest since March 2022, when margins stood at around 18.5

Meanwhile, net finance charges, which had been a major driver of losses in recent years, swung to a net gain this quarter. Although finance expenses more than doubled to N59.5 billion in the quarter under review, this was offset by a surge in finance income totaling N63.9 billion.

This turnaround was pri-

marily driven by gains from the remeasurement of foreign currency balances, which accounted for 99.51% of the finance income. The swing in profitability is seen as a significant boost for the new owners of Guinness Nigeria Plc, as they work to revitalize one of Nigeria's largest brewers.

Tolaram Group, which acquired Guinness in June 2024, has reported its first operating profit for the company in less than six months under its management. It is understood that Guinness Nigeria is likely to be delisted from the Nigerian Exchange as the new owners move forward with a mandatory takeover of the company's shares from minority shareholders.

Oando Secures Block KON 13 Operatorship In Angola

Anyanwu Theresa Ijeoma

Oando PLC has announced that its subsidiary, Oando Energy Resources (OER), has been appointed as the operator of Block KON 13, located in Angola's Onshore Kwanza Basin.

This achievement comes on the heels of Oando's successful \$783 million acquisition of the Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC) from Italian firm Eni, covering asset costs and reimbursements.

OER secured the operatorship of Block KON 13 after participating in a competitive bidding process organized by the Angolan National Agency for Petroleum, Gas, and Biofuels (ANPG).

The block, situated in the resource-rich Kwanza Onshore Basin, boasts significant pre-salt and post-salt formations, with an estimated potential of 770 to 1,100 million barrels of oil. It also features two exploration wells that have already been drilled to a depth of 3,000 meters, revealing the presence of oil and gas at various levels.

As the block's operator, OER will lead development efforts, holding a 45% stake, while Effimax and Sonangol will serve as co-venturers with 30% and 15% interests, respectively.

Wale Tinubu, Group Chief Executive of Oando PLC, expressed excitement about the acquisition and its significance for the company's expansion across Africa.

"This successful bid and award of Block KON 13 in Angola is a significant milestone. It reflects Oando's steadfast commitment to extending our reach across the continent and contributing to Africa's energy sufficiency objectives," Tinubu remarked.



L-R: Director, Maritime Safety and Security, Babatunde Bombata; Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, Gboyega Oyetola and Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy, Oloruntola Olutemi, during the 2025 Budget Defence to the Joint Committee on Marine and Blue Economy in Abuja

CBN Projects 4.1% Economic Growth in 2025

Anyanwu Theresa Ijeoma

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has forecast a 4.1% economic growth for 2025, along with a decrease in inflation and an increase in foreign exchange inflow.

CBN Governor, Mr. Olayemi Cardoso, shared these projections during the launch of the Nigeria Economic Summit Group 2025 Macroeconomic Outlook. He noted that foreign exchange market reforms in 2025 resulted in \$6 billion in foreign capita

The Federal Government has defended its projection of a decline in the inflation rate to 15% this year, stating that the projection is based on reality and data. The NESG has recommended measures to achieve economic stability in 2025 and a 5.5% economic growth rate.

The World Bank has urged the Federal Govern-

ment to increase the number of beneficiaries of its social intervention programs to reduce the cost of reforms on the poor and vulnerable Nigerians.

Cardoso stated that key economic indicators suggest a positive outlook for 2025, with GDP growth projected to rise to 4.17% from 3.36% in 2024. This growth is anchored on sustained government reforms, stable crude oil prices, and improvements in domestic oil production. Increased refining capacity, driven by the Dangote refinery and the revitalization of the Port Harcourt and Warri refineries, will significantly enhance economic activity. A stable exchange rate will also play a crucial role in maintaining this positive trajectory.

Domestic inflation is projected to decline in 2025 as the impact of economic reforms begins to take hold. Achieving overall objectives requires effective collabora-

tion between monetary and fiscal authorities alongside private sector participation.

The current account surplus is expected to be sustained in 2025 due to strong export performance and steady diaspora remittances. Crude oil prices are expected to benefit from supply cuts by OPEC and residual geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, while increased domestic crude oil and gas production supported by major refineries will bolster the surplus.

External reserves are projected to rise steadily, propelled by increased crude oil production, which could reach 2.3 million barrels per day by mid-2025. Additionally, the expected rise in capital inflows and remittances and the reduced reliance on imported refined petroleum products due to domestic refining capacity could conserve foreign exchange, attract investment, and strengthen Nigeria's eco-

nomics resilience.

Expressing optimism about further increases in foreign exchange inflow, Cardoso said: "Our achievements with these reforms have been encouraging and will continue to materialize in the long term. Our efforts resulted in significant economic milestones in 2024, with over \$6 billion in foreign capital inflows into Nigeria and external reserves exceeding \$40 billion, signaling growing investor confidence. We emphasize reserves going up, not just in numbers, but in the quality of our reserves. As we progress through 2025, we aim to ensure that the reforms are market-oriented policies that will support a more competitive business environment. This development carries significant implications for businesses operating in Nigeria, requiring them to adapt to an evolving economic landscape."

Stanbic IBTC Allocates Rights Issue Proceeds

Anyanwu Theresa Ijeoma

Stanbic IBTC Holdings Plc recently announced that it would allocate 96.3% of its N148.71 billion rights issue proceeds to its banking subsidiary.

The rights issue allows existing shareholders to subscribe to 2,944,772,083 ordinary shares of 50 kobo each at N50.50 per share, structured as five (5) new shares for every twenty-two (22) ordinary shares held as of October 29, 2024.

During the company's 'Facts Behind the Issue' presentation in Lagos, Acting CEO Kunle Adedeji revealed that 42% of the funds will be directed towards Corporate and Investment Banking (CIB) to boost lending to sectors such as manufacturing, power, agriculture, and telecommunications.

He emphasized that this allocation aligns with the Group's strategy to support industries critical to Nigeria's economic development.

Adedeji stated, "Our plan is to channel resources into sectors that have the capacity to catalyze sustainable growth in the Nigerian economy. The financial sector is a critical aspect of actualizing Nigeria's target of \$1 trillion economy."

Additionally, 27% of the proceeds will support Business and Commercial Banking (BCB), facilitating the growth of commercial enterprises and SMEs, particularly in the general commerce sector. "Personal and Private Banking (PPB) will account for 11% of the funds, enhancing credit accessibility for individual clients and improving their financial wellbeing," stated Adedeji.

Experience Innovation Redefined: Redmi Note 14 Series Launch In Nigeria

By Paul Onehi

On Thursday, Xiaomi hosted the highly anticipated Redmi Note 14 Series launch event in Nigeria. The event introduced three iconic models: Redmi Note 14, Redmi Note 14 Pro, and Redmi Note 14 Pro+ 5G. Alongside these flagship smartphones, Xiaomi unveiled its latest ecosystem products, including

the Redmi Watch 5, Redmi Buds 6, and Redmi Buds 6 Pro. This launch was a testament to Xiaomi's commitment to innovation and delivering cutting-edge technology to its users.

The event was a resounding success, featuring breathtaking setups and elaborate decorations that left a lasting impression on attendees. The launch also drew a stellar lineup of prominent tech

influencers and macro-influencers, including Cee C, Real Sophy, Singh Nini, Groovy, Yvonne Godswill, Mistchy, Valor Review, Izzi Boye, and Shaun. Their attendance injected an extra dose of enthusiasm and excitement, further fueling the anticipation and hype surrounding the Redmi Note 14 Series launch.

One of the highlights of the event was the opportunity

for attendees to experience the Redmi Note 14 Series firsthand. Guests explored the capabilities of the new devices, testing their performance, camera systems, and overall user experience. Xiaomi's representatives were on hand to provide in-depth explanations and answer any questions, making it an interactive and engaging experience.

Xiaomi also introduced

exciting offers for early adopters of the Redmi Note 14 Series: Buy the Redmi Note 14 Pro+ 5G and get 5GB of free MTN data enabling them to explore the power of 5G connectivity. Buy the Redmi Note 14 or 14 Pro and enjoy a 100% data bonus for six months when you top up your data bundles.

Buy any Redmi Note 14 Series device before 28th February 2025 and receive

Redmi Buds 6 Play for free instantly, making it a perfect time for consumers to upgrade their tech. Each model in the Redmi Note 14 Series brings unique features and cutting-edge technology tailored to meet diverse user needs. Here is an overview of the models.

Economic Disaster Hits Dry Season Farmers In Mokwa LGA Niger state

TUNDE ADIGUN - MINNA.

Dry season farmers around Mokwa local government area of Niger state and its environs are now counting their losses with the economic disaster that has taken over their farmlands.

This incident highlights the devastating impact of the water discharge from the Kainji and Jebba hydro power plants on the livelihoods of dry season farmers along the River Niger.

The sudden flooding has wiped out rice farms worth billions of naira, affecting both indigenous and visiting farmers in communities such as Rabba, Lafiyagi, and the Kede District of Mokwa Local Government Area.

Many of these farmers,

who have already faced challenges due to seasonal flooding, had resorted to dry season farming.

Unfortunately, the unexpected release of excess water has destroyed their crops, leaving them in dire financial straits, especially as many relied on loans to fund their farming activities.

The affected communities are urgently appealing to the Niger State Government, the management of Kainji and Jebba Hydro Power plants, and the Hydro Power Producing Areas Development Commission (HYPADCOM) for immediate intervention and support to recover from the disaster.

This is a critical moment where coordinated action is needed to prevent further economic loss and hardship for these farmers.



L-R: Commissioner of Police, Lagos State Command, CP Olanrewaju Ishola; Secretary to the State Government, Lagos State, Mrs. Abimbola Salu-Hundeyin; Representative of the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Kayode Adeolu Egbetokun/AIG Zone 2, AIG Adegoke Mustapha Fayoadé and Commandant, Police College Ikeja, Lagos, CP Omolara Ibidun Oloruntola during the Passing-Out Parade of the 2025 Police Constables at Police College Ikeja, Lagos recently.

The Transformational Journey of GDM: A 15-Year Odyssey

Celebrating 15 transformative years of trailblazing innovation and impactful contributions to the marketing and technology landscape, GDM Group, Nigeria's premier marketing and media technology powerhouse, has redefined itself as a full-fledged marketing, management, and technology innovation firm. With an unwavering commitment to delivering cutting-edge solutions, GDM Group continues to push the envelope in marketing technology, big data management, and integrated marketing services, setting the benchmark for excellence across Nigeria and Africa. To improve offerings and diversify its client base, GDM Group is now focusing on offering project consulting services in the areas of marketing, technology, and management.

A Legacy of Innovation and Market Disruption

Since its inception, GDM Group has been synonymous with reshaping the future of marketing, pioneering industry-defining practices that blend strategic cre-

ativity with flawless execution. The company's journey from below-the-line field marketing to data-driven strategies exemplifies its ability to evolve and lead. Through its bespoke service offerings, GDM has emerged as a catalyst for transformative brand experiences, delivering measurable results and setting a new standard in marketing and media innovation.

"GDM Group's evolution into a comprehensive marketing, management, and technology firm represents a

pivotal moment in our journey," noted Victor Afolabi, Founder and Group CEO of Hazon Holdings, during the company's fifteenth-anniversary celebrations. "We are empowering brands to connect, serve, and grow their audiences with unparalleled efficiency, ensuring measurable returns on investment."

Elevating Brands Through Innovation and Strategy

GDM Group's transformation reflects its profound understanding of modern

client needs—strategic, innovative, and results-driven solutions. By integrating digital, traditional, and field marketing strategies, GDM crafts campaigns that captivate audiences, drive authentic engagement, and deliver immersive brand experiences. From harnessing big data insights to executing experiential marketing campaigns, GDM ensures brands maintain a strong, resonant presence in a competitive marketplace.

The company's unique approach harmonizes cre-

ativity with analytical precision, leveraging data to optimize campaigns for maximum impact. This data-driven methodology empowers brands to penetrate untapped markets and achieve sustained growth, even to the last mile.

Empowering Growth Through Advanced Marketing Technology

At the forefront of technological innovation, GDM Group is redefining marketing with state-of-the-art platforms and tools that enhance campaign management and tracking. By utilizing advanced marketing technologies and consumer data analytics, the company delivers actionable insights that fuel strategic decision-making. Each technological solution is bespoke, tailored to meet the specific needs of clients, ensuring seamless integration and impactful results.

Expanding Offerings with Full-fledged Consulting Services

In its quest to provide holistic solutions, GDM Group is expanding its offerings to include project con-

sulting services in marketing, technology, and management. This strategic shift aims to empower businesses with expert guidance in navigating complex challenges, implementing cutting-edge technologies, and optimizing operational performance. With a deep understanding of industry dynamics, GDM's consulting services are designed to drive sustainable growth and operational excellence for clients across various sectors.

Management Excellence

Driving Business Transformation GDM Group's expertise extends beyond marketing into strategic management and operational excellence. By offering management consulting services, the company enables businesses to align their marketing strategies with corporate goals, optimize performance, and navigate complex challenges. From robust project management to innovative operations management frameworks, GDM ensures scalability, efficiency, and measurable impact.





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Our mission is to uphold the principles of professional journalism by providing accurate, fair, and unbiased news coverage. We aim to inform, educate and inspire our readers, ensuring they have access to information that enables them to make informed decisions and engage in meaningful public discourse.



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Public Interest: We believe in the power of information to shape society and advocates for policies that reflect the needs and aspirations of Nigerians.

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Breaking the Cycle of Division

Tribalism, a deep-seated issue in Nigeria's socio-political landscape, continues to be a stumbling block to national unity and progress. For decades, it has served as a tool for manipulation, exploited by politicians to gain power, often at the expense of national cohesion. The question before us now is: how do we break this cycle of division?

The role of tribalism in politics cannot be overstated. Politicians have long leveraged ethnic loyalties to rally support, creating an "us versus them" mentality that undermines the very fabric of democracy. Instead of focusing on policies that benefit all citizens, they appeal to regional and ethnic sentiments, sowing seeds of distrust among diverse groups. This not only weakens our political system but also deepens the divisions within our society.

The consequences of tribalism are glaring. Elections are marred by violence, appointments are driven by ethnicity rather than merit, and national development is stunted by a lack of inclusivity. In such an environment, the best minds are often sidelined, and the common good takes a backseat to parochial interests.

Breaking this cycle requires deliberate action on multiple fronts. First, the electorate must rise above ethnic affiliations when casting their votes. Nigerians must judge leaders based on their competence, vision, and track record rather than the tribe

they hail from. Political parties, too, must adopt ideologies that promote inclusivity, ensuring that their policies and candidates reflect the diverse makeup of the nation.

Furthermore, education plays a pivotal role in reshaping mindsets. Teaching the values of unity, diversity, and mutual respect from a young age can help dismantle the stereotypes and biases that fuel tribalism. Civil society organizations and the media also have a responsibility to champion narratives that emphasize our shared identity as Nigerians rather than our ethnic differences.

Finally, the government must lead by example. Policies that ensure equitable distribution of resources and opportunities will go a long way in reducing the grievances that tribalism feeds on. Leaders must prioritize national interest over

sectional agendas, fostering a culture of fairness and justice that transcends tribal lines.

As we navigate the challenges of nation-building, it is imperative that we confront tribalism head-on. Breaking the cycle of division is not merely a political necessity; it is a moral imperative for the survival and prosperity of Nigeria.

It is time to chart a new course—one where our diversity is not a source of division, but a strength that propels us towards a brighter future. Together, we can build a nation where unity, equity, and progress reign supreme.

As we navigate the challenges of nation-building, it is imperative that we confront tribalism head-on. Breaking the cycle of division is not merely a political necessity; it is a moral imperative for the survival and prosperity of Nigeria.



You're A Self-Serving Noisemaker Neglecting National Progress – Bauchi Governor Criticizes FCT Minister Wike

By Samuel Luka, Bauchi

Amidst growing Political feud between Bauchi state Governor and Chairman of People's Democratic Party (PDP) Governors Forum, Senator Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed, former Rivers state Governor and the current Minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Nyesom Wike has been tagged in a veiled statement as "a noisemaker who prioritizes personal gain over National Progress".

The recent development indicated a brewing Cold Political feud between the erstwhile Political friends, minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Nyesom Wike and Chairman of the PDP Governors Forum, Governor of Bauchi state, Senator Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed.

Recalled that Wike had sometime ago threatened to put fire on any PDP states supporting his state Governor, Fubara.

In a swift reaction, Bala Mohammed replied during a public function that no one can put fire on Bauchi state, saying that the state has the required volume of water to put off any fire.

Reacting to Wike's recent remarks against him through his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity Comrade Mukhtar Mohammed Gidado, the Governor accused Wike of grandstanding, and a perplexing display of loyalty that seems to shift with the wind.

plexing display of loyalty that seems to shift with the wind.

"The attention of Sen. Bala Mohammed, the Executive Governor of Bauchi State and Chairman of the PDP Governors Forum, has been drawn to the latest disjointed and bombastic media chat by Chief Nyesom Wike, the Honorable Minister of the Federal Capital Territory", the statement signed by Gidado on Thursday said.

"In his characteristic style, Chief Wike launched into his now-predictable tirade, marked by contradictions, grandstanding, and a perplexing display of loyalty that seems to shift with the wind", the statement further pointed out.

The statement further accused the FCT minister of distorting facts and aiming to undermine the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the very platform that gave him his political rise.

Governor Bala Mohammed who also described Wike as Transactional Politician Who Bites the Hand That Feeds Him, added that Chief Wike's ascendancy in politics is a testament to the opportunities provided by the PDP.

"Yet, he now gleefully undermines the very foundation that nurtured him. It is disheartening that a man who owes so much to a party that stood by him in his political journey has chosen to be a willing tool in its denigration. His recent media outburst was yet another

reminder of his transactional approach to politics, where personal ambition eclipses loyalty, principles, and collective interests", the statement disclosed.

It noted that, unlike Wike, who thrives on drama and divisiveness, Sen. Bala Mohammed has always understood that politics is not a game of self-serving theatrics but a platform to serve the public good.

"Wike's erratic behavior

and opportunistic alliances expose him as an unreliable and fair-weather friend—traits that alienate even those who once stood by him", the Bauchi Governor stated.

The statement further pointed out that, "Chief Wike's assertion that he is not friends with Sen. Bala Mohammed is as irrelevant as it is puerile. Governance is not built on personal friendships but on competence,

vision, and the ability to deliver results".

According to the statement, Governor Bala Mohammed's achievements in Bauchi State speak for themselves and his leadership has elevated the PDP as a formidable opposition party, countering the excesses of the APC-led federal government.

The Governor who said Wike busies himself playing a double game—PDP by day,

APC by night, advised the FCT minister to have a moment of genuine self-reflection and wish to align himself with true leadership for Sen. Bala Mohammed to welcome him with open arms.

"Until then, Wike's friendship—or lack thereof—is inconsequential to the progress of Bauchi State and the strengthening of Nigeria's democracy", the press statement said.



L-R:
Nyesom Wike,
Usman Ododo
and
Yahaya Bello in
Abuja on
Thursday,
January
23, 2025.
Credit:
@OlayinkaLere

Bauchi SEC Approves Over N8 Billion For Infrastructural Projects

By Samuel Luka, Bauchi

Funds amounting to N8,163,39,885.38 Kobo have been approved by the Bauchi state Executive Council for various developmental projects across the state.

The Commissioner, Bauchi state Ministry of works and Transport, Professor Titus Saul Ketkukah disclosed this while briefing newsmen on the outcome of Thursday council meeting at the government house Bauchi.

He said Governor Bala Mohammed had during his electioneering campaigns, pledged to ensure that the state is moved to greater heights, prompting the approval of a number of projects in line with the promises.

According to Prof Ketkukah, the Council approved the design and construction of six-span bridge along Nahuta-Rauta Road in Toro local government measuring 6.5 meter long at the

cost of N2,577,333,156.93 kobo.

"The second project approved by the council is the design and construction of six-span bridge at Kuka with culverts and concrete line at Mainamaji, Alkaleri LG, measuring 6.5 meter long at the cost of N3,777,615,911.47 Kobo.

The other project approved by the Council, the Works Commissioner said include the emergency repairs of 500 meter an erosion control in Gamawa LG at the cost of N752,725,626.98 Kobo as well as the rehabilitation of 2.5 kilometers Awala round about to 2.5 kilometers Airport road in Bauchi LG at the cost of N553,883,865.62 Kobo.

The Commissioner also disclosed that the Council further approved complete rehabilitation of 2 kilometers road and construction of 200 meters water drainage at the Nigeria Army 33 Artillery Brigade Shadawanka barracks Bauchi at the cost of N501,418,324.38 Kobo.

Yobe: Jakusko Ward Chairman Reinstated To APC

In a dramatic turn of events, Hon. Saldu Hassan Jakusko, the Ward Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Jaba/Muguram Ward, Jakusko LGA, has

rescinded his earlier decision to resign from the party.

In a letter dated January 24, 2025, Jakusko apologized to the Executive Governor of Yobe State, His Excellency Mai Mala Buni, and

other top party leaders for his earlier decision.

He expressed gratitude to several individuals, including the Deputy Governor of Yobe State, Hon. Idi Barde Gubana, for their

intervention in the matter. Jakusko's reinstatement is seen as a significant development in the party's efforts to maintain unity and stability ahead of future elections."

Politics Mass Defection Boosts APC In Kebbi

By Musa Abubakar

Kebbi State Governor, Dr. Nasir Idris, has received key leaders of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and their supporters who joined the ruling party in Kalgo, Jega, and Aliero Local Government Areas on Thursday.

In Kalgo LGA, Alhaji Umar Namashaya Diggi led hundreds of his supporters into the APC. Similarly, in Jega LGA, Alhaji Atiku Bunu, a former Commissioner of Works, defected

alongside thousands of PDP supporters.

In Aliero LGA, Alhaji Abubakar Abba Alieru, younger brother of Senator Muhammadu Adamu Alieru, and former Commissioner for Education, Alhaji Muhammadu Magawata Alieru, also joined the APC with a significant number of followers.

This is contained in a statement by the Governor Nasir Idris' spokesperson, Yahya Sarki.

Speaking on behalf of the defectors in Jega, Alhaji

Atiku Bunu cited Governor Idris' outstanding achievements and commitment to development as reasons for their decision to align with the APC. He also appealed for the immediate reopening of the College of Health Technology, Jega, to prevent disruptions to the academic calendar.

Responding to the appeal, Governor Idris directed the Ministry of Higher Education to reopen the college without delay, emphasizing his administration's focus on advancing education in the state. "I am committed to ensuring the growth and development of our state, particularly in the education sector," he said.

During the event, Professor Khalid Suleiman Jega, Chairman of the Kebbi State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), highlighted the governor's education-focused initiatives in Jega LGA, including the construction and renovation of class-

rooms, provision of school furniture, installation of boreholes, and fencing of schools.

In Aliero LGA, Alhaji Muhammadu Magawata Alieru, speaking on behalf of the defectors, praised Governor Idris for his dedication to governance and improving the well-being of Kebbi residents. He assured the governor of their loyalty, stating, "Our return to the APC is not for personal gain but to contribute to the development of the state under your exemplary leadership." He also hinted that Senator Muhammadu Adamu Alieru would soon join the APC.

In recognition of Governor Idris' support for persons with disabilities, Alhaji Malami Gwandu, Chairman of the Kebbi State Commission for Persons Living with Disability, presented him with a Merit Award, describing him as a "Pillar of Care for Persons."



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4. Young Leaders Training Programme	2 Weeks	Lagos	N1,600,000.00	6 February
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7. Strategic Board Leadership Development Programme.	6 Weeks	Lagos	N5,000,000.00	26 February
8. Entrepreneurship Intrapreneurship and Innovation in Emerging Markets	4 Weeks	Lagos	N1,600,000.00	5 March
9. Corporate Governance and Policy Management Development	6 Weeks	Lagos	N1,600,000.00	14 March
10. Strategic Marketing Management	6 Weeks	Lagos	N1,600,000.00	20 March
11. Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Effectiveness	5 Weeks	Lagos	N1,600,000.00	27 March
12. Digital Transformation and Business Strategy Development for Emerging Business Leaders	6 Weeks	Lagos	N2,000,000.00	2 April
13. Board Dynamics and Executive Decision-Making	6 Weeks	Lagos	N2,000,000.00	10 April
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17. Strategic Leadership and Change Management for Business Leadership	6 Weeks	Lagos	N5,000,000.00	19 May
18. Advanced Leadership Development for Public Office Holders	6 Weeks	Abuja	N2,000,000.00	28 May
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Tinubu appoints new chairman for UNIABUJA teaching hospital

By Nathaniel Gubniba

President Bola Tinubu has appointed Dr Ikwe Oriko from Delta State as the new Chairman of the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital.

Mr Bayo Onanuga, Special Adviser to the President, Information & Strategy, made this known in a statement on Friday in Abuja.

The presidential aide said "Oriko joins the new board chairpersons announced earlier today.

The Presidency also wishes to clarify a few things about the list of Board chairmen announced today.

Duro Meseko from Kogi state is the Chairman of the Nigerian Building and Road Research Institute. What appears to be a duplication has been corrected.

Also, Mr Yahaya Wurno from Sokoto, not Ambassador Wurno, is the Chairman of Sokoto-Rima River Basin Development Authority. The mix up is regretted," said Onanuga.

Wike Mourns General Jeremiah Useni

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Minister, Nyesom Wike, has described the death of one of his predecessors Lt. General Jeremiah Timbut Useni, as the "fall of one of the biggest trees in the forest of Nigeria" saying that the retired Army General will be missed by all.

Reacting to the death of General Useni through his Senior Special Assistant on Public Communications and Social Media, the FCT Minister said, he (Useni) was a leader Nigerians will never forget for helping to develop the FCT when he served as the Minister between 1993 and 1998.

Wike said "From joining

the Army at the age of 14, to becoming the Military Governor of the defunct Bendel State, Minister of Transport, Quarter-Master General of the Nigeria Army, FCT Minister and Senator for the Plateau South of Plateau State, Lt. General Jeremiah Timbut Useni, can be said to be among those Nigerians who saw it all and lived a life of service to the country.

"He was a jolly good fellow, fondly called 'Jerry Boy,' who took service to the people as his number one priority.

"Nigerians, especially the Tarok people of Plateau State will never forget the late General for epitomising great virtues.

"He will be sorely missed by the entire people of Plateau State, Nigerian Armed Forces and Nigerians in general.

"On behalf of myself and residents of the FCT, I mourn the departure of General Jeremiah Timbut Useni, a great man, a Patriot, a fine military officer, a Politician, a Peacemaker and a man of faith in the Almighty God.



2027: Don Rallies Support For Orji Kalu In Abia North

A renowned academician, Professor Kalu Eni, has urged the people of Abia State to rally around the lawmaker representing Abia North Senatorial District, Senator Orji Uzor Kalu, by persuading other political parties not to field candidates against him in the 2027 National Assembly elections.

Eni described Senator Kalu's performance as incredible and inspiring, particularly "his ability to facilitate the construction of over 80 schools across Abia North Senatorial District in a single budget", which he described as the first of its kind in Nigeria.

Speaking in a chat with newsmen, Professor Eni praised Senator Kalu as a leader committed to investing in the future of young children through quality and free education, a practice he began during his tenure as

the governor of Abia State.

"When I heard that Senator Orji Uzor Kalu has renovated over 100 schools, I initially doubted it until I reviewed the 2024 budget to study the performance of lawmakers. I was astonished to see that he facilitated the construction of 80 schools in Abia North Senatorial District within a single budget year. I felt truly proud to come from Abia North. It is time we protect him jealously. This achievement is the first of its kind in the history of Nigeria, and I implore Abians to persuade political parties to unanimously adopt him as the sole candidate in 2027. We cannot afford to lose such a performer. Every sensible Abian should join hands with him for the overall development of Abia North Senatorial District and Abia State as a whole.



The newly built Bola Ahmed Tinubu Barracks in Abuja, commissioned with the aim of improving the living conditions of dedicated soldiers and their families.

President Tinubu Inaugurates New Army Barracks In Asokoro, Abuja

By Nathaniel Gubniba

President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, has commissioned the newly constructed Nigerian Army Barracks in Asokoro, Abuja. The state-of-the-art facility, named after the President, marks a significant milestone in efforts to improve the welfare and living conditions of Nigerian Army personnel as they fulfill their constitutional duty to defend the nation.

During the commissioning ceremony, President Tinubu emphasized that the project underscores the Federal Government's dedication to prioritizing the welfare of troops. He highlighted

the importance of providing modern office spaces and residential accommodations to create a conducive environment for the officers and soldiers. The President reaffirmed his administration's unwavering commitment to equipping the military with the resources needed to effectively carry out their responsibilities.

Describing the troops as the nation's heroes, President Tinubu praised their resilience and steadfastness in ensuring Nigeria's security. He also commended the Army leadership for their vision and execution of the barracks project, as well as the collective contributions of all personnel who ensured its timely completion. He urged the Nigerian Army to maintain continuous devel-

opment, proper maintenance of facilities, and a steadfast commitment to troop welfare.

In his remarks, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt Gen Olufemi Oluyede, expressed gratitude to President Tinubu for his exceptional support for the Nigerian Army. He noted that naming the barracks after the President was a gesture of appreciation for his efforts to address accommodation challenges and strengthen the operational capacity of the Army.

Lt Gen Oluyede acknowledged the contributions of his predecessors, Lt Gen Farouk Yahaya and the late Lt Gen Taoreed Lagbaja, who initiated and pursued the project to address the critical housing needs of Army

personnel. He revealed that phases 1 and 2 of the project have been completed, providing accommodation for 614 personnel, including 170 officers, 444 soldiers, and their families. He expressed optimism that phases 3 and 4 would be completed expeditiously with the continued support of the Federal Government.

The COAS pledged the Army's loyalty to the Constitution and the Government, reaffirming its commitment to fostering national security and socio-economic development. He also called on the government and Nigerians to continue supporting the welfare of troops, whose dedication ensures a secure and prosperous Nigeria.

Wike Bags Leadership Newspapers Quinquennial Award As Outstanding Person In Governance and Infrastructure For 2024

By Nathaniel Gubniba

The Minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Barrister Ezenwo Nyesom Wike has been chosen by the Leadership Newspapers as its Quinquennial Award of Outstanding Person in Governance and Infrastructure for the Year 2024.

The award is held once in five years.

A letter conveying the award notification, dated January 13, 2025, and signed by the Senior Vice Chairman and Editor-in-chief of Leadership Newspapers, Azubuike Ishiekwe, was presented to the Minister today.

Mrs Zainab Nda-Isaiah, Chairman of Leadership Group, led the Management

Team comprising of Mr Ishiekwe and the Senior Director, Adverts, Fadilah Ismail.

The letter read; "On behalf of Leadership Group, I have the pleasure to convey to you the decision of our Nomination and Selection Committee, which met on the 29th of October 2024 and attended by our senior editors, top management and members of Leadership Advisory Board, which chose you as Quinquennial Award of Outstanding Person in Governance and Infrastructure for the Year 2024 as earlier announced on our platforms."

Stating reason for the award, the letter read further, "Amid several nominees with excellent credentials, you have been selected for this

prestigious award for your consistent record of achievement in ensuring massive development through the provision of infrastructure for both rural and urban dwellers wherever you govern, which has earned you the nickname 'Mr Project's, the selection board found you most qualified as Quinquennial Award of Outstanding Person in Governance and Infrastructure for the Year 2024."

The award ceremony comes up on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at the Banquet Hall, State House, Aso Villa, Abuja.

Accepting the award, the FCT Minister thanked Leadership Group for founding him worthy of the honour.

He assured that he will continue work for the benefits of the people.

"When I was governor, Leadership Newspapers also gave me an award. I sincerely thank you.

"For us, there are no excuses. Mr President has given us this opportunity and we must do everything possible to make sure that our people are happy.

"Mr President has given us all the supports that we requested for to enable us do our job. For us therefore, there is no excuses. We have to do our jobs.

"I want to assure that we will not relent. Rather, this award will spur us to do more. God willing, by the time Mr President finishes his first tenure, everybody would have been able to see that he came prepared and he meant well for this country."

Ebonyi: EBBC Boss, Nwizi Calls For Integration Of Local Media Providers Into Govt. Scheme

By Chijioke Njoku, Abakaliki

The Director General of Ebonyi Broadcasting Cooperation EBBC, Chief Tony Nwizi, has underscored the strategic importance of local media content in publicizing and advancement of government developmental policies at all levels. Hence the need for full integration of local media content providers in the scheme of things in the state.

Chief Nwizi made the disclosure when a delegation of

members of Local Tabloids and Online media in the state led by the Chairman, Comrade Celestine Chidi Okeh, paid him a courtesy visit in his office recently.

Chief Nwizi, a seasoned Journalist and former Chairman of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, NUJ, Ebonyi state council, noted that local and online media remains a driving force of development at the grassroots and always provide veritable platform in defense of Government policies and programs.

He promised to

synergize with the State government media handlers to ensure that local media providers are properly integrated in the state government programme, so as to alleviate some of the prevailing challenges bedeviling them.

Earlier, the leader of the delegation, and publisher of The Times Newspaper and Ebonyitimesnews online, Comrade Celestine Okeh said the visit was to familiarize themselves with the DG in the new Year. He however decried the level of

marginalization, segregation and exclusion of their members from anything that comes from government, especially during the festive periods, and called on the Director General to help reach the authorities involved for proper action, pledging the continued support of members in driving home the policies and programs of State Government through objective and balanced reportage.

Comrade Celestine Okeh Commended Chief Nwizi for his commitment in imple-

menting Governor Francis Nwifuru's people's charter of needs in EBBC through massive infrastructural and technical transformation. He Congratulated him on the recent honour bestowed on him by his people, Ezeakataka Enyim Agbaja community, as IDENYI OHA DOBERU 1 of Enyim Agbaja community, Izzi Local Government Area of the State.

On his part, the financial secretary of Nigeria Union of Journalists, NUJ Ebonyi state council and publisher of

peoples' Guide Newspaper, Comrade Israel Ekene Mbam, lauded the strides of Chief Tony Nwizi and his numerous interventions in welfare of journalists in the State. He noted with dissatisfaction, uncountable times members of local Tabloids and Online media were marginalized and called for urgent steps to correct it as members of local Tabloids and Online media are equally partners in the business of governance in the state.

Coordinator, National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS), South-East Zone, Comrade Charles Obinna Ijeomah and Secretary, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Mr. Muhammad Hammajoda, at the Commission headquarters, when the students union paid a condolence visit to the EFCC's over the loss of one of its operatives, Aminu Sahabi Salisu recently.



Enugu Govt Threatens To Terminate Contracts Over Shoddy Jobs

The Secretary to the Enugu State Government (SSG), Chidiebere Onyia, has threatened to terminate contracts of contractors doing shoddy jobs in the Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area of the state.

Mr Onyia, a professor, disclosed this on Friday, while inspecting the ongoing construction of Smart Green Schools and Type-3 Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) across the local government area, alongside his team and the Igbo-Etiti Chairperson, Eric Odo.

He expressed displeasure with contractors who would not deliver projects in record time, hinting that the government would blacklist such in Enugu State.

The SSG charged the contractors and the site engineers to strictly adhere to the approved building plan given to them, and avoid using substandard materials for the projects.

He said the state government had made adequate

funds available for the projects, and would hold any contractor, whose work was faulty, responsible.

"If you encounter any issue, please report it to the LGA chairman, who will also in turn report to me, and be assured that the issue will be resolved immediately, so you can proceed with the project.

"You do not have any reason to delay this work because our governor, Dr Peter Mbah, has provided you with everything you need to deliver at the record time.

"This inspection is in line with the state government's determination to ensure that contractors execute quality projects, and will continue till the projects are delivered," the SSG said.

On his part, the Igbo-Etiti council chairperson, Mr Odo urged contractors to speed up the progress of work, as the council was eagerly waiting to have the Smart Schools and the PHCs completed.

Anambra State Cracks Down On Crime: Government Demolishes Hotel Used as Kidnappers' Hideout

The Anambra State Government has taken a bold step to ensure citizens' safety by demolishing a hotel used as a hideout by kidnappers.

The hotel, Udoka Golden Point Hotel and Suites, also known as "La Cruise Hotel," was located along the Onitsha-Owerri Road in Oba, Idemili South Local Government Area.

This move is part of Operation Udo Ga Ach? an

initiative launched by Governor Chukwuma Soludo to tackle insecurity in the state. The operation, backed by the Ag?naehemba security network, aims to flush out criminal elements and restore peace to communities across Anambra.

The government has made it clear that it will not tolerate any establishment that serves as a safe haven for criminals. According to a government spokesperson,

"This is about protecting the lives and livelihoods of Ndi Anambra. We will continue to act decisively to ensure peace and security in our state".

This development comes after a similar incident in Enugu State, where the government demolished a building used as a kidnappers' den, warning property owners to be vigilant about their properties' use.



Charles Soludo

NUC Approves New ICT University For Ebonyi

The National Universities Commission (NUC) has approved the take-off of the new Ebonyi State University of ICT, Science and Technology, Oferekepe.

Executive Secretary of NUC, Prof. Abdullahi Ribadu, presented a letter of recognition of the new university to Governor Francis Nwifuru of Ebonyi State on Thursday in Abuja.

Ribadu while noting that the institution is now recognised as the 66th state university in Nigeria and the

278th in the Nigerian University System, disclosed that a copy of the recognition letter would be forwarded to the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND).

He, however, revealed that the university will only commence academic activities after the necessary resource verification.

"We want to say on the

part of the Commission, we are ready and willing to support this young university."

However, we need to indicate that giving a recognition letter is not equated with starting or commencement of academic activities. We will still have to undertake what is called resource verification.

"The Commission will visit when the university is ready, it will invite the Commission to go and look at the state of affairs, to look at the infrastructure, to look at the classrooms, look at the

library, look at the staffing.

"After that, the Commission will give the go-ahead for commencement of academic activities. It is pertinent to note that this university becomes the 66th state university," he said.

Nwifuru warns scholarship beneficiaries against becoming 'nuisance' abroad

On his part, the Ebonyi State Governor said the university was proclaimed in 2021, adding that the reason for its establishment is to increase access to higher education.

Ivo Council Chairman, Ajah Applauds Gov. Nwifuru For Sponsorship Of 204 Students To Study Abroad

By Chijioke Njoku, Abakaliki

The Chairman of Ivo Local Government Area, Chief Ajah Emmanuel Ogbonna, has commended Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru for sponsoring 204 Ebonyi students to study at United Kingdom on scholarship scheme.

Chief Ajah made this statement in an interview with journalists after the departure of the students at Chuba Okadigbo International Airport in Abakaliki.

The council chairman noted that over twenty students from Ivo were among the beneficiaries of this scholarship program.

He praised Governor Nwifuru for his dedication to the educational develop-

ment of Ebonyi State and lauded him for being a leader with remarkable capacity and prowess in governance.

The council boss who described the initiative as unprecedented in the state and in Nigeria as a whole, emphasized Governor Nwifuru's trailblazing efforts in the human capital development sector.

He called on the scholarship recipients to seize this opportunity to excel and bring pride to Ebonyi State during their studies in the United Kingdom.

"The announcement of Governor Nwifuru's sponsorship of the 204 students to the UK has been welcomed with enthusiasm and appreciation by the residents of Ivo Local Government Area.

IGP Inaugurates Newly Recruited Police Constables, Warn Against Human Rights Abuse

By Samuel Luka, Bauchi

The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kayode Adeolu Egbetokun has inaugurated the Newly recruited 2022 batch constables, warning them against engaging in professional misconduct and Human Rights violation.

The IGP who gave the warning while speaking at the passing out Parade ceremony of 10,000 police constables of 2022 batch in Bauchi on Thursday, charged them to abhor all forms of lawlessness, human

rights abuse, and unprofessional conduct.

The IGP who further enjoined the new recruits to utilize their authority to protect citizens, enforce laws, and apprehend

criminals, noted that the passing out parade is been held concurrently across four police colleges and twelve police training schools of Nigeria.

He explained that the constables have been impacted with the necessary orientation to effectively address the complex security challenges facing the country while

adhering to the principles of the law.

Represented by the Police Commissioner, Bauchi state Command, Auwal Musa Muhammad, the IGP said that the passing out parade ceremony, marks the

culmination of six-months rigorous training program that has pushed the recruits to their physical and intellectual limits.

The police boss stressed that high expectations have been placed on the graduating constables, with confidence that they

will uphold the values imparted to them during their training,

thereby contributing to the enhancement of law enforcement in the country.

IGP Egbetokun praised President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his administration's commitment to strengthening the Nigeria Police Force by addressing the longstanding manpower deficit.

"The President's approval for the annual recruitment of 30,000 Police Constables over the next few years is expected to

strengthen our internal security, enhance police performance, and promote optimal police service delivery nationwide", he said.

The IGP assured that the police under his watch is fully aligned with the President Tinubu's vision towards driving the renewed hope initiative of transforming the

Nigeria Police Force into a reformed, well-positioned, and

capable institution that effectively fulfills its internal security mandate Pursuant to the Community Policing principle of the current police

administration.

He said that the force has posted a significant majority of the newly graduated Police Constables to their states of origin to augment ongoing law enforcement efforts and reinforce the fight against crime at the grassroots level.

The IGP reminded the new constables that their role demands empathy and compassion towards the civilian population, particularly the vulnerable, while maintaining firmness and fairness in all interactions.



A cross-section of the parents of the victims of the Diko Petrol Tanker explosion, during the visit of NEMA DG to families of the Diko Petrol Tanker explosion at Gurara LGA, Niger State

Bauchi To reconstruct Residence Of First Civilian Governor Tafari Ali, NECO Office

By Samuel Luka, Bauchi

The Bauchi state Executive Council (SEC) has granted approval for the reconstruction of residence of the first Civilian Governor of the state, Alhaji Abubakar Tafari Ali.

Our correspondent reports that Alhaji Abubakar Tafari Ali was elected in 1979 as the first civilian Governor of Bauchi state and held office until the military coup of 31 December 1983 which brought General Muhammadu Buhari to power.

The Commissioner of Housing and Environment in the state, Rt. Honourable Danlami Kawule who disclosed this while briefing newsmen on the outcome of the State Executive Council SEC meeting which took place on Thursday, added that his ministry also presented a memo for the reconstruction of NECO office in the state and was approved.

According to him, the NECO office in Bauchi which was under construction some years ago got revoked

because the work was abandoned.

"We all know that NECO is a federal government agency but they have state offices and that of Bauchi was under construction and was not completed years back. The contract was revoked because it was abandoned and the dilapidation level is high", the Commissioner disclosed.

He further noted that the third memo approved by the SEC from his ministry was the renovation of the NYSC Orientation Camp at wailo, which he said has been in a state of dilapidation.

"The NYSC Orientation Camp at wailo has been in a state of dilapidation. His Excellency the Executive Governor of Bauchi, Senator Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed visited the place some few months ago and asked the ministry to come up with quotation for its renovation and reconstruction quickly", the Commissioner added.

"We forwarded to him, the request for the work for ratification of the Council and thank God we have gotten it", he said.

Fintiri Pledges Adamawa NYSC Camp Upgrade

Governor Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri of Adamawa State has pledged to renovate facilities at the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) orientation camp in Damare, Girei Local Government Area, to enhance its suitability for activities.

The Governor made this commitment during the 2025 orientation course for 1,700 Batch C Stream II corps members deployed to the state.

Represented by Dr. Edgar Amos, Chief of Staff, Government House, Yola,

Fintiri emphasized the significance of the orientation course in equipping corps members for national development.

He urged them to maximize opportunities presented by Adamawa's favourable climate and the establishment of the Adamawa Investment Promotion Agency to thrive during their service year.

"Consider yourselves as bona fide members of the community, immerse yourselves in the culture, and maintain healthy relationships. Adamawa is one of the

most peaceful states in the country, but I urge you to remain security conscious and apply the tips you'll receive during this period," he said.

The Chairman of the NYSC State Governing Board and Commissioner for Youth and Sports Development, Barrister Wali Yakubu, encouraged corps members to embrace the Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED) program, positioning themselves as job creators rather than job seekers.

Earlier, NYSC State Coordinator, Mr Ateli Samson,

praised Governor Fintiri for his generosity, including the donation of 50 bags of rice, 10 cows, and 10 jerricans of oil for corps members.

He also lauded the recent increment of corps members' allowances to N20,000 and the improved feeding arrangements at the camp.

The oath of allegiance was administered by the State Chief Judge, Justice Hapsat Abdurrahman, represented by Justice Helen Hammanjoda.

United Nations Resolving The Humanitarian Crisis In North-east Nigeria

The United Nations (UN) has emphasized that resolving the humanitarian crisis in North-East Nigeria requires a focus on development and peacebuilding efforts rather than relying solely on humanitarian interventions.

Speaking at the launch of the 2025 Nigeria Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan at the UN House in Abuja, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Mohammed Fall, highlighted the need for a strategic shift.

He noted that with humanitarian aid dwindling

globally, there is an urgent need to ensure efficient management of available resources.

The UN is seeking \$910 million to support 3.6 million people in dire need of humanitarian assistance across Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states.

Fall said: "But humanitarian interventions are not the solutions for these problems across Nigeria. What is required is development and peacebuilding efforts, combined with humanitarian action, to address the underlying causes of these needs.

He said that there are humanitarian needs across Nigeria due to a diverse range of causes – from food insecurity to internal displacement due to intercommunal clashes, as well as climate change impacts among other risks, adding that: "In 2025, food insecurity across Nigeria is projected to affect over 33 million people during the lean season, with alarming levels of acute malnutrition threatening the lives of millions of children. These figures underscore the gravity of the challenges we face."

"In Borno, Adamawa,

and Yobe states, the 2025 HNRP aims to provide life-saving assistance to 3.6 million out of 7.8 million people requiring urgent assistance with a financial requirement of a little over US\$ 900 million. The HNRP prioritizes women, children, and persons with disabilities, stressing that: "We cannot ignore the stark reality of declining global funding for humanitarian efforts.

"We have to become more efficient in terms of delivery of humanitarian action. We have to consider carefully who delivers what

and how to make sure that scarce resources are put to the best possible use. This may include anticipatory action, acting before disaster strikes to mitigate the impact and directly funding the local partners who often ultimately deliver the assistance.

"Together, we must continue making a difference in the lives of affected people.

"I urge donors to close the funding gap and appeal to the private sector and the Government to play a more significant role in supporting humanitarian action.

"I also reaffirm the United

Nations' unwavering commitment to working hand in hand with the Nigerian Government, partners, and communities to alleviate suffering and reduce affected people's vulnerability."

Fall also revealed that in 2024, the Humanitarian Response Plan for north-east Nigeria "received 57 per cent in funding (about \$527 million out of the total ask of almost \$927 million) to respond to the critical needs of 4.4 million people out of 8.1 million people in need of life-saving humanitarian assistance"

Federal Government Approves Construction of 10,000 BPD Refinery in Delta State

By Francis Sadhere, Warri

The Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) has granted approval for the construction of a new refinery with a capacity of 10,000 barrels per day (BPD) in Delta State.

This approval was issued to MRO Energy Limited, a prominent energy company, for the establishment of the refinery in Imode, Ughelli, Delta State.

The NMDPRA's Chief

Executive, Farouk Ahmed, formally presented the License to Establish the refinery to MRO Energy Limited on Tuesday.

The move is part of the federal government's ongoing efforts to boost Nigeria's refining capacity and reduce its reliance on imported refined products.

This new project follows the issuance of another refinery license in November to Process Design and Development Limited for the construction of a 27,000 BPD refinery in Dole-Wure, located in Gombe State.

With these recent approvals, Nigeria now has approximately 11 operational and modular refineries, contributing to the country's refining capacity.

In addition to these developments, the Petroleum Products Retail Outlets Owners Association of Nigeria recently announced plans to partner with stakeholders to build a new refinery with an initial capacity of 50,000 BPD.

Despite these positive steps, many of Nigeria's existing refineries remain underutilized or non-

operational, failing to run at full capacity. Nevertheless, the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission has set a domestic refining target of 770,500 barrels of oil per day to improve local refining operations.

The government's efforts to expand and modernize Nigeria's refining capacity aim to strengthen the domestic oil sector, reduce dependence on imports, and create more jobs within the industry.



PTI SUG Inauguration: Dr. Onoji Charges New Executives on Accountability, Peace, and Leadership

By Francis Sadhere, Warri

The newly inaugurated Students Union Government (SUG) of the Petroleum Training Institute (PTI), Effurun, has been urged to uphold accountability, dialogue, and peace as they lead the student body for the 2024/2025 academic year.

During the inauguration ceremony held at the Institute's Council Chamber, Dr. Samuel E. Onoji, Principal and Chief Executive of PTI, addressed the new leaders, emphasizing the importance of effective leadership.

Represented by Dr. (Mrs.) Tina Isichei, Director of Research and Development at PTI, Dr. Onoji urged the SUG executives to prioritize maintaining peace and serenity within the Institute.

"It is a privilege to be elected as the student's representative, and you should make it count. Any issues you have with the management should be resolved through dialogue, not through insults or protests," Dr. Onoji said.

He emphasized that accountability is crucial, especially when managing student funds, urging the new

leaders to handle their responsibilities with transparency.

The PTI Chief Executive reminded the SUG officials about the importance of abiding by the Institute's policies, particularly its zero-tolerance stance on cultism, examination malpractice, and other social vices.

He called on the student leaders to champion these values and create a conducive environment for learning.

Dr. Onoji also addressed the issue of examination postponements, stressing the negative impact on final-year students who, due to delays, risk missing graduation deadlines and opportunities such as the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and timely entry into the job market.

"Examination postponement should be a thing of the past," he urged, encouraging the new SUG to ensure that classes and exams proceed as scheduled.

In his speech, Dr. Onoji emphasized that the role of student leadership is not one of bullying or intimidation, but of service to others, with a commitment to fulfilling the needs of the student body.



The Executive Director of Project DESOPADEC Chief Dr. Ebenezer Okorodudu (right) received a delegation of Community Development Committee (CDC) led by President General Owevwe Community Mr. Philip Akpovwokoko in the Commission's headquarters in Warri.

DESOPADEC Executive Director Reaffirms Commitment to Developing Oil-Producing Communities

By Francis Sadhere, Warri

The Executive Director of Projects at the Delta State Oil Producing Area Development Commission (DESOPADEC), Chief Dr. Ebenezer Okorodudu, has reiterated the Commission's commitment to addressing underdevelopment in oil-bearing communities. This statement came during a meeting with a delegation from the Community Development Committee (CDC) of Eriemu Field, led by Mr. Philip Akpovwokoko, the President General of Owevwe Community, at the Commission's headquarters in Warri.

In his address, Chief Okorodudu emphasized that Owevwe, an oil-producing community with a flow sta-

tion, deserves equitable development. He remarked, "Eriemu Field is one of the richest oil installations in all of Africa, yet it is unfortunate that funds generated from this resource are used to support the country's 774 local governments." He vowed to address the development concerns raised by the CDC, citing that the creation of DESOPADEC was a direct response to the challenges faced by oil-producing communities.

The delegation presented several requests to the Executive Director, highlighting the need for key infrastructure improvements. Okorodudu assured them that the Commission would give due consideration to these demands. "Fighting for derivation, which led to the creation of DESOPADEC,

was meant to address the underdevelopment of these communities," he said.

Mr. Onome Esakpaide, the Public Relations Officer of the CDC, conveyed the group's congratulations to Chief Okorodudu for his appointment, acknowledging his experience and vision for the development of oil-producing communities. He also highlighted that Owevwe community is composed of seven sister communities, which include Owevwe, Opherin, Gana, Otokutu, Saniko, Agbaide, and Ughere. These areas, despite housing oil wells, flow stations, and the largest manifold in West Africa, continue to suffer from a lack of basic amenities, particularly citing the dilapidated 11-kilometer road linking Owevwe to Otokutu.

On behalf of the seven communities, Mr. Akpovwokoko formally presented several requests to Chief Okorodudu. These included the construction of an administrative block for Owevwe Secondary School, renovation of the Owevwe Community Health Center, rehabilitation of Opherin Community Primary School, as well as water projects, solar-powered street lighting, and medical equipment for the Gana Community Health Centre.

Mr. Akpovwokoko prayed for divine guidance and blessings on Chief Okorodudu as he fulfills his responsibilities in promoting the development of Delta State's oil-producing communities.

Governor Eno: My Focus Is Good Governance For A'Ibom, Not Political Gamesmanship

Governor Umo Eno has reaffirmed his commitment to delivering good governance to the people of Akwa Ibom State, emphasizing that he will not be distracted by political gamesmanship.

The governor made this assertion in a press release issued by his Chief Press Secretary, addressing allegations made by a faceless political group identified as "Concerned Members of the All Progressives Congress in Akwa Ibom State."

The group had published an advertorial in which the governor's office dismissed as a baseless attempt at blackmail.

Refuting the allegations, the Chief Press Secretary stated, "Our attention has been drawn to an advertorial published in The Nation newspaper of Janu-

ary 22, 2025, by an amorphous group under the name Concerned Members of the All Progressives Congress in Akwa Ibom State.

"The authors, in what was purely a politically motivated hatchet job, maliciously concocted a rich cocktail of lies and blackmail against the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Pastor Umo Eno, PhD."

Governor Eno reiterated his administration's resolve to remain focused on the state's development agenda and not be swayed by politically motivated distractions.

The statement noted that the intent of such advertorial was to strain the warm relationship between the Governor and President Tinubu, the Senate President and the Minister of Petroleum.

Lagos To Host The Maiden Edition Of Bola Ahmed Tinubu South West Alliance Games

The Lagos State Sports Commission (LSSC) and Practagali Partners, organisers of the maiden Bola Ahmed Tinubu South West Alliance Games (BAT SWAG), have announced that the inaugural edition of the games will be hosted in Lagos.

BATSWAG, a unifying sports initiative led by Practagali Partners, is designed to discover emerging under-18 athletes from across the Southwest region, encourage mass participation in sports, and provide

opportunities for talented athletes to showcase their skills and build a career in sports.

Scheduled for March 2025, the highly anticipated competition will bring together promising young talents from Lagos, Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Ekiti, to compete in various sporting disciplines, including Athletics (Track & Field), Basketball, Boxing, Football, Table Tennis, Traditional African games, Ayo-Olopon and Abula.

BATSWAG aims to promote youth development,

stimulate sports participation, and encourage inclusivity through adaptive sports. The event will showcase the immense sporting potential within the South-western region while creating opportunities for budding athletes to shine on a regional stage.

Speaking on the upcoming tournament, the Director-General of LSSC, Lekan Fatodu, expressed enthusiasm about Lagos being identified as the state where the event will be hosted.

"Hosting the inaugural edition of the Bola Ahmed

Tinubu Southwest Alliance Games in Lagos is an honour, and it speaks volumes about the support and commitment of Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu to sports over the years, which has laid the foundation and created many opportunities and resources for Lagos to be the ideal location for any great sporting events. The future of sports in the South-West region is bright, and the BAT SWAG Games will undoubtedly serve as a springboard for young athletes aiming for national and international success," he

noted.

Ms. Funmilola Adedipe, Managing Director of Practagali Partners, highlighted the broader impact of the event, noting that it aims to promote positive engagement among youth and rescue them from the grip of social vices prevalent in society.

According to her, "The BAT SWAG Games will not only nurture talent but also serve as a vital tool for social reformation, using sports as a vehicle for development, empowerment, and hope."

Adedipe also highlighted

the significance of Practagali Partners' collaboration with the Lagos State Government, noting that the partnership will create sustainable opportunities for youth and further the cause of grassroots sports development across the region.

"This partnership with Lagos as the host state will bolster efforts to engage youth meaningfully, and we look forward to discovering new talents that can potentially represent Nigeria on the global stage," Adedipe added.

Appeal Court Upholds Death Sentence Of Adedoyin Over Murder Of OAU Student

The court of appeal in Akure, Ondo state, has upheld the death sentence of Rahman Adedoyin, the owner of Hilton Hotel in Ile-Ife, Osun state, for the murder of Timothy Adegoke, a postgraduate student at Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU).

Adedoyin was sentenced to death by hanging in May 2023 by the Osun state high court after being found guilty of the 2021 murder.

Oyebola Ojo, the trial judge, also convicted two others in connection with the crime.

The court ordered the forfeiture of the hotel and a Hilux bus used to transport Adegoke's body to a dumping site.

In November 2021, Adegoke traveled from Abuja to Moro, Osun state, to sit for an exam at OAU's distance learning centre.

He checked into Hilton Hotel but was reported missing two days later. His body was later discovered, prompting investigations that linked his death to Adedoyin and others.

Displeased by the judgment of the high court, Adedoyin approached the appeal court to dismiss the sentence and conviction.

Kehinde Eleja, counsel to Adedoyin, argued that neither the evidence nor the witnesses proved Adedoyin's involvement in the murder case.

On Thursday, a three-member panel led by Olufemi Akeju upheld the conviction and death sentence of the hotelier, affirming the high court's decision.

The court, however, overturned the earlier order requiring Adedoyin to forfeit his hotel and fund the education of Adegoke's children.

MOT Taak Force Impound Buses Obstructing Traffic At Berger Bridge

In response to the non-compliance of bus drivers at the Berger Bridge, the Ministry of Transportation, in collaboration with the Lagos State TASKFORCE, conducted an enforcement exercise to clear the bridge of commercial vehicles indiscriminately parked along the corridor.

The operation followed multiple warnings to bus drivers to desist from using the road infrastructure as an unauthorised garage/park, which has turned the stretch of the bridge into a gridlock point and impeding smooth vehicular movement.

The Commissioner for Transportation, Mr. Oluwaseun Osiyemi,

emphasised that the State Government will not tolerate the disregard of repeated warnings, reiterating that the State Traffic Laws must be strictly enforced and complied with by all road users across the metropolis.

He further stated that all apprehended bus drivers and impounded vehicles will face penalties in accordance with the 2018 State Traffic Law. Additionally, the Commissioner expressed confidence that the clampdown which will be consistently monitored will serve as a deterrent to others, as the State Government remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring orderliness on Lagos roads.



A cross section of the newly officers of Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN), Western Zone during their swearing in ceremony, at the Annual General Meeting/Elections 2025 of IPMAN, in Ibadan

EFCC Arraigns Five For Alleged Tampering With Forfeited Property in Lagos

The Lagos Zonal Directorate of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, recently, arraigned Benjamin Okoye, Moughalu David Arinze, Okey Okeke, Ekene Mgbeokwere and Eboh Thaddeus on a one-count charge bordering on alleged tampering with a forfeited property before Justice A.O. Owoeye of the Federal High Court sitting in Ikoyi, Lagos.

The court reads: "That you, Ilongwo Angela (NOW AT LARGE), Benjamin Okoye, Moughalu David Arinze, Okey Okeke, Ekene Mgbeokwere, Eboh Thaddeus, sometime in July, 2024 in Lagos State, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, without due authorization dealt, with the property of Obinna Ezenwaka situate and located at Plot 165C, Block 12, Amuwo Odofin, Ajayi Street, Diamond Estate, Amuwo Odofin, Lagos, subject of interim forfeiture to the Federal Government of Nigeria, and you thereby committed an offence contrary to and punishable under Section 32(1) of the Economic and Financial

Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act, 2004."

The defendants pleaded "not guilty" to the charge preferred against them.

In view of their pleas, the prosecution counsel, Hannatu .U. Kofar Naisa, informed the court of the presence of a witness and that he was ready to proceed with the trial.

Counsel to the first to fourth defendants, M.C. Odo informed the court of pending bail applications for the defendants and also prayed the court to move the same. Counsel to the fifth defendant, N. Chukwuemeka, informed the court of the existing bail previously granted to the defendant.

Odo further prayed the court to admit the defendants to bail, adding that they had been in prison custody for some time. However, Kofar Naisa, in response, informed the court that she had not received the bail applications being moved by the counsel to the first to fourth defendants and that it was not before the court.

The court confirmed it was not on its record.

After listening to both parties, Justice Owoeye fixed January 24, 2025, for ruling on the bail applications by the defence counsel.

Thereafter, the prosecution counsel called on Abubakar Mohammed, an operative of the EFCC, to review the facts of the case. Mohammed told the court that he works as the custodian of assets in interim or final forfeiture with the EFCC.

When asked by the prosecution counsel if he knew the defendants, he answered in the affirmative. According to him, "I met them during the inspection of Plot 165C, Block 12, Diamond Estate, Amuwo Odofin, Lagos State."

"The EFCC had obtained an interim order of the property. The Proceeds of Crime Management Unit that takes care of forfeited assets went to mark the property, with the EFCC written on it."

"On July 22, 2024, I led a team to inspect the property and met the defendants there. I informed them that the property had been forfeited in the interim and also asked them to leave."

Continuing, he said: "

They left after much hassle and the house was put under lock and key.

"Unfortunately, on July 29, 2024, while conducting routine research, I found out that they had broken the padlock and were still living in the property." He further told the court that the defendants were subsequently arrested for tampering with the forfeited assets.

Mohammed, thereafter, identified the interim forfeiture order secured by the EFCC on October 6, 2017, in respect of the property.

Counsel to the prosecution sought to tender the interim order as an exhibit and it was admitted and marked as exhibit A. When asked to give further testimony about the property, he said there was an order of notification from the Lagos State High Court on the final forfeiture of the property.

Kofar Naisa asked for an adjournment to enable her to bring documents before the court.

Justice Owoeye adjourned till February 14, 2025, for continuation of the trial



L-R: Deputy Speaker, Niger State House of Assembly, Mrs Afiniki Eunice-Dauda; Chairman, Gurara LGA, Niger State, Mr. Abdulalim Abubakar; Director-General, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Hajiya Zubaida Umar; Head of Operations, NEMA Niger/Kwara, Mr. Hassan Isah and other dignitaries, during the visit of NEMA DG to families of the Diko Petrol Tanker explosion at Gurara LGA, Niger State

Court Declares Lakurawa Sect Terrorist Group

By Paul Onehi

A Federal High Court in Abuja has officially proscribed the Lakurawa sect, declaring it a terrorist organization and extending the ban to similar groups across Nigeria, with a specific focus on the North West and North Central regions.

Justice James Omosho, in his ruling on the ex-parte originating summons submitted by Justice, Lateef Fagbemi, SAN, the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice on Thursday in Abuja.

According to the judge, "It is hereby ordered as follows: An order is issued declaring the activities of the Lakurawa sect and similar groups in any part of Nigeria, particularly in the North West and North Central regions, as acts of terrorism and illegality."

"That an order is hereby made proscribing the existence of the Lakurawa and other similar groups in any

part of Nigeria, especially in the North West and North Central Regions of Nigeria either in groups or as individuals by whatsoever names they are called and publishing same in the Official Gazette and two (2) National Dailies.

"That an order is hereby made proscribing any person or group of persons from participating in any manner whatsoever in any form of activities evolving or concerning the prosecution of the collective intention or otherwise of the Lakurawa under any other name or platform however called or described.

"That an order is hereby made proscribing all other groups in Nigeria by whatsoever name called with similar objectives as the Lakurawa which include but not limited to banditry, kidnapping for ransom, kidnapping for marriage, mass abduction of school children and other citizens, cattle rustling, enslavement, imprisonment, severe deprivation

of physical liberty, torture, rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, other forms of sexual violence, attacks and killings in communities, commuters and wanton destruction of lives and properties in Nigeria."

In the ex-parte application marked FHC/ABJ/CS/41/2025, the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF) sought four orders, all of which were granted by the court. The motion, dated January 13 and filed on January 14, was moved by David Kaswe, an Assistant Director at the Federal Ministry of Justice, on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecutions of the Federation (PPF), M.B. Abubakar.

The affidavit supporting the originating summons was sworn by Michael Akawu, a litigation officer in the Department of Public Prosecutions, who stated that he had obtained the consent of the PPF Director to make the declarations. Akawu detailed that the

Lakurawa sect/group had been involved in acts of terrorism, including cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, hostage-taking, attacks on top government officials and security personnel, and efforts to spread their ideology within local communities. He further stated that they encouraged locals to disregard authorities, resulting in harm, injuries, and loss of lives and property to innocent citizens of Nigeria.

Akawu noted that the activities of the Lakurawa sect/group posed a serious threat to national security, public peace, and order in Nigeria. Based on these grounds, he expressed his belief that the group met the criteria for proscription under the Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act. He concluded that proscribing the Lakurawa sect/group would serve the best interest of justice, peace, and national security in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Kano Police Warns Of Suspected Terror Attacks

The Kano State Police Command, in collaboration with other security agencies, has received intelligence reports of suspected terrorists planning to target public gatherings in strategic locations across the state.

In a statement issued by the Police Public Relations Officer, SP Abdullahi Haruna Kiyawa, residents were advised to exercise caution and avoid crowded places as a precautionary measure to help security operatives identify and neutralize potential threats.

The statement read in part: "To ensure the safety of Kano State, robust security measures have been implemented. Experts from the Command's Explosive Ordinance Disposal, Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Units have been

deployed to strategic areas and remain on high alert. Residents are urged to report any suspicious persons or items to the unit via the following numbers: 08169884988 or 07067157218."

The statement also encouraged residents to promptly report emergencies or suspicious activities to the nearest police station or through emergency lines, emphasizing the importance of public vigilance in maintaining security.

The Kano State Police Command remains steadfast in its commitment to protecting lives and property, as well as maintaining law and order. We appreciate the continued support and cooperation of the people of Kano State and urge everyone to stay alert and vigilant," the statement concluded.

Darkness Engulfs Katsina NYSC Camp Despite Government's Approval For Electrification

By Paul Onehi

Darkness has been pervading the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) permanent orientation camp in Katsina State despite the approval by the state government to install solar-powered light in all areas in the camp.

The approval, which was given last year by Governor Dikko Umaru Radda to the state's Rural Electrification Board (REB) for the installation of the solar-powered light, has not resulted in the



installation of the light at the camp.

The inability of the management of the board to implement Radda's approval has thrown the MD Yusuf NYSC permanent orientation camp, located along Mani road, Katsina, into darkness.

Speaking on the development during the swearing-in ceremony of the 2024 Batch 'C' stream II corps members deployed in the state, the state NYSC Coordinator, Alhaji Ibrahim Sa'idu, said nothing has been done despite the governor's approval.

"I wish to remind the governor that since when approval was given to the Rural Electrification Board (REB) to illuminate the camp, nothing has been done till now," Sa'idu said while addressing the corps members on Friday.

He appealed to the management of the state rural electrification board to implement Governor Radda's approval for the installation of the solar light in the camp for enhanced illumination.

Sa'idu, however, said 1,292 corps members comprising 807 males and 485 females have so far been duly registered for the 21-day orientation course in the state.

However, efforts by THISDAY to reach the REB General Manager, Mr. Abubakar Matazu, to explain why the project was not executed was futile, as he did not respond to calls and text messages sent to his telephone line.

Kaduna: EFCC Officer Allegedly Disappears After Stealing Over \$30,000 From Exhibit Room

By Our correspondent

An officer of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Kaduna zonal office, has reportedly disappeared after allegedly absconding with over \$30,000 and other valuable exhibits.

This latest development comes after the anti-graft agency early this month, said it had detained 10 officers in Lagos over theft of operational items they could not

account for.

Though, insider sources revealed that the officers stole gold bars worth over N1 billion as well as over \$180,000.

Meanwhile, in the latest scandal according to Daily Nigerian online media, a staff of the commission, simply identified as Polycarp, suddenly disappeared when he failed to account for "over \$30,000".

Insider source who doesn't want to be quoted

revealed that the zonal director, Benedict Ubi, a couple of weeks ago ordered for an audit of the directorate's exhibit room, following the internal heist that occurred in Lagos.

According to the source, when Mr Polycarp received the directive that the exhibit room would be audited, he took an excuse to ease himself and took to his heels.

"Immediately after the order for the audit was given, he took an excuse to ease him-

self. Efforts were made to contact him but all his telephone lines were switched off.

"This is only what the preliminary audit on foreign currency shows. There are chances that more could be uncovered after a thorough audit of the exhibit room," a source familiar with the development said.

News Band understand that a manhunt has been launched by the agency to trace the fleeing officer's whereabouts.

Governor Bago Thumbs Up Medical Team Of IBB Specialist Hospital

TUNDE ADIGUN--
MINNA.

Niger State Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago, has applauded the medical team of the IBB Specialist Hospital Minna, after conducting the first neurological and knee surgeries at the Hospital.

Governor Umaru Bago

in a message describes the development as a milestone achievement and a major breakthrough in his administration.

He restates that it is his administration's desire to continue to revamp and improve the health sector to provide effective medical services of all kinds to the citizenry, and also end foreign

medical trips.

The Governor commended the Management of the IBB Specialist Hospital Minna, under the leadership of the Chief Medical Director, Dr. Bala Waziri, for the significant milestone achieved and reassured that his administration will continue to provide all the necessary support that will take the

Health Institution to greater heights.

Recall that an upgrade and expansion work is ongoing at the IBB Specialist Hospital in a bid to make it a State-of-the-art tertiary health facility and as a result, a theatre team led by Consultant Neurosurgeon, Dr. Uthman Uthman, successfully performed the first

brain surgery in the Hospital on a 19-year-old male, who sustained severe brain injury and skull fracture, the patient is presently being nursed in the newly remodelled Amenity Wing of the hospital.

Similarly, a surgical team led by Orthopaedic Surgeons, Abdullahi Mohammad and Mustapha Ibrahim, conducted the first

total knee replacement surgery at the IBB Specialist Hospital, on a 65-year-old woman with bilateral advanced osteoarthritis of the knee and the patient is presently on ambulation exercises at the VIP wing of the hospital.



Bauchi state Commissioner of Police, Auwal Musa Muhammad (front) inspecting newly recruited constables during the 2022 batch passing out parade ceremony held at Police Training school Yelwa, Bauchi state on Thursday.

Federal Government Commends Niger state For Quick Response To Tanker Explosion

TUNDE ADIGUN --
MINNA.

The Federal Government has commended the Niger State Government for its quick response to the tanker explosion disaster at the Dikko Junction

Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, in company of his Humanitarian Affairs Counterpart, Prof. Yilwatda Nentawe, on behalf of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, gave the commendation when he came on a sympathy and evaluation visit in Suleja.

The Minister was received at the General Hospital Suleja, where some injured victims of the tanker explosion are being treated by the 18-Man multidisciplinary medical Team set up by the Niger State government to provide free medical services.

He said President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, is deeply saddened by the incident and

extends his condolences to the Niger State Government, Emir and people of Suleja Emirate.

The Minister disclosed that the Federal Government will provide free medical services to all critically injured victims that will be moved to tertiary healthcare in Abuja.

He also announced that the President has directed that a high-power Committee should be set up to look into the incidences of tanker explosions in the country.

The Minister said the high-power committee, comprising the Minister of Information and National Orientation Agency, that of Humanitarian Affairs, representatives of NEMA, Standard Organisation of Nigeria, Petroleum Tanker Drivers Association, IPMAN and other stakeholders is expected to find the remote and immediate courses of tanker explosions in the Country with a view to averting recurrence.

More Chinese Investors Take Interest In Nasarawa's Agric, Solid Mineral Potential

By Victor Peter

In the coming months, LOVOL Heavy industries Company Ltd., the Chinese leading tractor and farm equipment producer will be establishing strong presence in Nasarawa State.

The desire of the industrial giant with footprints in all over Asia, Europe to invest in Nasarawa State, was

anchored on the commitment of Governor Abdullahi Sule to transform the state into a leading agricultural hub.

To further convince the governor of its intention to invest in the state, the company's management invited him on assessment of its facilities in China and is currently on a week-long working visit to the Asiagiant.

At a meeting with offi-

cial of the company in Weifang, Governor Sule who was intrigued by the LOVOL's potential, urged the company to not just establish presence but consider setting up workshops and training centres in the state.

"My vision extends beyond equipment procurement to having service centres that will also help with training and retraining of citi-

zens of the state," he was quoted to have said.

With the facility tour and the promise on both sides to partner in boosting food production not just in the state but the country at large through manpower development and agro allied investment, the deal was finally sealed.

Metro Kwara: Family Of Murdered Detainee Who Died In Police Detention Cries For Help

By Victor Peter

Family of Olatunji Jimoh, a detainee who died in police detention under questionable circumstances at the police command headquarters in Ilorin, Kwara State capital, has cried out for justice.

A press statement issued by Counsel, Olukayode Oloyede and Owolabi Olumuyiwa Tayo, in Ilorin on Friday, on behalf of the family, appealed to the Inspector General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun, Gover-

nor Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq of Kwara State, the Emir of Ilorin, Alhaji Ibrahim Sulu Gambari and the National Assembly, to come to the rescue of Olatunji Jimoh's family and the Balogun Fulani community in Ilorin Emirate, in the efforts to secure justice.

Olatunji Jimoh was allegedly murdered on December 2, 2024 over a N220,000 debt reportedly owed by him.

They lamented that despite efforts and resources put in place to determine the

cause of Olatunji's death, the police have refused to provide the family a copy of the autopsy result conducted a month ago on the deceased but released two weeks ago.

"We have put every effort and resource in place to determine the cause of Olatunji's death and we are pleading with the Nigeria Police to release to the family with the results of the autopsy that was conducted a month ago.

"We are calling on the National Assembly to help investigate and look

wholistically on this case to help in this horrible, terrible and inhuman situation. Because if we leave them without being punished, Nigeria is sleeping on a time bomb which will soon explode in the hand of some unprofessional Nigeria police.

"In conclusion, we have written a letter to His Royal Highness, the Emir of Ilorin in regards to this and we are awaiting his response," the statement added.

Gen. Useni Dedicated His Life To Helping Widows, The Poor - Former Plateau Varsity VC

Former Vice Chancellor of Plateau State University, Bokkos, Prof. Danjuma Sheni, has paid tribute to the late General Jeremiah Timbut Useni, describing him as a compassionate leader who dedicated his life to supporting widows and the less privileged.

In a tribute made available to our correspondent in Lafia, Prof. Sheni highlighted the profound impact the former FCT minister had on the TAROK nation in Plateau State, emphasizing that his contributions to the development of his people, Plateau State, and Nigeria will not be forgotten.

He described the late General, who also served as the military administrator of the old Bendel State, as a generous and caring leader who was deeply committed to the welfare of widows, underprivileged women, and the poor.

Prof. Sheni further noted that General Useni played a key role as the pioneer founding chairman of the Board of Trustees of the North Central People's Forum and worked tirelessly to facilitate the establishment of the North Central Development Commission (NCDC).

"He was a humanitarian. He loved people and was compassionate. He took care of widows, poor women, the poor of the poor. He was a giver and identified with the TAROK Nation.

"He served as a vice chairman and later as chairman of TAROK elders forum. He was in the forefront of the fight to have Karl Kum University sited in TAROK land due to the history of how COCIN missionaries were accepted in Langtang before spreading to other communities in plateau.

Pirates Drove A Lot Of Foreign Music Recording Companies Out Of Nigeria - Stella Monye

Stella Monye, known as the Samba Queen is back to the industry that gave her fame after more than two decades hiatus. Her long absence in the industry was as a result of her son's accident. She narrates her experience and how this affected her music career. Enjoy this interview she had with Sam Orji

You have been outside the music industry for a long time, how are you adjusting to the new trend in the sector now?

In the first place, my long absence was due to my son's accident which became so cumbersome because we have to travel from hospital to hospital and so, I really did not have time to pursue my career for almost two decades that I focused on my son's treatment. It's not as if it's over, it's just that I told myself, if you don't go back to work; it will be even more difficult to pay his bills because his medical procedure is systematic and its being done in America. I just told myself, you have to go back to work and combine the two. I gave it time and I have gotten to that point where I can say okay; while it's still going on, I can still work and cushion the effect of raising money for his treatment.

How has it been carrying the burden of your son's treatment for this long and where has help come from so far?

I will answer the first question you asked on how I am adjusting back into the business after so many years.

I know it's a generational shift from what we did and what these new generations are doing. There's no competition. I am not competing with anyone because I believe that whatever I am doing now, I have just moved a bit higher. I have gone beyond singing about mundane things and my songs are inspirational songs based on experience, so I have to sing about positive things that can inspire people. Most of the things you will be hearing from me are positive and inspirational songs and it does not mean that all these while, I have not been singing inspirational songs.

Concerning my son, I have gone through a lot of emotional torture looking at him knowing that when he is in pain, I am in pain as well; knowing that this thing happened when I left him at home for national assignment. I feel guilt because if I had taken him along or had stayed with him, it would not have happened. I have even survived heart attack during this process because I also have my own underlying medical conditions. I am diabetic, I have BP and I am managing everything at the same time. Sometimes I call myself a cat with 13 lives. Financially, it's cumbersome, emotionally it's stressful and physically it's demanding. Now that I have to combine my job with it, I have to look forward to tougher days ahead.

You were on national assignment when this accident happened, was there at a point government, or PMAN or your colleagues came in to support financially?

At the initial time when this happened I remember when we came back from Abuja, it was difficult because the General Hospital then did not do a good job on the surgery they did on him and that was the genesis of the problem. That was when we started moving him from one hospital to another and my colleagues came out and like I said, at every point there's been little support from here and there. They marched on the road with me to raise funds and at that time, we raised about N1m which did not go anywhere because each hospital we went to demanded much more than that because it was very complicated and complex surgery. I get help from here today, tomorrow I don't get help; it's just being like that.

Whats the state of his health presently, I believe he is in the final stage now?



Stella Monye

I pray so because a lot of things happened when we got to America, we had already visited India and Tigrish before we ended up in America all based on recommendations. When we ended up in America, they said they have not seen this kind of thing before because all the surgeries they did have really made things worse. They have really damaged a lot of his organs and there were a lot of technical things they have to perform on him to get him to where he is now. Like I said, he doesn't still have clean bill of health, they are still doing semantic treatment in that when they do one surgery for him, we have to wait for him to heal maybe like six months before we are back on the next one.

Maybe today they are working on his bladder; next time his intestine, or kidney. We are still working and praying that soon they will give him a clean bill of health but funding has been a very difficult part.

In totally, what did the doctors say is actually the problem with your son?

What happened is that when he had the accident, it was just one major problem and this now festered to other problems. They do this surgery, there's no success, they will say his bladder is not growing, we have to expand his bladder and something happens, they will say it has kicked his kidney, each time there's always a major organ involved, until everything becomes settled and they will give him clean bill of health.

I understand you are working on new album 'Iyaanu', how far have you gone?

I have already completed the 'Iyaanu' album and I was going to set things in motion but 'He prepared me,' took over because it came from another person's effort and they were ready for whatever it takes to push it out.

Your new song 'He prepared me,' is it out, what inspired the song?

It's a song written by a song company in America called Far Cry. It was inspired by some of the experiences I have gone through which inspired them to write the song for me. For a long time, I wanted to do the song but I found out that I was not mentally ready for it. However, I told myself that if I don't go back

to work, I will continue to pay for that experience.

So, I went to the studio; I did the song and it came out on September 31.

Is it a gospel song?

No. It's an inspirational song.

Are you going to include the song 'He prepared me' in the album?

It's a new terrain for me and I will be doing a couple of songs with Far Cry Songs that's the name of the song company. They write songs for artistes. I will be doing a couple of songs with them and you know how these things work, it's not like in our time when you record an album and you will have like 12 songs to have a complete album.

Now, by the time I do all the singles, it will be ready for album compilation which is how it works now, do singles and compile them and it becomes an album, unlike during our days when you have to suffer and include 15 songs in an album and then one becomes a hit.

Any video on the single?

Both audio and video came out the same day.

You studied theater arts which

I had strong band behind me: Zeal Onyia was behind me, Peter King, they were playing Saxophone, Lagbaja was the bassist, Willy Bestman was the drummer, Remy Kabaka was the drummer and I was in front. I was the one representing Nigeria and because of these great musicians that were behind me everything went explosive.

took you on stage performances to a couple of places outside the country but you ended up in music, what happened? When did you change your mind?

It wasn't a change of mind because I was really interested in theater arts. I thought that after my study I would become a TV producer or work with a radio station. I took a lot of interest in music and don't forget that in theater, you do a lot of songs and dancing on stage. I started writing songs that I could use for my stage drama and then I wrote 'Oko mi ye', somebody heard the song and said, 'this one is good; you can make a record out of this. I said I could try and that was how I took my tape to the record company EMI, I dropped it there and never got back to them or asked. So, one day a message came to my father's house that my demonstration tape was no 1 at the panel and they said I should come for my contract. I was surprised, I didn't take the whole thing serious, I went to EMI and the rest is now history. I recorded an album and it became a hit.

Why would a student write that song, 'Oko mi ye' (my husband please) when you are not married?

It was inspired by my mum; she endured because she wanted to be with her children. She was really that kind of African woman who told herself that she was not going anywhere even if she has to die looking after her kids because my father was polygamous in nature. My father married more women after my mother, who was the first wife and it was really a battle. So, I have to do a song because of my mum.

How did you get the name, 'Samba Queen'?

I was not the one that gave myself the Samba Queen; it was the media, when I did Arigo Samba. After Arigo Samba which is very percussive in style and Samba means percussive, like konga that they play in Brazil. Because of the percussive background, the media named me the Samba queen, from then on I became the Samba queen.

When you travelled to the Caribbean during one of your tours, they tagged you the bombshell. What really happened?

I wouldn't know if there was anything special, all I know is that one of my greatest gifts is being able to perform well on stage, being able to interpret whatever I am doing very well on stage. I think I came around with something great from Nigeria.

I had strong band behind me: Zeal Onyia was behind me, Peter King, they were playing Saxophone, Lagbaja was the bassist, Willy Bestman was the drummer, Remy Kabaka was the drummer and I was in front. I was the one representing Nigeria and because of these great musicians that were behind me everything went explosive. It was great because Mariam Makeba was on that tour; she came to represent South Africa including other artists from all over the world were there.

It was the 150th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in diaspora. It was just something to unify all the black people and also celebrate the abolition of the slave trade. It was great, like I said; when you have these people I mentioned behind you, of course; you cannot afford to fail. There were other great artistes and I said, I will go and hide my face but after the performance; the media chose me as the bombshell in that festival.

Clash Over Nigeria's Oil Future: Dangote Refinery Takes on NMDPRA in ? 100BN Legal Showdown



By Anyanwu Theresa Ijeoma

In a significant legal confrontation within Nigeria's oil industry, Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals FZE has initiated a ?100 billion lawsuit against the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA), the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Limited (NNPCL), and several prominent oil marketing companies.

The case, filed in September 2024, centers on the issuance of petroleum import licenses, raising critical questions about regulatory compliance, market dynamics, and the future of Nigeria's oil sector.

In the Beginning

The dispute traces back to Dangote Refinery's contention that NMDPRA has been unlawfully granting import licenses to NNPCL and five other oil marketing firms: AYM Shafa Limited, A.A. Rano Limited, T. Time Petroleum Limited, 2015 Petroleum Limited, and Matrix Petroleum Services Limited.

Dangote Refinery argues that these licenses were issued in violation of Sections 317(8) and (9) of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA), which stipulate that such licenses should only be granted in situations where there is a proven shortfall in domestic petroleum products. The refinery asserts that the continued issuance of these licenses undermines its operations and the broader objectives of the PIA.

In the suit, marked FHC/ABJ/CS/1324/2024 and filed on September 6, 2024,

Dangote Refinery seeks several reliefs. A declaration that the import licenses issued by NMDPRA to NNPCL and the five other companies are null and void, as they contravene the provisions of the PIA.

Damages: A demand for ?100 billion in damages against NMDPRA for the alleged unlawful issuance of import licenses, which Dangote Refinery claims has caused significant financial harm and operational challenges.

Injunction: A court order restraining NMDPRA from further issuing import licenses under the disputed circumstances, to prevent future violations and protect the refinery's interests.

NMDPRA's Defense: In response to the allegations, NMDPRA has defended its actions by highlighting the current state of domestic petroleum production. The authority contends that Nigeria's existing refining capacity is insufficient to meet the nation's daily petroleum product demands.

As a result, to bridge the supply gap and ensure energy security, NMDPRA has been issuing import licenses to reputable companies with proven track records in international petroleum trading. Idris Musa, a senior regulatory officer at NMDPRA, emphasized: "The agency's actions are in compliance with Section 317(9) of the PIA, which allows for the issuance of import licenses to address product shortfalls." Musa further argued: "Relying solely on domestic production, especially during the early stages of Dangote Refinery's operations, could lead to monopolistic practices and jeopardize the nation's energy security."

Current Status of the Case
As of January 2025, the legal

proceedings are ongoing. A recent hearing scheduled at the Federal High Court in Abuja was adjourned to January 30, 2025, due to procedural delays. Specifically, Dangote Refinery's legal team had not completed the necessary service of amended originating summons on the defendants,

The ? 100 billion lawsuit filed by Dangote Refinery against NMDPRA, NNPCL, and other oil marketing companies represents a pivotal moment in Nigeria's oil industry. The case encapsulates the tensions between regulatory frameworks and market realities, domestic production aspirations and import dependencies, as well as competition and monopoly. Its resolution will undoubtedly shape the future of the nation's oil sector for years to come.

leading to the postponement.

The court has directed all parties to ensure that all legal processes are duly filed and served to facilitate a substantive hearing on the next adjourned date. This development underscores the procedural complexities inherent in high-stakes litigation involving multiple parties and significant economic interests.

This lawsuit has far-reaching implications for Nigeria's oil sector, particularly in the context of the nation's refining capacity and import dependency. The Dangote Refinery, with a projected capacity of 650,000 barrels per day, is poised to significantly reduce Nigeria's reliance on imported petroleum products.

However, until the refinery reaches optimal production levels, the country remains dependent on imports to meet domestic demand. The legal battle raises critical questions about market competition, regulatory oversight, and the balance between encouraging domestic production and ensuring sufficient supply through imports. A key concern is the potential for monopolistic practices if import licenses are curtailed prematurely, which could lead to supply shortages and increased prices for consumers.

Stakeholder Perspectives

Industry stakeholders are closely monitoring the case, recognizing its potential to set significant precedents for the sector. Some analysts argue that NMDPRA's approach is pragmatic, aiming to maintain supply stability during a transitional period for Nigeria's refining capabilities.

They caution that an abrupt halt to import licenses could disrupt the market, leading to fuel

shortages and economic instability. Conversely, supporters of Dangote Refinery's position contend that the continued issuance of import licenses undermines investments in domestic refining capacity. They argue: "Adhering strictly to the PIA's provisions would incentivize local production, promote self-sufficiency, and align with Nigeria's long-term energy security goals."

Going forward, as the court prepares to hear substantive arguments, the outcome of this case will have significant implications for policy formulation, regulatory practices, and investment strategies within Nigeria's oil industry. A ruling in favor of Dangote Refinery could lead to stricter enforcement of the PIA's provisions, potentially accelerating the development of domestic refining capacity. On the other hand, a decision supporting NMDPRA's current licensing practices may underscore the necessity of a balanced approach that accommodates both immediate supply needs and long-term strategic objectives. In either scenario, the case highlights the complex interplay between regulation, market forces, and national interests in Nigeria's evolving energy landscape.

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A Plea For Harmony: Kaduna, Our Shared Home

By Godwin Anyebe

The whispers coming out of Kaduna are deeply troubling. Reports of communities segregating along religious lines, with Christians leaving one area and Muslims another, paint a grim picture of a society fracturing at its core. If these reports are true, it is a stark indictment of our collective failure to build a truly inclusive and harmonious society. This is not how it is supposed to be. This is not the Kaduna we should accept.

Kaduna has a long and complex history, marked by periods of both peaceful coexistence and devastating conflict. The wounds of past violence are still raw, and the scars remain visible. Yet, amidst this history, there has always been the potential for a different narrative – one of mutual respect, understanding, and shared prosperity. This potential is now being threatened by the insidious forces

of division.

The idea that people should feel compelled to leave their homes simply because of their religious beliefs is anathema to everything we should stand for. It violates the fundamental principles of human dignity and freedom of religion. It creates an environment of fear and mistrust, where communities are pitted against each other, and the fabric of society is torn apart.

Both Christianity and Islam, the two dominant religions in Kaduna, preach peace, compassion, and brotherhood. Both emphasize the importance of tolerance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. How then can we reconcile these teachings with the reality of communities segregating themselves along religious lines? How can we claim to be people of faith while allowing prejudice and hatred to fester in our hearts?

The truth is, we cannot. We must confront the uncomfortable

truth that religious identity has been weaponized for political and personal gain, fueling division and conflict. We must reject the narratives of hatred and division that seek to define us. We must instead embrace the values of empathy, understanding, and mutual respect.

The responsibility to build a harmonious Kaduna rests on all of us. Religious leaders have a crucial role to play in promoting interfaith dialogue and fostering understanding between communities. Political leaders must prioritize inclusive governance and ensure that all citizens are treated equally, regardless of their religious affiliation. Community leaders must work to build bridges between different groups and promote peaceful coexistence.

But ultimately, it is the responsibility of each and every individual to reject prejudice and embrace tolerance. We must learn to see

Let us choose harmony over division, understanding over prejudice, and love over hate. Let us build a Kaduna where all feel safe, respected, and valued, regardless of their religious beliefs. This is not just a dream; it is a necessity. This is the Kaduna we must strive for.

each other not as members of different religious groups, but as fellow human beings, sharing a common humanity and a common destiny. We must recognize that our diversity is not a weakness, but a strength.

The path to healing and reconciliation will not be easy. It will require courage, empathy, and a willingness to confront our own biases and prejudices. But it is a path we must take if we are to build a better future for ourselves and for generations to come.

Kaduna can be a beacon of hope, a testament to the power of peaceful coexistence. But only if we choose to make it so. Let us choose harmony over division, understanding over prejudice, and love over hate. Let us build a Kaduna where all feel safe, respected, and valued, regardless of their religious beliefs. This is not just a dream; it is a necessity. This is the Kaduna we must strive for.

The Contribution Of Women In Agriculture To Food Security

By Paul Onehi

Women farmers constitute about 75 per cent of the farming population in Nigeria, in recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the significant role played by women in agriculture.

From farming to processing and marketing, women have been crucial in ensuring food security for communities worldwide. However, their contributions often go unnoticed and underappreciated. In this article, I will shed light on the vital role of women in agriculture and discuss ways to support and empower them.

First and foremost, women play a crucial role in farming. According to the United Nations, women make up nearly half of the agricultural labor force in developing countries. They are responsible for producing up to 80% of the food in African countries and 60% in Asia. Despite this, women face numerous challenges and barriers

in accessing resources such as land, credit, and education. This hinders their productivity and leaves many women struggling to provide enough food for their families.

In addition to farming, women are also heavily involved in processing and marketing agricultural products. They are responsible for transforming raw produce into value-added goods and bringing them to market. This not only creates economic opportunities for women but also ensures the availability of diverse and nutritious food for communities. In many developing countries, women are also responsible for food distribution and play a critical role in ensuring food security during times of crisis or natural disasters.

It is evident that women are essential to food security, yet their contributions are often overlooked. To support and empower them, there are several steps that can be taken. Firstly, providing access to education and training

programs can help women improve their skills and knowledge in agricultural practices. This could include training in modern and sustainable farming techniques, financial literacy, and leadership development. With proper educa-

By investing in women in agriculture, we can create a more sustainable and food-secure future for all. Let us recognize and celebrate the vital role of women in agriculture and work towards a more inclusive and equal industry.

tion and training, women can become more productive and efficient farmers, leading to increased food production.

Another crucial step in supporting women in agriculture is to address the inequalities they face in accessing resources. This could involve implementing policies that grant women equal access to land ownership, credit, and markets. Women also need access to affordable and appropriate technologies and tools, which can significantly improve their productivity and reduce their labor burden.

Additionally, investing in infrastructure such as irrigation systems and storage facilities can help reduce post-harvest losses and improve food processing and distribution, benefiting women and their communities.

Furthermore, partnerships between governments, NGOs, and the private sector can play a crucial role in supporting women in agriculture. These partnerships can

provide women with access to resources, training, and markets, as well as advocate for their rights and representation in decision-making processes. Governments can also create policies that prioritize and protect the rights of women in agriculture, ensuring they have a voice and are included in decision-making processes.

In all, women play a vital role in agriculture and are essential to ensuring food security for communities worldwide. From farming to processing and marketing, their contributions are invaluable.

However, to fully harness their potential, women need to be supported and empowered through education, access to resources, and advocating for their rights. By investing in women in agriculture, we can create a more sustainable and food-secure future for all. Let us recognize and celebrate the vital role of women in agriculture and work towards a more inclusive and equal industry.

The Rise of Digital Currencies and Global Economy

By Paul Onehi

The 21st century witnessed rapid advancement in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT), with a strong knock effect on the financial system leading to innovative financial services and opening ways for state-of-the-art payment system, this have gained significant attention in recent years due to their potential impact on the global economy.

This advancement led to the emergency of digital currencies, programmable money which comprise any structure of payment that is available purely in electronic form without tangible apparatuses like coins, cheques, or notes.

The rise of digital currencies

has the potential to disrupt traditional financial systems and reshape the global economy in several ways. One of the key advantages of digital currencies is their ability to facilitate fast and low-cost cross-border transactions. This can help reduce the reliance on expensive and slow international payment systems, such as SWIFT, and make it easier for individuals and businesses to conduct transactions across borders.

Furthermore, digital currencies have the potential to increase financial inclusion by providing access to banking services for the unbanked and underbanked populations. By using digital wallets and mobile phones, individuals in developing countries can access financial services and participate in

the global economy without the need for a traditional bank account.

However, the widespread adoption of digital currencies also poses challenges and risks to the global economy. One of the main concerns is the potential for digital currencies to be used for illicit activities, such as money laundering and terrorist financing, due to their pseudonymous nature and lack of regulation. Governments and regulatory bodies are grappling with how to regulate digital currencies to prevent these risks while still fostering innovation and growth in the sector.

The technology also has the following characteristic, all transaction, once executed no room for corrections after confirmation, a

transaction cannot be reversed, there is no safety net. Neither transactions nor accounts are connected to reveal world identities, everything is digitalized with access by means of the internet.

Since they happen in a global network of computers, they are completely indifferent of your physical location. There are no third parties involved in the verification or validation, meaning that authentication is eliminated.

In addition, the volatility of digital currencies, such as Bitcoin, can pose risks to investors and financial stability. The value of digital currencies can fluctuate significantly in a short period, leading to potential losses for investors and instability in financial markets. Central banks and financial regulators are

exploring ways to mitigate these risks, such as developing central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) that are backed by fiat currencies and have stable value.

Overall, digital currencies have the potential to revolutionize the global economy by increasing financial inclusion, reducing transaction costs, and fostering innovation. However, careful regulation and oversight are needed to address the risks and challenges associated with their widespread adoption. As the digital currency landscape continues to evolve, policymakers, regulators, and industry stakeholders must work together to ensure a balanced and sustainable approach to integrating digital currencies into the global economy.



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The Drama "Uriri", A Conflict Of Culture, Loyalty, Power

Set in the 15th century in the Evergreen Forest of the Niger Delta, the Kingdom of Oto Egba is the backdrop for 'Uriri'. It's a tale of culture, conflict, political intrigue, and the struggles of everyday people.

The story starts with a sense of mystery and suspense. Uriri is about a mystical force, deeply connected to the heart of Oto Egba. Ogaga, played by Seun Ajayi, is our hero. He finds himself caught between the spirit world and the real world, haunted by a strange message from the gods about a beautiful woman. His friends think he's imagining things, urging him to focus

on wrestling. This creates tension—is he meant for greatness, or should he just focus on his duties?

Tragedy strikes early on. Instead of shooting the antelope he set out to hunt, Ogaga mistakenly hits his best friend, Ochuko, played by Isioma Okey-Nwosu. This accident plunges Ogaga into a spiral of guilt, making his already uneasy connection to the spirit world even more difficult. Meanwhile, the political tension between Oto Egba and the Benin Kingdom is simmering beneath the surface. The murder of a Benin envoy and the cover-up by Oto Egba's leaders expose the dangerous game

of loyalty, deceit, and power, setting the stage for an even bigger conflict.

The story unfolds as Serome, the king's cousin, portrayed by Osarehia Oronsaye, is forced into an arranged marriage with Okakuro, played by Frank Konwea. This highlights the unfair treatment of women and the limitations imposed on their choices. Serome's quiet resistance hints at a brewing rebellion against these societal norms, adding an air of tension.

As the Agbakara Festival approaches, anticipation builds. This grand celebration of trade, culture, and identity brings both hope

and danger. Ochuko's excitement reflects the festival's importance, while the preparations paint a vivid picture of the kingdom's rich traditions. Amidst this, a touch of humour lightens the narrative when Okakuro awkwardly seeks advice from Ogheneovo, a new council member, on how to win Serome's heart, showcasing the relatable imperfections of the characters.

However, the festivities are shadowed by rising political intrigue. An envoy from Benin arrives to investigate the mysterious disappearance of an emissary, creating an atmosphere of suspicion. Okakuro's deceitful schemes

intensify as he manipulates the chaos to his advantage, but cracks begin to show in his plans. Themes of bribery and betrayal dominate, painting a picture of a kingdom teetering on the edge of chaos. Amid the turmoil, a tender connection emerges between Serome and Ogaga, hinting at a budding romance and adding emotional depth to the unfolding drama.

'Uriri', is so far, masterfully weaving together personal struggles and the challenges facing society. It explores themes of guilt, destiny, and the fight against unfair rules. The political tension between Oto Egba and

Benin adds a layer of high-stakes drama, while the vibrant portrayal of the Agbakara Festival underscores the importance of cultural identity.

As the festival approaches, many questions remain. Will Ogaga overcome his guilt and embrace his destiny? How will Oto Egba deal with the political fallout with Benin? And what role will Serome play in challenging the existing order? With its rich cultural backdrop and emotionally charged storytelling, 'Uriri's' next episode on Africa Magic Showcase on DStv and GOtv and on Showmax is a must watch.



Harrysong, Alexer Finally Part Ways As Wife Celebrates The Divorce

The door seems to have closed on any reconciliation between singer Harrysong Tare Okri and his estranged wife Alexer, who went to the social media to celebrate her formal divorce from the 'Reggae Blues' crooner.

Her subtle announcement seems to have put a ceiling on the troubled marriage which has seen the couple going at each other on

the social media especially Alexer. "Finally took the bold step I've always wanted. Now a free woman. Cheers to 2025. We move. Bigger things ahead," she wrote.

Harrysong had accused Alexer of cheating on him during their marriage, including while she was pregnant. Unfortunately, Alexer lost her third pregnancy during that period.

The couple's marital drama

escalated last year, when Harrysong dragged Alexer's mother into the dispute, claiming she had been married seven times and was therefore unable to raise her daughter properly.

He also accused Nollywood actress Destiny Etiko of playing a significant role in their separation, though Etiko denied the allegations.

Destiny Etiko builds 'Africa's biggest bill payment mobile app

By Paul Onehi

Actress and producer Destiny Etiko has announced creating a revolutionary bill payment mobile application. Renowned actress Etiko took to Instagram to announce the highly-anticipated launch of her latest venture - a cutting-edge mobile app.

The actress announced the launch of the app on her

Instagram page, expressing excitement and gratitude.

Destiny revealed that the idea for the app was born during a visit to the UK last year where she met a team of talented tech engineers. After a year of development, Destiny announced the readiness to launch the mobile app.

Destiny congratulated herself and her team on achieving this milestone while also attributing her success to her Maker

and encouraged her fans to stay tuned for the app's official launch.

She wrote: "Over a year now, I have visited the UK and met an amazing team of tech engineers. I have always had the dream to be in the tech space; I came up with the idea of building the biggest bill payment mobile app in Africa."

"I am thrilled to announce that after a year of dedicated effort, my team and I have suc-

cessfully developed a groundbreaking mobile application. This milestone achievement is a testament to our collective hard work and perseverance.

We look forward to sharing this innovative solution with the world soon. I extend my sincerest gratitude to my talented team for their tireless contributions and commitment to excellence."



Top 10 most Streamed Titles Of 2024 On Showmax In Nigeria

Showmax has revealed its 10 most streamed titles of 2024 in Nigeria, based on unique viewers. Eight out of the ten titles ranked are local, reaffirming Showmax as the best place to watch homegrown content in Nigeria.

Big Brother Naija Season 9 alongside Showmax Original series: Wura, Flawsome, and The Real Housewives of Lagos Season 2, emerge as top favourites while HBO's Game of Thrones and its prequel, House of the Dragon rank on the list.

The second season of The Real Housewives of Lagos (RHOLagos) broke first-day streaming records on Showmax in Nigeria. This record beat the first season's record and claimed the spot

as the most-watched Original on its first release day in Nigeria.

The Showmax Original movie, Dead Serious, which was among the lineup of releases for the streamer's February relaunch, also

earned a spot on the list.

In alphabetical order, here are the top 10 titles Nigerians watched on Showmax in 2024:

Big Brother Naija S9 (series)

The ninth season of the

beloved reality show brought intense competition, drama, and entertainment as contestants fought for the ultimate prize. This season also brought back Toke Makinwa for another season of BBNaija: The Buzz, an exclusive talk show featuring celebrity guests and top BBNaija show commentators who dissect top moments, giving their candid opinions and predictions.

Dead of Night (movie)

A young lady living in a small backwater town joins her friends to rob an abandoned house. They end up unleashing their worst nightmare when they discover that the house is not empty and not everyone in it is human. Dead of Night is

directed by Chiemeka Osuagwu, whose credits includes Far From Home (2022), Blood Covenant (2022), and A Weekend to Forget (2023).

The horror movie stars Kunle Idowu, popularly known as Frank Donga, who has been nominated for three AMVCAs (Best Actor in a Comedy in 2015 and 2023, and Best Supporting Actor in 2018). The movie also stars Eric Obinna (Inside Life, Razz Guy), Allison Precious, Chuks Joseph (The Origin: Madam Koi-Koi), Favour Etim, Diana Egwatu, and Nene Aliemeke.

Dead Serious (movie)

A romantic comedy starring Sharon Ooja, Sabinus, Deyemi Okalanwon and Nkem Owoh, directed by

Moses Inwang. When tragedy strikes, a heartbroken Jonny embarks on hilarious attempts to end his life, but ends up discovering the beauty of life.

Flawsome (series)

Flawsome follows the lives of four ambitious friends - Ifeyinwa, Ramat, Ivie, and Dolapo - trying to navigate their personal and professional lives while battling the challenges of being a woman in modern society. It is a tale of friendship, women's experiences, and a patriarchal society. The show stars Bisola Aiyoola, Ini Dima Okojie, Sharon Ooja and Enado Odigie. Seasons 1 and 2 are currently available on Showmax.



12 Years Of Agony: Abdullahi Iliya's Struggle For Survival With Untreated Burn Wounds And Tragic Losses

Abdullahi Iliya is above 20 years old and has been nursing open wounds he sustained as a result of burns in his two legs. He has been battling with the wounds for 12 years without proper treatment and the condition of his legs are getting deteriorated, limiting his chances of survival. To worsen his condition, his parents both died few months after the incident, leaving him stranded without a caregiver.

In this interview with our correspondent *Samuel Luka* , Abdullahi narrates how he has been battling with life in such a serious health challenge. Excerpts :

Abuja Post: Tell us your name, address and age

Abdullahi: My name is Abdullahi Iliya and I live in Wuntin Dada Community, Jos Road, Bauchi state. I am above 20 years.

Abuja Post: What happened to your legs? I can see wounds all over them.

Abdullahi: I was caught up in a fire incident which broke out in one filling station along Jos Road, Bauchi about 12 years ago. I have been battling with this wounds since then up to this day that I am talking to you and the little assistance I used to get from some people is no longer there because the treatment has taken a very long time and I lack the money to go for proper treatment. As a result of this problem I couldn't continue in school since the incident happened. My life is been wasted and my hope for better living is crippled due to this lingering health challenge.

Abuja Post: what are your parents doing about it?

Abdullahi: My parents have died. When the accident occurred, I was rushed to the hospital where I was given some first aid, I was administered a drip, we couldn't continue with the treatment in the hospital and was taken to herbalist by my caregivers because they were aggrieved that no Doctor came to check on me. So they took me away in anger. My father and mother died about a month after the incident. I was left at the mercy of neighbors who have tried their best by helping with what to eat. As it is now, I live alone in a very small room with nobody to look after me, even to feed or cloth is a big

challenge to me. The little assistance I used to get from some people is no longer there because the treatment has been prolonged.

Abuja Post: What happened to your educational pursuit after the incident?

Abdullahi: This thing happened to me while I was still in JSS three, we were about to sit for junior WAEC but I couldn't make it because of the condition I found myself. I couldn't continue in school since the incident happened, I didn't anticipate that the wounds will continue up to date, I am afraid that my life is wasting away and hope dashed due to this lingering health challenge confronting me. My parents have died, leaving me with no one to take care of me. I rely on well meaning people within the community who often assist me with food, I don't have the health to go out and hustle for myself.

Abuja Post: How have you been managing the wounds?

Abdullahi : That's how I live with it, any time I am given money by a good Samaritan, I rush to chemist to buy some pain killers and other medicines. Of recent, there was only one person called Alassaini who used to help me with money to buy drugs but now he has a lot of burden on him.

Abuja Post: How did the fire incident occurred?

Abdullahi : One fateful day, we were doing some menial work in one filling station when someone made a mistake that caused fire incident which affected us, that was in 2013. When the incident happened, we were rushed to specialist hospital here in Bauchi and we were received at the emer-



gency section where they administered drip on me, then we had no issue with money for the treatment but my caregivers were upset that no Doctor cared to check on me, so they decided to take me to herbalist for further treatment. After the herbalist used some herbs on me, I got relieved, but the wounds failed to heal after some time. They took me to different herbalists but to no effect. I would have love that they take me back to hospital now, but honestly speaking, since my parents have died and with no relatives who are financially sound to shoulder the expenses, I have no option than to continue to suffer.

Abuja Post: How are you coping with life now?

Abdullahi : For me, life is terrible considering my present condition, I have nothing but always relying on what comes from God through good Samaritans, I know that the problem is taking me this long because of lack of adequate treatment, and I am sure that if properly treated, it will be healed and I will bounce back to good health to achieve my life dreams.

Abuja Post: Do you have any plea or appeal to make?

Abdullahi: I want to plead with the Bauchi state government or well-meaning Nigerians to help me with the resources to go back to the hospital in order to have the wound properly treated. Let me have a renewal of hope by getting sponsors of my treatment because I don't have anybody close to me that can help me out, even to get food to eat is very hard. I can be reached through this medium.

'Pirates Drove A Lot Of Foreign Music Recording Companies Out Of Nigeria'



At a point, a lot of your contemporaries like Mike Okri, Alex O, Majek Fashek, Ras Kimono and others left the country, what happened that made them to leave?

One of the reasons is that the pirates were very hard on our generation. Secondly, most of the recording companies were already folding up because of the piracy issue and they were selling the companies off. It was only when the white men were managing those companies that they did well. As soon as they started selling the companies to the black people things became a bit difficult for them to cope with the economy because the pirates were really at work that's why they were not really making much.

When the white people were here they were bringing money from their country to run the business, they did not really bother about the pirates. So, everything started wobbling at that point and when the companies

started folding some of our generation left for greener pastures. That was when Kenny Ogunbe and Dayo Adeneye now came into the music scene and started changing the narratives with other younger artistes, but few of us stayed back.

The way you people sang in your days, you touched on issues happening in the society unlike what's happening now when artistes talk basically about nothing that makes no moral sense at all. Is it the change in trends or because this is what the society wants?

Don't also forget that music is evolving. We still have a lot of them that are still singing positive songs like Tubaba, Psquare, Asake and a whole lot of them still sing great songs. We don't have music soldiers like Fela Anikulapo Kuti and Sunny Okosun, all these people that sang liberation songs.

The musicians of nowadays their orientation are different, the way they reason is different, and their morals standard are different. Things happening now never happened in our time, nothing like record companies, social media was not there. They practically own their own labels now and get all their money online, so they're making money because the pirates cannot go online. CD is phasing out because people don't use it anymore and nothing for pirates to lay hands on, so this generation is in a better position now. It's a great development and it depends on what you listen to. There's a particular song from Buju and I hear a lot of great songs

from Buju, for me, I choose who to listen to because that's who I want to listen to

Tell us any current artiste you will like to work with especially females

The first person that came to my mind is Tiwa Savage. I could do my stuff with her and she would give a good interpretation. She has her own style of singing which I love very much and I know that anything she handles, she does that in her own unique way. I was working on it but somewhere along the line we lost touch and my son's accident became a major distraction. I couldn't go on with it, but if the opportunity comes, I will love to do collaboration with some of them including the male.

You have not tried your hands on full time acting in movies

I acted at some point. I acted in Caravan of Life, which was an NTA TV series and most of the acting was at the earliest part of my career. I did some Nigerian movies with the NTA. I did Magun, not long ago, I did Agbode Meje, (Cross road), a Yoruba movie

When I went into music, I didn't have the full time to go into acting. I love acting and I know I can act. I am really considering it, to see if I can go into full time acting but I still believe my music may not give me the opportunity. I am not competing with anyone; I will play my music the way I will think it will come out well. Its Gods grace that will propel you, not the kind of song you sing. I will be in my own class not to start dragging with these genres. If somebody invites me to an occasion I will come and perform.



I'm Ready To Serve Leon Balogun Offers Himself For Super Eagles Selection

By Paul Onehi

Super Eagles defender who's currently playing for Rangers, Leon Balogun has expressed his decision to return to contention for the Super Eagles, as he never announced international retirement.

The 36-year-old, once an automatic choice for the Super Eagles, formed a rock-solid partnership with Troost-Ekong, earning them the nickname "Oyinbo Wall" during the 2018 World Cup. This development comes as the defender aims to revive his international career.

Leon Balogun, a veteran defender with 46 caps for Nigeria, has been absent from the Super Eagles' starting lineup for some time.

His last appearance for the national team was as a substitute in the 10-0 thrashing of Sao Tome and Principe in 2022.

In an interview with Brilia, the former Brighton defender expressed his desire to make a return to the national team fold, stating he is very much available.

"It's not that I've not accepted an invitation ever," Balogun told Brilia. "Unfortunately, right before the World Cup break, I suffered an injury that was supposed to last a few weeks but didn't go the way it was supposed to.

"I couldn't join the team earlier due to fitness issues, and although I suffered a setback after recovering, I've since maintained my fitness level.

"I've always been available for selection and have never announced my retirement from international football. Those who need to know are aware of my willingness and ambition to continue representing the national team."

Balogun expressed his openness to making a comeback similar to that of his former defensive partner, Troost-Ekong, who made a remarkable return to the national team.

Balogun revealed that he (Ekong), was on the verge of hanging up his international boots, but a dramatic turn of events saw him captain the Super Eagles to a remarkable silver medal finish at the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) last year.

Kontagora LG Emerges Champion Of Mai Sudan Of Kontagora Unity Cup

TUNDEADIGYMINNA.

Kontagora local government football team has emerged champions of the first edition of Kontagora Emirate inter local government football competition, tagged.

"Mai Sudan Cup," and organized by zone C football association and sponsored by the state NLC Chairman, Comrade Idrees Abdulkareem Lafene.

The Champion defeated Mariga LG team by 2-0, at the finals decided recently at Adamu Bokani stadium in Kontagora.

The Emir of Kontagora, Alhaji Muhammad Barau II, whom the competition was in his honour witness the closing ceremony of the tournament, in company of his council members.

Speaking to sports journalists shortly after the finals, the Emir observed that football is one of the things that brings the youths together.

He called on the youths to embrace football not for only its leisure but also as a means of livelihood, adding that they should use it as a tool for unity and peaceful coex-

tence among them.

The Emir also used the occasion to appreciate Governor Mohammed Umar Bago for his developmental strides in the state, praying for more strength and wisdom for the governor.

While commending the Niger NLC Chairman who holds the title of Dan Adalin Kontagora, for honouring him by sponsoring the football competition in his honour, the royal father also called on well to do individuals in the emirate to engage the youths through football.

He also appreciated the Niger State Football Association (NSFA) under the lead-

ership of Comrade Ahmed Yusuf Fresh, the Zone C football association and Kontagora LG football council for ensuring that the competition was hitch free and successful.

The state NLC Chairman, Comrade Idrees Abdulkareem Lafene revealed that football offered him the opportunity of getting appointment as a civil servant by Kontagora LG for his dedication to the local government football team.

He added that football made him who he is today and that he owe everything he has today to football, hence the reason he was given back to the society through sponsorship of football tournaments across the state.

Comrade Lafene said as a title holder of Kontagora Emirate, nothing would be too much for him to contribute to the peace and unity of the emirate, promising to continue to do his best towards youth development.

Speaking on behalf of football stakeholders across the state, the Chairman of Niger State Football Association (NSFA), Comrade Ahmed Yusuf Fresh appreciated the Emir for his support and fatherly advise towards the success of the tournament, saying the presence of the Emir during the finals has added glamour to the closing ceremony.

Meanwhile, the NLC Chairman and his delegation had earlier paid homage to the Emir at his residence, to appreciate him for his support and accepting the tournament to be organized in his honour, as well as for the conferment of the title of Dan Adalin Kontagora on the NLC Chairman.

The six local governments under the Kontagora Emirate participated in the tournament, and the closing ceremony was witnessed by football stakeholders and the state labour movement family, including the state chairman of TUC, NUT, medical and health workers union among others.



Manchester United Told To Replace Ruben Amorim With Gary Neville

By Paul Onehi

Manchester United have been told Gary Neville is the man to "save" the club as their next manager.

Ruben Amorim is the sixth permanent boss at Old Trafford since Sir Alex Ferguson's departure in 2013 and he has been unable to spark a swift turnaround in the club's fortunes.

Defeat to Brighton in their last Premier League match has left United 13th in the Premier League table, having lost 10 of their 22 league matches this season.

Amorim has labelled this side the worst in United's history and it is a verdict that former Match of the Day host Des Lynam agrees with.

In his latest Telegraph column, Lynam made the shock suggestion that United should appoint Neville as their manager. The former right-back's only previous managerial experience was an unsuccessful spell at Valencia.

Lynam wrote: "A few years ago I suggested that the only man who could steer United back to their former glory was their one-time captain Gary Neville.

"I put it to him and while I touched something of a nerve, Gary made it clear that his

business interests and his punditry for Sky would take precedence over any thought of engaging in football management again.

"But here goes - Neville would still be the best man for the job. He has Manchester United blood running through his veins. He

is deeply hurt by the club's present predicament. He has a powerful personality and would be a strong presence in the dressing room. Oh and the money men had better watch out, Neville is an astute businessman."

While Neville has made it clear he has no desire to return to management after his time at Valencia, Lynam believes he would be "forever remembered" if he could lead United back to the top of the English game.

"My plea to him was over three years ago but as the men with their furrowed brows took their temporary residence in the United dugout, Neville has remained the best candidate, in my mind," Neville said.

"He is hugely successful as a broadcaster but then almost every Tom, Dick and Rio has had a go at that.

"Apparently Neville has made a great deal of money from his business exploits but will he be remembered for them? If he were to save Manchester United, he would be forever remembered."

