ADC Vice Presidential Candidate, Rotimi Amaechi, Gives Mum Befitting Burial, in Ubima, Rivers State

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BOSS OF THE WEEK

Ex-FirstBank CEO, Adesola Adeduntan, Becomes Balogun of Oyo

FEATURE

Igogo Festival: Fusion of Culture and Modernity - Olowo of Owo

Nigeria External Reserves Climb to $54.08bn, All Time Highest in 18 Years

Former FirstBank CEO, Adesola Adeduntan, Becomes Balogun of Oyo

By Eric Elezuo

His popularity, his philanthropy and all-round achievements continue to trail him, paving way for him to garner global accolades. He is the former Chief Executive Officer of one of Nigeria's foremost banks, FirstBank of Nigeria Limited. He is Dr. Adesola Kazeem Adeduntan, and he is the freshly installed Balogun of Oyo.

Stepping out into a new arena over the weekend, Adeduntan brought the ancient Oyo Kingdom to a frenzy as prominent traditional rulers, professional colleagues and entrepreneurial giants gathered in solidarity as the financial wizkid received another cap of excellence from His Imperial Majesty, Oba Akeem Owoade, the Alaafin of Oyo.

The colourful ceremony took place at the Alaafin's Palace with dignitaries, traditional rulers, government officials and indigenes in attendance.

Adeduntan succeeds the late former Governor of the old Oyo State, Dr Victor Olunloyo, who served with equanimity and distinction, before passing to the great beyond in 2025.

While acknowledging the Balogun title as one of the most revered and senior offices in the Oyo Empire,

the Alaafin described Adeduntan as very suitable for the honours, noting his leadership qualities, courage, and ability to defend the kingdom, which are hallmarks of the responsibilities that come with the office.

The Alaafin charged the new Balogun to continue to be man above board as he has always been, uphold the values of the institution and deploy his experience for the development, peace and unity of Oyo Kingdom.

In his acceptance message, Adeduntan expressed gratitude to the Alaafin and the entire Oyo Kingdom for the honour bestowed on him, pledging to serve with humility, integrity and commitment to the progress of Oyo and Yorubaland.

Beyond his meritorious performance as CEO of FirstBank, the new Balogun had occupied and still occupying numerous high profile positions, notably among which is his position as the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council of Abiola Ajimobi Technical University, Ibadan, and the Apesin Ola of Ibadanland.

The installation of Adeduntan received prominence and boost with the presence of traditional rulers who graced the occasion including the Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba Rashidi Ladoja, and the Oluwo of Iwo, Oba Abdulrasheed Akanbi.

The presence of Ladoja, who is the Chairman, Oyo Council of Chiefs, further cements the relationship between Ibadanland and Oyo, and that of the Olubadan and Alaafin. It would be recalled that Ladoja's visit is his first to Oyo since the coronation of Alaafin Owoade

It is also on record that President Bola Tinubu, endorsed the installation, sending a congratulatory message, where he described the installation as a call to greater service and urged Adeduntan to promote peace, development and preservation of cultural heritage.

Several government officials and traditional chiefs in their separate goodwill messages described the installation of Adeduntan as symbolic and timely for the kingdom.

With traditional displays such as drumming, prayers and homage by members of the Oyomesi council and other title holders, the event lived up to its billing and welcomed the new Balogun to another phase of community development and affecting humanity.

THE MAN, ADESOLA ADEDUNTAN

Adeduntan's achievements remain the pivot his personality revolves. From bagging an international award as Distinguished Alumnus of the Year by Cranfield

School of Management, United Kingdom to leading FirstBank to the height of biggest mover of the year according to KPMG Report within the same period, it is absolutely correct to say that Adeduntan is a creative achiever.

Born Adesola Kazeem Adeduntan on May 7, 1969, in Ibadan, Oyo State, the banker started his early education at Ibadan Municipal Government Primary School (IMG), Adeoyo between 1975 and 1981, for his primary education before proceeding to Urban Day Grammar School, Old Ife Road, Ibadan, where he had his secondary schooling. His excellent to duties created a space for him to become the Deputy Senior Prefect in his final year in 1986.

In the same year, he was admitted to the University of Ibadan in to study Veterinary Medicine, and qualified in 1992 as a Veterinary Surgeon, a profession he hardly practiced before switching over to financial management.

Consequently, in 1994 he joined Afribank (Nig) Plc., and was posted to the Ibadan Main Branch as a graduate trainee. He spent 18 months there learning the ropes, and working in various areas of banking operations including cash management, clearing, credit risk management, and foreign operations.

Between September 1995 and May 2002 Adeduntan worked with Arthur Andersen Nigeria, rising to become manager in the firm's financial services industry business, leveraging on the 18 months mentorship he received at Afribank. In this role, he led and managed the statutory audit of a number of leading Nigerian banks.

In August 2000, he served as an instructor at the Andersen World-Wide Induction training for new hires in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. He also served as the lead instructor for the Local Office Basic Accounting Training and Induction course in 1999. It was while he was with Arthur Andersen that qualified as a chartered accountant in 2000.

With more feathers to his cap, Adeduntan moved

the team that secured an A3/P2 investment grade international credit rating from Moody's Investors Service in March 2014. This made the Africa Finance Corporation the second highest-rated lending financial institution in Africa.

In July 2014, he was appointed an Executive Director/Group Chief Financial Officer of FirstBank, where he was responsible for the bank's financial control, internal control and enhancement, business performance management, treasury and procurement functions.

On Monday January 4, 2016, Adeduntan succeeded Bisi Onasanya, and assumed duty as Managing Director of FirstBank of Nigeria Limited, and its commercial banking subsidiaries including

to the financial services industry in KPMG as a senior manager in June 2002, and served diligently till October 2004 when he bowed out. At KPMG, he co-pioneered the firms' financial risk management advisory services. He was also a KPMG-accredited Trainer and facilitated several internal training programmes.

When he left KPMG in 2004 to study, he pursued a Master's degree in Business Administration at the Cranfield School of Management, where he was a British Chevening Scholar. He graduated in September 2005.

Armed with yet another great feather, Adeduntan moved to Citibank Nigeria Limited in 2005 where he became the Senior Vice-President (General Manager) and Chief Financial Officer. He was saddled with the responsibility of overseeing the bank's financial and product control functions, quality assurance and operational risk management. he was on hand to assist the bank in its recapitalisation during the banking consolidation era.

In October 2007, he called it quits with Citibank, and a month later, pitched tent with the Africa Finance Corporation, as the pioneer Chief Financial Officer and Business Manager.

His achievement at the AFC includes leading

FBN UK, FBN Ghana, FBN DRC, FBN Guinea, FBN Gambia, FBN Mortgages, FBN Senegal, FBN Sierra Leone and First Pension Custodian Limited.

He coordinated his functions so professionally that on December 7, 2016, he was awarded the 2016 Banker of The Year award by the Leadership Newspaper "For refusing to 'go with the flow' even when the temptation was high and the reward substantial, and for reminding his colleagues that banking is nothing without integrity".

A man of many beneficial and influential parts, Adeduntan currently sits on the board of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group, and as a non-executive director on the boards of the Nigeria Interbank Settlement System (NIBSS), Africa Finance Corporation (AFC), FBN Bank U.K. Ltd., Universal Payments Plc., and FMDQ OTC Securities Exchange. He is also a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria.

In just four years at the helm of affairs at FirstBank, Adeduntan turned the tables and rewrote banking narratives, delving into all aspects of human endeavour to see to the development of SMEs, youth entrepreneuship among many others.

In his speech at the kick off of FirstBank's celebration of 125 years of unbroken business operations, Adeduntan hinted as follows:

"From that very modest beginning in 1894, First Bank has traversed an incredible journey of delivering impeccable financial services to its customers and supporting the building of the modern-day Nigeria and indeed, West Africa, including our early pivotal role as the monetary and fiscal policy regulator for the entire West African region," he said.

"As a long-standing institution, which even predates Nigeria as a unified entity, FirstBank is entrenched in the nation's development; woven into the very fabric of society, with our involvement in every stage of national growth and development.

"At the amalgamation, independence and through the seasons ever after, we have been here marching hand-in-hand with you and our dear nation. We have enabled financial, technological, industrial and societal advancements, achieving very many firsts over time."

Adeduntan has seen to the sponsorship of prolific enterprises to guide the youths on the right path. These include the African Fashion Week which took place at the Oriental Hotel and Youth Empowerment Seminar at the Harbour Point Event Centre. These shows among a whole lot have a lot of testimonials following.

Adesola is married to Mrs. Adenike Adeduntan and together they have three wonderful children.

Congratulations sir, and may your reign be fruitful!


ALAAFIN

Daily Times Celebrates a Century of Brilliant Journalism, Legacy

By Ruth Akpan *Photo: Tunde Bolarinwa*

Nigeria's most historic and oldest newspaper, Daily Times of Nigeria, has turned 100—a magnificent milestone that very few institutions can claim. Founded on June 1, 1926, in colonial Lagos, when the idea of an independent Nigeria was still a distant aspiration, the newspaper has survived and evolved through some of the most consequential chapters in the country's history—from colonial rule and political emancipation to independence, military coups, civil war, democratic transitions, economic upheavals and the digital revolution.

For a newspaper to survive for a century is no ordinary feat. For one to spend those hundred years chronicling the birth pains, triumphs, turbulence, personalities and defining moments of an entire nation is an even more extraordinary achievement.

That was the profound significance surrounding the grand Daily Times Nigeria Centenary Celebration, which brought together an impressive constellation of political leaders, former heads of government, serving governors, ministers, captains of industry, traditional rulers, media proprietors, veteran journalists, public intellectuals and other eminent Nigerians at the ThisDay Dome in Abuja.

It was an occasion where history appeared to step out of the pages of old newspapers and take its place among the distinguished guests.

The atmosphere carried the unmistakable dignity of a national institution celebrating an extraordinary chapter in its existence. There was nostalgia for the golden years, admiration for the men and women who built the newspaper, appreciation for those who have sustained its legacy and, above all, a determination to ensure that the centenary would not represent an ending but the beginning of another ambitious chapter.

With its theme of "100 Years: Honouring the Past, Shaping the Future," the celebration beautifully captured the dual character of the occasion. Daily

Times was looking back at a century of journalism while simultaneously looking forward to the possibilities of the next hundred years.

When Richard Barrow and Ernest Ikoli established the newspaper in 1926 as a modest four-page daily in colonial Lagos, Nigeria was a profoundly different society. The country was still under British colonial administration, political nationalism was gradually gathering momentum and the idea of an independent Nigerian nation remained a dream being pursued by a determined generation of nationalists.

Daily Times grew alongside that dream, its pages becoming a platform through which Nigerians encountered the issues, personalities and events shaping their society. From the agitation for self-government to the excitement of independence in 1960, from the turbulence of the First and Second Republics to the military coups and the Nigerian Civil War, the newspaper remained an important chronicler of the nation's journey.

It reported the speeches of political leaders, the controversies of successive administrations, the changing fortunes of the economy, the struggles of ordinary citizens and the emergence of new social and cultural identities.

Over time, Daily Times became much more than a newspaper delivered to readers each morning. It became part of the rhythm of Nigerian life.

Its historic Kakawa Street headquarters in Lagos became a familiar landmark in the country's media landscape, while the newspaper itself grew into one of the most influential publications in West Africa. At the height of its glory in the 1970s and 1980s, Daily Times was widely regarded as the largest circulating newspaper in West Africa.

For generations of Nigerians, the newspaper was a trusted companion at breakfast tables, in offices, shops, public institutions and homes. Its pages carried election results, government announcements, business

own careers formed important chapters in the story of Nigerian journalism. Their appearance at the centenary was therefore more than the attendance of distinguished guests; it represented a meeting of generations and a reunion of some of the country's most influential custodians of the printed word.

For Mr Fidelis Anosike, Chairman of Folio Media Group and Publisher of Daily Times, the presence of the veterans was deeply significant.

He paid tribute to the men and women who had built the newspaper with their talent, sacrifice, sweat and courage, acknowledging that the Daily Times story could never be complete without recognising those who had carried the institution through its many seasons.

information, political commentary, features, photographs and the stories that gave readers a sense of what was happening within the country and beyond its shores.

The significance of that heritage was not lost on the organisers of the centenary celebration.

Indeed, the Abuja event seemed to deliberately bring together the various strands of the newspaper's extraordinary history.

Veteran journalists who had spent decades working in the industry mingled with younger professionals. Former editors and reporters reunited with colleagues and friends. Media proprietors who had themselves become towering figures in Nigerian journalism joined the celebration of an institution that had helped shape the very industry in which they made their names.

Among the distinguished media personalities who graced the occasion were the Publisher of Vanguard Newspapers, Mr. Sam Amuka-Pemu, veteran journalist and former governor of Ogun State, Aremo Segun Osoba; Chief Onyema Ugochukwu; Dr Yemi Ogunbiyi, Dr Dele Cole; and Prince Nduka Obaigbena, Chairman of THISDAY and ARISE Media Group.

These were men whose

His reflections also turned attention to another defining chapter in the newspaper's more recent history—the privatisation and acquisition of Daily Times.

Anosike spoke warmly about the privatisation policy of the administration of former President Olusegun Obasanjo, describing the process as sufficiently transparent to allow a group of young Nigerian entrepreneurs to compete fairly for the historic institution.

He recalled that the team that led the bid was made up largely of young Nigerians, many of them in their thirties, who were determined to demonstrate that Nigerian entrepreneurs possessed the financial ingenuity, managerial competence and professional sophistication required to operate major corporate institutions.

For Anosike, the acquisition represented more than a business transaction. It was proof of what Nigerian enterprise could achieve when given a fair opportunity.

He recalled the rigorous technical, financial and managerial assessments that preceded the acquisition and praised the National Privatisation Council for maintaining what he described as a transparent and level playing field.

His words carried particular significance against the backdrop of a newspaper that had itself become a symbol of Nigeria's institutional evolution.

Daily Times had been listed on the Lagos Stock Exchange in 1975, marking another important chapter in its corporate history and reinforcing its position as one of the country's pioneering media institutions.

Now, under new ownership and navigating a radically transformed media environment, the newspaper is attempting another reinvention.

The centenary programme consequently looks beyond celebration to renewal, with plans around a digital-first newsroom, data journalism, video, podcasts, media literacy initiatives and training fellowships for young journalists.

Perhaps the most ambitious of these initiatives is the proposed digital archive, a project of immense historical value that seeks to make a century of Daily Times editions accessible to researchers, students, historians, journalists, educators and members of the public.

The old pages of a newspaper often reveal what official documents cannot fully capture—the mood of a nation at a particular moment, the language of political debate, the anxieties of ordinary people, the personalities who dominated public consciousness and the issues that occupied society.

Preserving those pages therefore means preserving fragments of Nigeria's collective memory.

That philosophy also found expression in the unveiling of The Nigerian Grand Book, one of the most significant highlights of the centenary celebration.

The imposing publication, conceived as a major documentation of Nigeria's national journey, fitted naturally into the anniversary of a newspaper that had spent a hundred years documenting that very journey.

Representing the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, was the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Senator George Akume, who delivered the President's message at the ceremony.

President Tinubu described Daily Times as one of the defining chroniclers of Nigeria's political, social and democratic evolution, noting that its pages had captured the personalities, events and aspirations that shaped the country from the colonial period through independence and the emergence of contemporary democracy.

He described the newspaper's century of existence as a testament to endurance, relevance and institutional resilience.

The President also gave his endorsement to the philosophy behind The Nigerian Grand Book, stressing the importance of preserving the nation's history and learning from

The gathering assumed an even more majestic dimension with the presence of prominent traditional rulers.

His Imperial Majesty, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, Ojaja II, Ooni of Ife, graced the ceremony, alongside His Royal Majesty, Igwe Nnaemeka Achebe, Obi of Onitsha, and His Royal Highness, Luka Ayedoo Nizassan III, Etsu Kwali and Chairman of the Council of Chiefs for the Kwali Area Council of the FCT.

Their presence added a regal flourish to an occasion already steeped in history, while symbolising the enduring place of traditional institutions in the Nigerian story that Daily Times has spent a century chronicling.

The intellectual centrepiece of the celebration was the

it.

According to him, the lessons of history must not merely be preserved for nostalgia; they must be used to guide the future.

It was a sentiment that beautifully complemented the central philosophy of the centenary.

The event also attracted an impressive array of political leaders.

Three serving state governors—Engr. Abdullahi Sule of Nasarawa State, Alhaji Mohammed Umar Bago of Niger State and Dr Dauda Lawal of Zamfara State—were present, while the National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress, Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda, attended alongside members of the party's National Working Committee.

The federal cabinet was represented by several prominent ministers, including Hajiya Hannatu Musawa, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Creative Economy; Barrister Festus Keyamo, Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development; and General Christopher Musa (rtd.), Minister of Defence.

Also present was the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Kalu, alongside former Governor of Ebonyi State, Senator Sam Egwu, and Comptroller-General of the Nigeria Customs Service, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi.

keynote address delivered by Dr Akinwumi A. Adesina, former President of the African Development Bank and former Minister of Agriculture.

Adesina used the historic occasion to look beyond the achievements of the past and challenge Nigerians to imagine the country they intend to leave for generations yet unborn.

With characteristic passion, he emphasised the importance of building stronger institutions, investing in young people, creating opportunities and developing a clear national vision.

Nigeria, he argued, cannot afford to continue running yesterday's race.

The future requires a different kind of imagination.

For him, the Daily Times centenary itself represented the power of continuity—the responsibility of one generation to honour what it inherited, improve upon it and hand over something stronger to those coming behind.

He expressed his conviction that Nigeria remains a country with immense possibilities and urged citizens to unite around the task of building a stronger, more prosperous and more confident nation.

He also challenged Daily Times to preserve its rich heritage while contributing to the continuous advancement of journalism.

Then came one of the most eagerly anticipated aspects of the evening—the DTN@100 Times Heroes Awards, through which the newspaper celebrated an extraordinary collection of Nigerians and institutions whose contributions have made significant impact across various sectors of national life.

The awards transformed the centenary celebration into a glittering roll call of achievement.

The honours cut across virtually every sphere of national endeavour. Business titan Aliko Dangote emerged as Business Icon of the Century, while Dr Akinwumi Adesina received the Global Impact Award and Senator George Akume was named Public Impact Person of the Decade. Ooni Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi received the Community Impact

Award, while Zenith Bank founder Jim Ovia was celebrated as Change Maker of the Century. Dr Mahmood Ahmadu was named Nigeria Global Champion, MTN Nigeria took the Digital Company of the Decade honour and Dame Adaora Umeoji, GMD/CEO of Zenith Bank, emerged Person of the Year.

The governors also featured prominently among the honourees. Pastor Umo Eno of Akwa Ibom State emerged Outstanding Governor, South-South, while Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State was recognised as Outstanding Governor, South-West. Dauda Lawal of Zamfara State took the North-West honour, Abdullahi Sule of Nasarawa State received the North-Central award, while Agbu Kefas of Taraba State was recognised for the North-East. Mohammed Umar Bago of Niger State emerged Governor of the Year, while Hope Uzodimma of Imo State received the Governor of the Decade Award.

The ceremony also recognised the contributions of lawmakers and public officials.

Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, was named Lawmaker of the Year, House of Representatives, Dr Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, Minister of Interior, received the Transformative Minister of the Year Award, Festus Keyamo, Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, received the Minister of the Decade Award, Nyesom Wike, Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, emerged as Impactful Minister of the Year, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, Comptroller-General of the Nigeria Customs Service, received the Public Officer of the Year Award, the Nigerian Revenue Service was named Government Agency of the Year and Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda, National Chairman of the APC, received the Politician of the Year Award.

In the energy and development sectors, Prof. Anthony Adegbulugbe, Chairman/CEO of Green Energy International Ltd, received the Energy Company of the Decade

recognition, EMADEB ENERGY Group received Energy Company of the Year, The Bank of Industry received the National Development Award, the Trade Modernization Project was honoured as Transformative Project of the Year, The National Council on Climate Change received the Climate Responsibility Award, ACReSAL—Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes—was recognised with the Project Sustainability Award, and Prof. Banji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, Special Adviser on Industrialisation at the African Development Bank, received the Social Impact Award.

The celebration also recognised the accomplishments of distinguished Nigerian women.

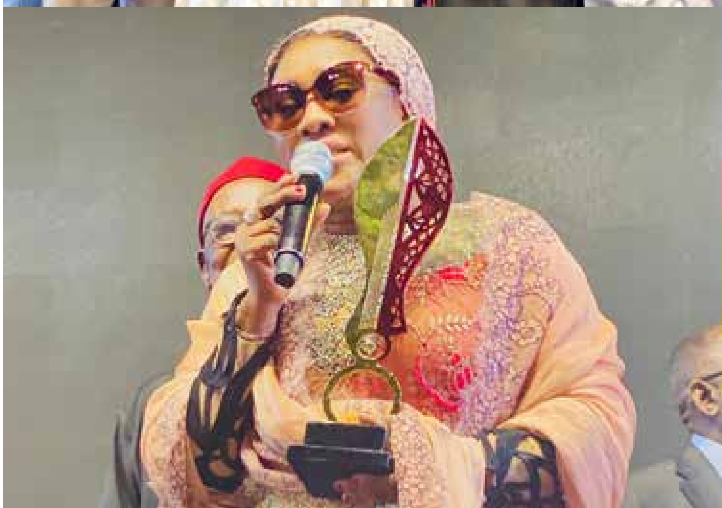
Mrs Folorunso Alakija, Executive Vice Chairman of FAMFA Oil, received the Life and Legacy Award, Mrs Jane Egerton-Idehen, CEO of NIGCOMSAT, received the Enterprise Award, and Dr Mrs Olayinka Fayomi, Group Chairperson of Foreign Investment Network, received the Global Investment Leadership and Economic Diplomacy Award.

And for the media industry, Prince Nduka Obaigbena was honoured with the Media Icon of the Decade Award.

The Times Heroes Change Maker Awards further extended the celebration to other notable Nigerians. High Chief Government Oweizide Ekpemupolo, Chairman of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Ltd, received the National Security Award, Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/ CEO of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, was recognised with the Nigeria Rising Award, and Rt. Hon. Tajudeen Abbas, Speaker of the House of Representatives, received the Parliamentary Personality of the Decade Award.

Former Senate Presidents and parliamentary leaders were also honoured, including Senator David Mark, Senator Bukola Saraki, Senator Aminu Tambuwal, and Rt. Hon. Olufemi Hakeem Gbajabiamila, Chief of Staff to the President, who received the Parliamentary Development Awards.

The gathering was more than a celebration; it was a vivid reflection of an institution that has survived by adapting to the changing face of Nigeria.



ADC Vice Presidential Candidate, Rotimi Amaechi, Gives Mum Befitting Burial in Ubima, Rivers State

By Eric Elezuo *Photos: Ken Ehimen*

From the palatial home of the former Rivers State Governor, two-term Minister of Transport and Vice Presidential Candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Rt. Hon Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi, to the Corpu Christi Catholic Church, on Aba Road, Port Harcourt to the Saint Theresa's Catholic Church, Ubima, his country home, the affection was unprecedented as crowd of mourners, sympathisers and well wishers, gathered in solidarity to mourn Madam Mary Orduah Amaechi, who died at the age of 89, on July 16, 2026.

Madam Amaechi was the beloved mother of the prominent politician, and what could have ordinarily passed for a burial ceremony, fast became a gathering of political bigwigs in the country.

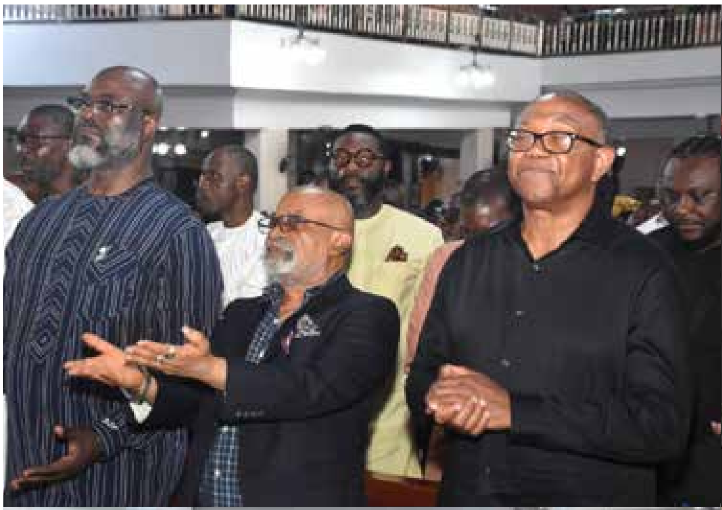
The funeral events, which kick-started on Friday, September 4, with a vigil mass and concluded on September 5, with the interment of the octogenarian after a funeral service, witnessed a large turn out of dignitaries, including former Vice presidents Atiku Abubakar and his wife, Titi Abubakar, and Yemi Osinbajo.

Other dignitaries in attendance were Presidential Candidate of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Mr. Peter Obi; former Senate President, and National Chairman of the ADC, Senator David Mark; Senator Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed, former Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, National Secretary of the ADC, Rauf Aregbesola Dr. Donald Duke, Senator Dino Melaye, Hon. Emeka Ihedioha, Alhaji Aminu Tambuwal, Chief John Odigie Oyegun, Senator Ben Murray-Bruce, Senator Chris Ngige, former Rivers State governor, Sir Celestine Omehia; and former deputy governor of Rivers State, Engr. Tele Ikuru, former Attorney-General of the Federation, Mohammed Bello Adoke; former National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, Prince Uche Secondus; NDC vice-presidential candidate, Senator Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso; former Edo State governor and senator, Prof. Oserheimen Osunbor, and many others.

Describing his mother as a woman with strong faith, dignity and human kindness, Amaechi said she would be sorely missed. He thanked everyone, who came from far and wide, especially members of the ADC family, led by the Presidential Candidate, Atiku Abubakar, to stand with him in the period of grief, and wished all God's nerves as they journey back to their various homes.

On their part, ADC said the leaders joined Amaechi and his family "to pay their final respects and stand with the Amaechi family in their time of grief."

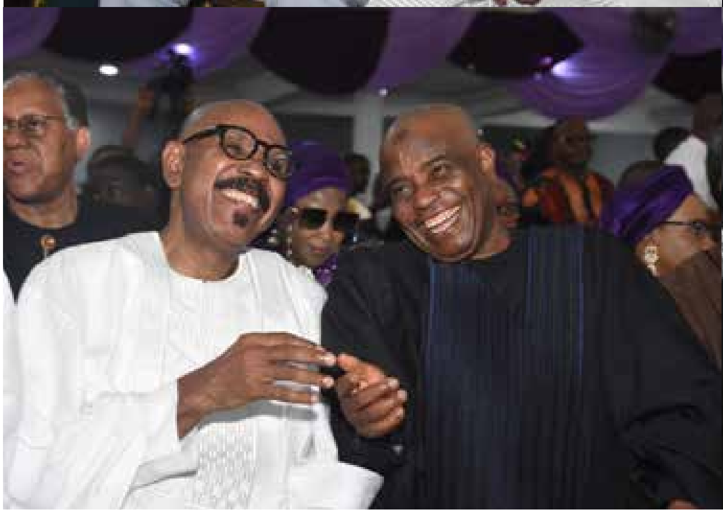
The remains of Dame Amaechi were interred in her home at Ubima, as her children and other loved ones watched in quiet grief mixed with respect and admiration.












Osun Poll: 21-Day Tribunal Window Closes, No Petition Filed

The Osun governorship election petition tribunal has received no petition challenging the outcome of the August 15 governorship poll during the 21-day window stipulated by the constitution.

The 21-day window for filing petitions to challenge the outcome of the poll ended on Saturday, and none of the 14 parties who got defeated in the poll challenged the result.

The incumbent Osun State Governor, Ademola Adeleke, who contested the poll on the platform of the Accord, was declared elected by the State Returning Officer of the Independent National Electoral Commission, Prof Joshua Ogunwole, in the August 15 governorship poll.

Adeleke won the governorship poll with a total of 511,067 votes to defeat his closest challenger, Bola Oyebamiji of the All Progressives Congress, who polled 444,815 votes.

Fifteen political parties fielded candidates in the poll.

Shortly after the results of the poll were announced, the office of the Election Petition Tribunal that will hear matters opened for operation on the premises of the State High Court in Oke Fia, Osogbo, Osun State.

On Saturday, the last day for filing petitions challenging the outcome of the poll, The PUNCH visited the tribunal office, where the registry was open for business.

However, a staff member who responded to enquiries told our correspondents that no petition had been received.

Efforts to get the reaction of the Osun APC to the development failed, as calls to the party's spokesperson, Kola Olabisi, went unanswered.

A response to a WhatsApp message sent to him seeking the party's position on the refusal of opposition parties to challenge Adeleke's victory was still being awaited as of the time of filing this report on Sunday.

Speaking exclusively with The PUNCH on Sunday, a member of the APC legal team, who craved anonymity since he was not authorised to comment on the matter, said the party refused to challenge Adeleke's victory in the interest of peace.

"Not that we don't have grounds to challenge Adeleke's election. There are good grounds to challenge the outcome of the poll. But the party hierarchy and the legal team, after deliberations, resolved not to file any petition.

"Power belongs to God, and He gives whoever He wants. We decided not to file any petition in the interest of peace," he said.

Speaking on the development, the Osun Accord chairman, Victor Akande, said in a telephone interview that by refusing to challenge Adeleke's victory at the poll, the opposition candidates had demonstrated political maturity.

"We appreciate the maturity of the candidates of the opposition for not challenging the outcome of the poll.

"That itself is good for democracy, if an election stops at the poll. The idea of going to court to regain a mandate is sometimes not good for democracy," Akande said.

Also commenting, the governorship candidate of the Social Democratic Party, Olugbenga Ajala, said in a telephone interview on Sunday that the election and the processes leading to it were considered fair enough.

Ajala said, "The election came, and it's gone. Fair enough; we have to be content with the outcome of the poll because we believe the best candidate won, and we also believe that the president is fair enough.

"If the election has not been fair enough, we would have headed for the tribunal, but we give thanks to God that the process can be seen by all to be very fair. That is why no party or candidate is coming forward with any petition."

Two Weeks Leave: Oyebanji Resumes Second-Term

The Governor of Ekiti State, Mr Biodun Oyebanji, will resume official duties on Monday following the conclusion of his two-week annual leave.

The Special Adviser to the Governor on Media, Olayinka Oyebode, disclosed in a statement in Ado Ekiti on Sunday.

Oyebode stated that the two-week leave was part of the governor's statutory annual leave entitlement.

He stated, "While on leave, Governor Oyebanji, however, attended to crucial matters relating to governance and administration of the state.

"The governor is resuming with a renewed vigour as preparations for the commencement of his second-term administration gather momentum," Oyebode stated.

It is believed that the governor, whose first term in office will wind down on October 15, has resumed with fresh energy for his second term in office, taking off on October 16.

Oyebanji, who was the candidate of the All Progressives Congress, won his reelection bid in the June 20 Ekiti State governorship election, having defeated his opponents in the election in all 16 local government areas of the state.

With the victory, Oyebanji, who became the first governor in Ekiti State to win a second term while in office, had, while reacting, assured Ekiti people that the renewed mandate would spur his administration to greater service.

Oyebanji had, on the occasion, pledged to "consolidate on existing achievements, intensify the implementation of people-oriented policies and continue serving the people with integrity, humility and fear of God."

Ogun Ends Monthly Sanitation, Boosts Daily Waste Collection

The Ogun State Government has ruled out the reintroduction of the monthly environmental sanitation exercise, saying it will instead strengthen daily waste collection and disposal through increased investment in equipment for the Ogun State Waste Management Authority.

Governor Dapo Abiodun recently stated this in Abeokuta while inaugurating waste management equipment, operational vehicles and an office block to mark the first six months in office of the Special Adviser and Managing Director of OGWAMA, Farouk Akintunde.

Represented by the Commissioner for Environment, Ola Oresanya, Abiodun said the state had moved beyond the monthly sanitation model, arguing that residents had become accustomed to maintaining a clean environment daily.

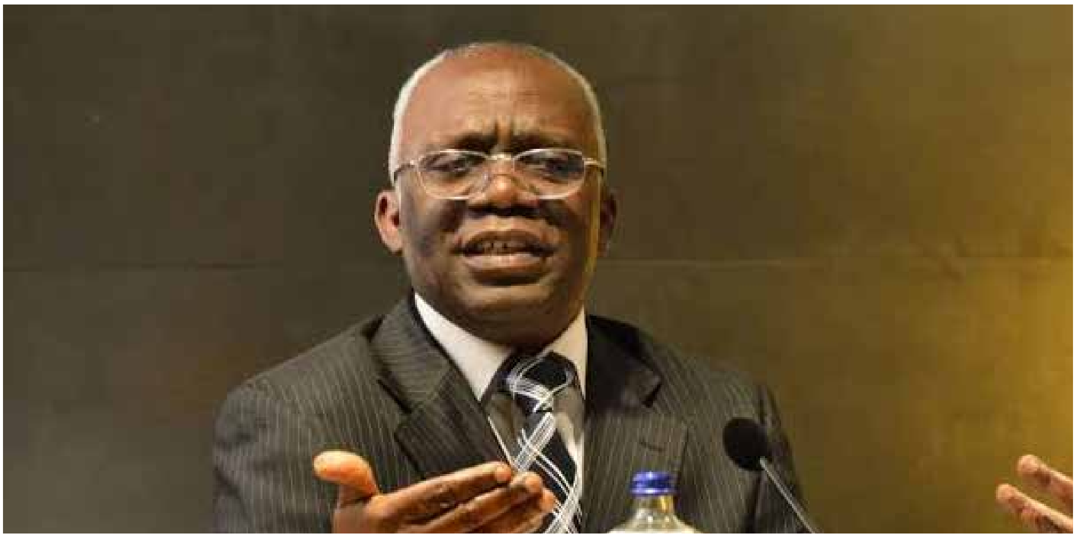
"Ogun State has grown beyond the monthly sanitation exercise since six years ago. Every day is now Environmental Sanitation Day in the state, so there is no need to pick a day in a month during which the state will be shut down for some hours in the name of sanitation," the governor said.

He said the government had chosen to channel resources into strengthening OGWAMA's operational capacity rather than revive the monthly exercise.

"Already, our people are used to daily sanitation. So, instead of re-introducing monthly environmental exercise, we have decided to buy more compactors and other waste management equipment for OGWAMA to daily collect and properly dispose of waste generated by households, commercial outlets and industrial facilities in conjunction with accredited PSP operators across the state," Abiodun said.

The governor added that the government would soon take delivery of additional compactors and other waste management equipment to further improve the authority's operations.

N33.75bn Cash Transfer: Falana, SERAP Demand Probe



Human rights lawyer and Chairman of the Alliance on Surviving COVID-19 and Beyond, Femi Falana (SAN), has called on the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission to investigate the alleged diversion of N33.75bn meant for cash transfers to poor and vulnerable Nigerians.

Also, the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project has urged President Bola Tinubu to order an immediate investigation into over N78.8bn in public funds allegedly diverted, unaccounted for or irregularly spent under the Federal Government's social protection programmes.

Falana, in a statement issued on Sunday, urged the anti-graft agency to work with the Auditor-General for the Federation to recover the money and prosecute public officials found culpable.

The call followed a disclosure by the Auditor-General for the Federation, Shaakaa Chira, that the Federal Government could not provide sufficient evidence to auditors that N33.75bn in cash transfers intended for more than 3.29 million vulnerable households reached genuine beneficiaries.

The disclosure was contained in the Auditor-General's 2024 Annual Report on Non-Compliance/Internal Control Weaknesses in Ministries, Departments and Agencies of the Federal Government.

Falana said the development raised serious concerns about the management of funds intended to alleviate poverty and support vulnerable Nigerians.

He said, "The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission should liaise with the Auditor-General of the Federation with a view to recovering the missing N33.75bn.

"Furthermore, the EFCC should embark on an immediate investigation of the serious allegation of the criminal diversion of the sum of N33.75 billion in cash transfers earmarked for poor and vulnerable people in the country.

"All the characters involved in the shameful conduct should be arrested and prosecuted without any delay."

The lawyer noted that the National Social Investment Programme Agency was established as a statutory agency under the National Social Investment Programme Agency Act 2022, enacted during the administration of former President Muhammadu Buhari.

According to him, the law empowered NSIPA to design social investment programmes, manage beneficiaries' databases, strengthen payment and accountability systems and collaborate with state governments and development partners.

The Act provides for the implementation of programmes including N-Power, the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme, National Cash Transfer, National Social Safety-Net, Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme and the Grant for Vulnerable Groups.

However, Falana alleged that the management of the programmes had been undermined by corruption involving some public officials.

He recalled that the pioneer Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Sadiya Umar Farouq, was investigated by the EFCC over alleged money laundering involving more than N37.1bn.

He further recalled that in April 2026, a Federal Capital Territory High Court issued an arrest warrant against Farouq and her former Permanent Secretary, Bashir Nura Alkali, following their repeated failure to appear for arraignment.

Falana also referenced the scandal involving former Humanitarian Affairs Minister, Betta Edu, who was suspended in January 2024 after a leaked December 2023 memo directed the Accountant-General of the Federation to transfer N585m in public intervention funds into a private bank account.

Pay Review: Military Generals' Salary Rises To N2.5m Monthly

The Federal Government has approved a new pensionable salary structure for personnel of the Nigerian Armed Forces, with Generals, Admirals and Air Chief Marshals topping the scale at an annual gross pensionable salary of N29.75m.

The approval, contained in a September 3, 2026 circular issued by the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission, takes effect from September 1, 2026, and sets out new annual salary figures to be used for pension purposes across the Army, Navy and Air Force.

The circular, obtained by our correspondent, was signed by the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the commission, Major General Junaidu S. Bindawa (retd.), and addressed to key government officials, including the Chief of Staff to the President, Deputy Chief of Staff to the President, Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Minister of Defence, Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Auditor-General for the Federation, Director-General of the Budget Office of the Federation and Accountant-General of the Federation.

Titled "Review of Gross Consolidated Armed Forces Salary Structure for Pension Purposes," the circular referenced an earlier communication dated August 28, 2026, which revised the Consolidated Armed Forces Salary Structure.

The commission said the latest review was carried out in accordance with the provisions of the 1999 Constitution and following the approval of President Bola Tinubu, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

The circular stated, "I refer to Circular No. SWC/S/04/S.304/III/526 dated 28th August 2026 which revised the Consolidated Armed Forces Salary Structure (CONAFSS), and in line with the provisions of Section 173 (3) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), and hereby convey the approval of the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria, for the review of Gross Consolidated Armed Forces Salary Structure for Pension Purposes attached as Annex I."

The commission consequently attached a new schedule detailing the approved gross annual pensionable salaries for the various ranks and

salary steps.

For Generals, Admirals and Air Chief Marshals, the highest annual pensionable salary is N29,745,561, while the lowest figure for the rank is N21,898,443, depending on the salary step.

Lieutenant Generals, Vice Admirals and Air Marshals will have annual pensionable salaries ranging from N16,995,355 to N25,908,856.

Major Generals, Rear Admirals and Air Vice Marshals will earn between N14,977,173 and N23,899,084 annually for pension purposes.

For Brigadier Generals, Commodores and Air Commodores, the annual pensionable salary ranges from N13,863,954 to N16,387,106.

Colonels, Captains and Group Captains will have annual pensionable salaries ranging from N8,313,134 to N9,489,244, while Lieutenant Colonels, Commanders and Wing Commanders will earn between N7,552,046 and N8,739,205.

Majors, Lieutenant Commanders and Squadron Leaders will have annual pensionable salaries ranging from N5,987,815 to N7,009,293.

For Captains, Lieutenants and Flight Lieutenants, the annual pensionable salary ranges from N5,277,111 to N6,415,885.

Second Lieutenants, Midshipmen and Pilot Officers will have annual pensionable salaries ranging from N4,924,943 to N5,587,014.

At the warrant-officer level, Army, Navy and Air Force Warrant Officers will have annual pensionable salaries ranging from N4,525,780

to N5,173,449.
Master Warrant Officers will have between N3,935,753 and N4,932,638, while Warrant Officers will have annual pensionable salaries ranging from N3,455,892 to N4,345,165.
Staff Sergeants, Petty Officers and Flight Sergeants will have annual pensionable salaries ranging from N2,976,031 to N3,757,692.
Sergeants and Leading Seamen will have annual figures ranging from N2,808,064 to N3,164,813, while Corporals and Able Seamen will earn between N2,477,709 and N2,734,367.
Lance Corporals and Seamen will have annual pensionable salaries ranging from N2,323,876 to N2,580,533, while Privates, Ordinary Seamen and Aircraftmen will have figures ranging from N2,281,185 to N2,491,623.
The commission, however, made clear that the approved figures are specifically for pension purposes and should not be interpreted as the monthly take-home pay of serving personnel.
The document states, "This approval takes effect from 1st September 2026."
It further directed government establishments and other concerned parties to refer enquiries on the implementation of the new structure to the commission.
According to the circular, "Please all enquiries concerning this circular should be directed to the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission."
The latest development comes shortly after the Federal Government approved a separate upward review of the remuneration of Armed Forces personnel. The broader salary review reportedly provided differentiated increases across the ranks, with junior personnel receiving the largest percentage adjustment.
The review was also designed to improve military welfare amid the country's prolonged security challenges.

Lagos To Recruit LJL Fellows Into Civil Service — Sanwo-Olu

The Lagos State Government has introduced an Excellence Pathway that will enable qualified fellows of the Lateef Jakande Leadership Academy to join the state civil service, Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu has said.
Sanwo-Olu disclosed this on Friday at the graduation ceremony of the academy's third cohort and the induction of the 2026/2027 fellows at the Balmoral Convention Centre, Ikeja GRA.
He described the initiative as a deliberate effort to bridge the gap between leadership training and public service.
According to him, the pathway would give high-performing fellows who meet the applicable requirements an opportunity to move directly from the fellowship into government.
"For too long, the best of our young people have looked at public service and seen a closed door, a place where merit waits in line behind everything else. If we train leaders and then give them no way in, we have trained them for somebody else," the governor said.
He said the Excellence Pathway was designed to change this by making the academy a pipeline for young Nigerians seeking to serve in government.
"The Pathway closes that gap. It is how a Fellowship stops being a year of experiences and becomes a pipeline into the machinery of government itself. It is how an idea becomes a system. And a system is the only thing that survives its founder," Sanwo-Olu said.

The governor said the initiative was particularly important because the academy was established not merely to produce fellows with impressive CVs, but to develop people capable of taking responsibility for the future administration of Lagos.
He said the programme was also intended to outlive his administration, noting that the academy had been written into law to ensure that its survival did not depend on the governor in office.
"This is the last graduation of the Lateef Jakande Leadership Academy that I will attend as Governor of Lagos State. By this time next year, someone else will hold this office, and someone else will stand at this lectern," he said.
Sanwo-Olu added, "We did not build this Academy for a Governor. We built it for a State. We wrote it into law so that it would not depend on my goodwill, or my successor's, or on anyone's mood in a budget season."
He said the central question behind the academy was who would take charge of Lagos in the years ahead.

2027: ADC unveils Full List Of Governorship, Deputy Candidates In 28 States

The African Democratic Congress has unveiled its governorship and deputy governorship candidates for the 2027 general elections in 28 states, including former presidential aide Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour in Lagos, former Kaduna State governorship candidate Isa Ashiru and former Attorney-General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami.

The party also fielded former Delta State governorship candidate Great Ogboru, Senator Ahmad Babba Kaita in Katsina.

The candidates were announced in a statement on Friday, with the party saying they would carry its banner and commitment to providing Nigerians with credible leadership and a “real alternative” in the 2027 elections.

A release by the party’s spokesperson, Bolaji Abdullahi also shared on X disclosed this.

Other notable candidates include Senator Halliru Dauda Jika in Bauchi, former House of Representatives member Herman Iorwase Hembe in Benue, former House of Representatives member Zakari Mohammed in Kwara and former Nigerian Army officer Brigadier General John Sunday Sura in Plateau.

The party also fielded candidates in Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Borno, Cross River, Ebonyi, Enugu, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Nasarawa, Niger, Ogun, Oyo, Rivers, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe and Zamfara.

In Lagos, Rhodes-Vivour will contest the governorship with Gbadamosi Babatunde Olalere as his running mate, while Ashiru will fly the party’s ticket in Kaduna alongside Kantiok Irmiya Ishaku.

Ogboru is paired with Afiari Gloria in Delta, while Kaita will contest in Katsina with Aminu Yar’adua Ahmed as his running mate.

In Kebbi, Malami will contest alongside Zagi Musa Mohammed.

The ADC said the candidates represented its commitment to offering Nigerians an alternative ahead of the 2027 elections.

ADC unveiled the candidates ahead of the February 6, 2027 governorship elections.

Also, governorship campaigns are scheduled to begin on September 9, 2026.

Here is the full list:

ADC governor & deputy governor candidates

1

Abia: Governor – Kalu Kalu Agu; Deputy Governor – Alozie Ogidimma Darlington.

2

Adamawa: Governor – Modibbo Hammantukur Ribadu; Deputy Governor – Aguwa Kevin Iliya.

3 Akwa Ibom: Governor – Akpanudoedehe John James; Deputy Governor – Nsien Mkpombuk Tommy.

4

Bauchi: Governor – Sen. Halliru Dauda Jika; Deputy Governor – Sama’ila Mohammed Kabir.

5

Benue: Governor – Rt. Hon. Herman Iorwase Hembe; Deputy Governor – Abba John Abba.

6

Borno: Governor – Babagana Buhari; Deputy Governor – Mamman Dauda.

7 Cross River: Governor – Nkoyo Toyo; Deputy Governor – Okwoche Andrew Adagbor.

8

Delta: Governor – Chief Great Ogboru; Deputy Governor – Afiari Gloria.

9

Ebonyi: Governor – Ukpai Mba Udeh; Deputy Governor – Onwe Daniel Ede.
10 Enugu: Governor – Ocho Obodoze Chukwuma; Deputy Governor – Eze Arinze Christopher.
11 Gombe: Governor – Bala Bello; Deputy Governor – Bala Sani Isa.
12 Jigawa: Governor – Sabo Mohammed Nakudu; Deputy Governor – Musa Ya'u Balarabe.
13 Kaduna: Governor – Isa Mohammed Ashiru; Deputy Governor – Kantiok Irmiya Ishaku.
14 Kano: Governor – Ibrahim Ali Amin; Deputy Governor – Shehu Abdulkadir Bari.
15 Kastina: Governor – Sen. Ahmad Babba Kaita; Deputy Governor – Aminu Yar'adua Ahmed.
16 Kebbi: Governor – Abubakar Malami; Deputy Governor – Zagi Musa Mohammed.
17 Kwara: Governor – Zakari Mohammed; Deputy Governor – Olawuyi Julius Olayide.
18 Lagos State: Governor – Gbadebo Rhodes Vivour; Deputy Governor – Gbadamosi Babatunde Olalere.
19 Nasarawa: Nuhu Angbazo — Governor; Ahmed Yusuf — Deputy Governor
20 Niger: Dr. Mohammed Kpautagi — Governor; Musa Mamman — Deputy Governor
21 Ogun: Biodun Collins Ogundipe — Governor; Muraina Oluwaranti Oluyemi — Deputy Governor
22 Oyo: Taofeek Adegboyega Adegoke — Governor; Wahab Adeniyi — Deputy Governor
23 Plateau: Brig. Gen. John Sunday Sura — Governor; Pwajok-Kele Chundung Bitrus — Deputy Governor
24 Rivers: Gabriel Pidomson — Governor; Okumgba David Amapakaye — Deputy Governor
25 Sokoto: Manir Mohammad Daniya — Governor; Isah Bello Ambarura — Deputy Governor
26 Taraba: Abubakar Umar Tutare — Governor; Kwetishe Haruna Kwenyan — Deputy Governor
27 Yobe: Kassim G. Gaidam — Governor; Kori Lawan Mohammed — Deputy Governor
28 Zamfara: Shinkafi Bilyaminu Yusuf — Governor; Muhammad Abdulmuddalib Auwal — Deputy Governor

2027: No Presidential Candidate Can Improve Nigeria, Including Obi — Datti

Former Labour Party vice-presidential candidate, Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed has said none of the politicians contesting against President Bola Tinubu in the 2027 election can improve Nigeria, including his former running mate, Peter Obi.

Baba-Ahmed stated this in an interview on the Mic On Podcast, hosted by Seun Okinbaloye and posted on Saturday.

He was responding to a question on what advice he would give Tinubu about his leadership of the country.

He said the President should prepare to leave office, but not hand over to any of the politicians currently challenging him.

"I will simply advise uncle (Tinubu) to please prepare to hand over and move away, but not to the people contesting against him because none of them will improve Nigeria," he said.

Asked to clarify whether he was referring to all the opposition candidates, Baba-Ahmed said, "None of that part. Tinubu should leave the stage. All those people contesting against him, too—they were all in bed together at some point or another."

When the host asked whether he was referring to Peter Obi, Baba-Ahmed replied, "Including Peter Obi, I'm sorry to say."

Baba-Ahmed said Obi had previously been a member of the Peoples Democratic Party while it was the ruling party, arguing that he was calling for "a

whole new Nigeria"

"Tell me one politician who has never been in a ruling party. Tell me," he said.

When Okinbaloye pointed out that Baba-Ahmed had also been involved in politics and had served in the National Assembly, the former lawmaker said he had never belonged to a ruling party.

"I have never been in a ruling party. While I was in CPC, CPC was the leading opposition party, even above ANPP then. When they merged with APC and came to power, you have my letter of resignation from the then, uh, APC because… even though I was, because I have never had a card, a membership card of APC. Never. I never had a membership card of APC," he said.

He said his criticism was not based solely on party affiliation, but on what he described as the political history of those seeking to challenge Tinubu.

Why Fuel Prices Remain Volatile — NMDPRA

The Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority has identified crude oil sourcing, single-source domestic refining, logistics and transportation costs among factors driving volatility in fuel pump prices.

Head of Public Affairs, NMDPRA, Mr George Ene-Ita, made this known in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria in Abuja on Sunday.

Ene-Ita described the issues surrounding continuous fuel price increases as knotty, adding that fuel prices had been completely deregulated and were, therefore, subject to market volatility.

He said the sourcing of crude oil as feedstock and the time lag between crude procurement and arrival at refineries were factored into product pricing.

According to him, marine and inland taxes associated with the movement and supply of petroleum products were also factored into the pricing.

"This issue is knotty in the sense that there are various factors involved.

"Pump price of petrol has been completely deregulated. And if this is the case, it also means that all volatilities associated with supply have to be factored in.

"These factors include single-source domestic refining, sourcing of crude oil as feedstock, time lag between when crude is sourced offshore and when it eventually arrives at the refinery.

"They also include time lag between when PMS cargoes are ordered and when they eventually arrive our ports for subsequent inland distribution and supply in the case of imported fuel.

"There are also transportation and landing costs, as well as marine and inland taxes.

"Perhaps when the domestic refining ecosystem becomes more robust, competitive and sustainable, the issues regarding pricing will become clearer and more beneficial to consumers," he said.

Ene-Ita said refinery pricing templates and ex-depot prices were not regulated under the current framework.

He, however, said NMDPRA was collaborating with stakeholders and agencies such as the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission to ensure price equilibrium and parity at the last mile.

NAN reports that the current market price for Brent crude oil is $96.28 per barrel, driven by the ongoing geopolitical conflict and tensions in the Middle East.

The pump price of fuel currently ranges between N1,299 and N1,350 in the FCT, following an upward adjustment in the gantry (ex-depot) price by the Dangote Refinery, which ranges between N1,265 and N1,290 per litre.

Motorists and consumers have expressed concern over the continued rise in fuel pump prices, saying it has worsened hardship, inflation and the high cost of living.

Reacting to this, the Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria urged the Federal Government to intervene in crude oil pricing for domestic refining to moderate fuel prices and ease pressure on consumers.

IPMAN President, Maigandi Garima, told NAN that the current international crude oil market posed challenges to domestic petrol pricing because refiners had to procure crude at prevailing market prices.

Garima said higher crude oil prices translated into higher production costs for refiners, who would subsequently pass the additional cost to the market.

He called for government intervention to reduce the cost of crude supplied to domestic refineries during periods of international market volatility.

According to him, such intervention should not be interpreted as a return

to fuel subsidy, but as a temporary measure to support domestic refining and reduce pressure on consumers.
"What we are saying is that if Nigerians can make this huge investment, we should support them. Government can intervene by reducing the cost of crude oil to the refinery.
"When the refinery refines the product at a lower cost, it can also reduce the price for Nigerians, and this will help the economy," he said.
Garima also called for a more predictable crude oil pricing arrangement for domestic refineries, saying frequent fluctuations made it difficult to sustain stable fuel prices.
He urged the government and relevant stakeholders to explore mechanisms that would provide a more stable crude supply and pricing framework for domestic refining.
He said such an arrangement would enable domestic refineries to plan better and potentially provide more stable prices for petroleum products.

World Bank Projects Africa To Drive Global Workforce Growth By 2050

Sub-Saharan Africa is tapped to become the biggest source of new workers globally over the next 25 years, with more than 620m people expected to join the region's working-age population by 2050, according to the World Bank.
The demographic shift will increasingly position Africa at the centre of the global labour market as populations age and workforces contract in several other regions.
The World Bank estimates that SSA's population will expand from about 1.5bbn in 2024 to 2.5bn by 2050, with more than 600m additional people entering the working-age population.
But the continent's demographic expansion comes with a major economic test, analysts say. Creating enough productive jobs to absorb millions of new workers each year remains a challenge.
The World Bank estimates that SSA will need to generate an average of 25m jobs annually through 2050 to keep pace with the expansion of its working-age population.
That requirement is particularly challenging because economic growth across the region has not generated jobs quickly enough to match the expansion of the labour force.
The institution has therefore urged African countries to pursue more productive, diversified and private-sector-led growth, supported by investment in infrastructure, skills and institutions that reduce the cost of doing business.
The World Bank has identified infrastructure and energy, agriculture and agribusiness, healthcare, tourism, and value-added manufacturing as areas with strong potential to generate jobs at scale.
Unlocking that potential will require more than government spending. Greater private-sector investment, improved infrastructure and a stronger business environment will be critical to enabling companies to expand production and employment, World Bank said.
Skills development will also become increasingly important as African economies integrate into changing global supply chains and new industries, it added.
For Nigeria, the demographic shift is particularly significant. As Africa's most populous country, its rapidly expanding workforce could become a major source of economic growth if sufficient productive employment is created.
But without faster job creation, the same population growth could deepen unemployment, underemployment and pressure on household incomes.

Tinubu's Policies Improving Student Welfare — NANS

The National Association of Nigerian Students has linked recent developments in education and student welfare to policies of President Bola Tinubu's administration, urging students to consider their impact ahead of the 2027 general election.

NANS President, Akinteye Afeez, made the remarks during a meeting between a delegation of the student body and representatives of the APC Youth Network West Africa at the network's secretariat in Lagos on Friday.

Akinteye highlighted the Nigeria Education Loan Fund (NELFUND), improved electricity supply on some university campuses and a reduction in prolonged industrial actions as developments that could positively affect students' academic experiences.

He said Nigerian students were closely monitoring government policies and their consequences for their education and welfare, irrespective of their political affiliations.

"Students are not necessarily defined by membership of political parties," Akinteye said.

According to him, students remained interested in developments that directly affected their academic and social well-being.

"Students are observing developments within the country and the impact of government policies on their education and welfare," he said.

The NANS president said he would communicate the issues discussed during the engagement to students across the country to ensure they remained informed about developments affecting them.

He also expressed support for the Tinubu administration and disclosed plans to mobilise students in support of the President ahead of the 2027 presidential election, with a reported target of 10 million votes.

The meeting also focused on student welfare, educational development, youth participation, ongoing student projects and possible areas of collaboration between student leaders and the APC Youth Network West Africa.

Akinteye called for stronger cooperation between student leaders and youth stakeholders, saying such relationships were necessary to advance issues affecting young Nigerians.

"There is a need for stronger relationships among student leaders and youth stakeholders," he said.

The Director-General of the APC Youth Network West Africa, Olatunde Gideon Igbasan, was represented at the meeting by Olumayowa Jose, the Alaaye of Dome-Kwabenya, Accra, Ghana. Representatives of the network's Directorate of ICT, Media and Publicity and the Welfare Directorate also attended the meeting.

The APC Youth Network representatives welcomed the NANS delegation and commended the student leaders for initiating the engagement.

The meeting provided an avenue for both groups to explore partnerships aimed at improving student welfare, strengthening leadership development and increasing youth participation in national affairs.

The engagement is expected to establish further channels of communication and collaboration between NANS and the APC Youth Network West Africa on issues affecting Nigerian students and young people.

Makinde Tells Oyo Monarchs To Stay Away From Politics,

Oyo State Governor, Seyi Makinde, has warned traditional rulers in the state against partisan politics ahead of the 2027 general elections, saying those who openly participate in political activities should be prepared to be treated as politicians.

Makinde gave the warning on Saturday while speaking at the newly commissioned palace of the Eleruwa of Eruwa, Oba Samuel Adegbola, during the monarch's first coronation anniversary and the conferment of the honorary chieftaincy title of Aare Asoludero of Ibarapaland.

The governor urged traditional rulers to remain neutral and concentrate on their traditional responsibilities, particularly the preservation of peace, unity and development in their domains.

He said, "The traditional institution occupies a sensitive position in society and should not be dragged into partisan political contests.

"Monarchs are expected to serve as fathers to all political actors and residents in their domains, irrespective of their political affiliations. Any traditional ruler who chooses to openly participate in partisan politics should be

prepared to be regarded as a politician rather than being treated solely as a traditional ruler.

"If you want to play politics, then you should be ready to be treated as a politician. But if you want to remain a traditional ruler, then stay away from politics," the governor warned.

Makinde maintained that his administration had continued to respect the traditional institution and would sustain its support for monarchs across the state.

He stressed that such support should not be interpreted as an invitation for traditional rulers to become partisan actors in the political process.

Makinde also called on traditional rulers to continue to promote peaceful coexistence and support initiatives capable of improving the welfare of their subjects.

Jigawa Governor Appoints Dr Sani As 17th Emir Of Gumel

Jigawa State Governor, Umar Namadi, has approved the appointment of Dr Lawan Ahmed Muhammad Sani as the 17th Emir of Gumel Emirate, three days after the death of his father.

The announcement was made by the Secretary to the State Government, Bala Ibrahim, during a press briefing at the Nigeria Union of Journalists Secretariat in Dutse, the state capital, on Sunday.

"Following due consultations with the Gumel Emirate Council, kingmakers, and in accordance with the Jigawa State Emirate Council Law, His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Jigawa State, Umar Namadi, has approved the appointment of Dr Lawan Ahmed Muhammad Sani as the new Emir of Gumel," the SSG said.

Ibrahim said the appointment took effect immediately to ensure continuity of leadership and stability in the emirate following the death of the former emir.

"This appointment takes effect immediately in order to fill the vacuum created by the passing of His Royal Highness and to sustain peace, unity and development in Gumel Emirate," he stated.

The SSG described Lawan

as a worthy successor, noting his years of service to the emirate.

"Dr Lawan Ahmed Muhammad Sani previously served diligently as the Ciroman Gumel during the reign of his late father. His experience, education and deep understanding of the traditions of Gumel make him eminently qualified for this exalted throne," Ibrahim said.

He added that the new emir's background would enable him to build on his father's legacies.

"Having served as Ciroman Gumel, Dr Lawan is not new to the people. He understands the challenges and aspirations of Gumel and Jigawa State at large. Government is confident he will provide purposeful and exemplary leadership," the SSG said.

Defence Minister Musa Accuses El-Rufai of 'Terrible' Crimes As Kaduna Gov

The Minister of Defence, Gen. Christopher Musa, has accused a former Governor of Kaduna State, Nasir El-Rufai, of deliberately planning the killing of people in Southern Kaduna.

Musa made the allegation while fielding questions on Channels Television's Politics Today programme on Thursday.

The minister said El-Rufai's administration created deep divisions in Kaduna State, alleging that the situation made it difficult for residents from Southern Kaduna to live freely in the northern part of the State and vice versa.

According to him, the administration of the current governor, Uba Sani, has made deliberate efforts to restore unity and rebuild trust among residents of the State.

"We know how it was when El-Rufai was there; it was toxic," Musa said.

"El-Rufai did a lot of terrible things in Kaduna State. He divided the country, the State, into two. In that, if you are from the South, you cannot go to the North and live. Those ones from the North were moving to the South.

"Governor Sani within one year has been able to dissolve all that. You see, now everybody is free, everybody has a say. It's not 100%. Let me tell you, it's not 100%, but you can see that he's making deliberate effort in uniting the state."

Speaking on the feelings of people in Southern Kaduna towards the former governor, Musa said the people remained deeply pained over killings recorded in the area during El-Rufai's tenure.

He alleged that El-Rufai deliberately planned the killing of people in the region.

"Well, I don't know if unhappy is an issue. I think if there's anything worse than unhappy, we can never be happy with somebody who has deliberately planned for the killing of our people," Musa said.

"I mean, when you look at it, if you look at his videos, you know, his speeches, he was very proud of what he did.

"He told us he paid bandits. He told us he did this, he did that. He didn't hide it. He was that arrogant to come out and tell people that this was what he did."

The Defence Minister said residents of Southern Kaduna were still traumatised by the killings that occurred during the period, adding that the security situation in the area had improved under the current administration.

"The Southern Kaduna people are still very pained. Of course, definitely. I mean, if you look at the number of killings that was done there and what is going on now, you can't compare at all," he said.

Musa further accused El-Rufai of denying some people opportunities during his administration and alleged that the former governor's policies affected even people from his own part of the state.

"I can tell you what he has done to people living in Kaduna from his own area. He did a lot of things that I'm sure even him is not proud of," he added.

The minister, however, called on Nigerians to reject politicians who exploit religion, ethnicity and other differences to divide the country.

"We should get politicians that want to unite Nigeria. For me, any individual who is using either religion, tribe, creed, or anything to divide the state can never be a friend; can never be somebody we look up to," Musa said.

"We shouldn't have those kind of ones in government. Anybody who is using religion or tribe or whatever to divide Nigeria is an enemy of the State."

US Cannot Arrest Tinubu Or Family Members During UN General Assembly — Jimoh Ibrahim

President Bola Tinubu and members of his family "enjoy unimpeded transit in the United States and cannot be arrested while attending the United Nations General Assembly," Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Jimoh Ibrahim, has said.

Ibrahim, who is also Chairman of the United Nations Committee on Budget and Administration, said the Nigerian Mission in New York had received "no notification from the US government imposing any restriction on Tinubu's movement during the UNGA."

The envoy stated this in a statement released on Sunday issued by the Office of the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations in New York.

Citing Section 11 of the 1947 UN-US Agreement, Ibrahim said representatives of member states and their families were protected from impediments to transit to and from the UN headquarters district.

He explained that the provision required US federal, state and local authorities to refrain from imposing restrictions on the movement of representatives of member states, their families, UN officials, specialised agencies and persons invited to the headquarters district on official

business.

Ibrahim's statement comes against the backdrop of an ongoing legal dispute in the United States over access to records relating to Tinubu.

Meanwhile, it was reported that Tinubu was expected to attend the 81st United Nations General Assembly in New York, where he is scheduled to address world leaders, according to earlier confirmation by Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the UN.

Also, the Presidency had dismissed suggestions that Tinubu was facing a criminal case in the US, describing an ongoing Freedom of Information Act lawsuit in Washington, DC, as a civil records-disclosure

The Presidency said the case, filed by American transparency activist Aaron Greenspan, "is not a criminal case against President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, nor has the court found him guilty of any criminal wrongdoing."

Trump Proposes Renaming New Mexico State 'New America'

United States President Donald Trump's name-changing spree found an unlikely new target on Sunday when he suggested the state of New Mexico could become "New America."

His proposal, which was immediately dismissed by the state's governor, comes days after he signed an order to rename Lake Ontario as "Lake America" in the middle of a trade war with neighboring Canada.

"Many people suggested changing the name of New Mexico… to NEW AMERICA," the Republican president posted on social media. "So much more prestigious and beautiful for the people of that potentially incredible State. Wow, I Love It!!!"

The White House reposted an image showing the Mexico part of the state's name crossed out and replaced with "America."

Some US media reports said the idea originated as an internet hoax.

State governor Michelle Lujan Grisham told Fox News that the name "isn't

up for debate — it's been ours since before the United States existed."

She said the president wanted to "distract Americans" from issues such as soaring gas prices.

Trump last week suggested renaming the Strait of Hormuz as "Trump Strait" as the war with Iran continues — then hours later implied he was not serious about the plan.

He renamed the Gulf of Mexico as the "Gulf of America" on his first day back in the White House in 2025 in a move rejected by Mexico.

Canada has also rejected the attempt to rename Lake Ontario.

Lagos Mortgage Scheme Allocates 20,000 Homes Since Inception

The Lagos State Mortgage Board, which oversees the Lagos Home Ownership Mortgage Scheme, also known as LagosHOMS, has allocated over 20,000 housing units to residents since its inception in 2014.
The agency explained in a statement on Thursday that the Lagos State Mortgage Board was inaugurated to bridge the housing deficit in the state by allocating houses to residents, adding that over 20,000 families had benefited from the scheme since its inception.
Following a survey that revealed a huge housing deficit, it said Lagos took steps to address the problem by looking inward for ways to reduce the deficit. It said the state recognised that the cash-and-carry approach would not benefit low- and middle-income earners.
As a result, the state introduced a mortgage scheme and a rent-to-own scheme for low- and middle-income earners, under which beneficiaries are required to pay a particular percentage of the asking price of the property and repay the balance over a 10-year period.
This was revealed by the General Manager/Chief Executive Officer of the Lagos State Mortgage Board, Mr Bayowa Foresythe, during the celebration of his 60th birthday with members of staff in his office.
Foresythe stated that the agency had so far allocated housing units in all five divisions of Lagos, known as IBILE, comprising Ikeja, Badagry, Ikorodu, Lagos Island and Epe.
“On the Island, we have Sangotedo Phase 1 and Phase 11; in Surulere, we have 36 units; in Ikorodu, we have in Igbogbo 360 units, and Ibeshe 420 units; in Epe we have about 360 units; in Ogba, we have 96 and 144 units in Sir Anthony Enahoro Housing Scheme; in Ilupeju, we have Oba Mufutau Olatunji Hamzat Housing Estate, we have 120 units; and over 400 units in Ajara, Badagry. We also have units in Odonosa and Idale, among others. We are still building more.”
Asked when Lagos hoped to finally bridge the housing deficit, he said: “Lagos is attractive, and people come to Lagos on a daily basis, and obviously, if you come to Lagos and you don’t go back, you will need shelter. The demand for accommodation is high, and it continues to keep the deficit high. It’s not static.
“So, the challenge is supply, and it will always be supply as long as people continue to flock into Lagos. Someone who comes into Lagos needs shelter immediately. So the supply side has always been the challenge, and the financial side as well. In building, the government can’t do it alone.
“So, we have to resort to private partnership at the end of the day to be able to increase the supply. In summary, the demand is high, and for the supply to meet the demand is the challenge, because the demand is not static; it keeps shooting up.”
He gave a number of reasons why the project had continued to record success. “First and foremost, I would like to thank God Almighty for sparing my life to this particular age of sixty and for wisdom to carry on. The point is that we enjoy the grace of God. We recognise that he is keeping us alive to do what we are doing.
“I sincerely thank President Bola Tinubu, and Governor of Lagos State, Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu. I thank the Deputy Governor, Dr Obafemi Hamzat, who is the incoming governor. He was the Commissioner for Works and Infrastructure who supported the agency when it was inaugurated.”
He said the policy was made favourable for people to participate in by reducing equity contributions and interest rates, while allowing beneficiaries to pay the balance over a period of 10 years.

Subsidy or No Subsidy
The Atiku Solution

By Eric Elezuo

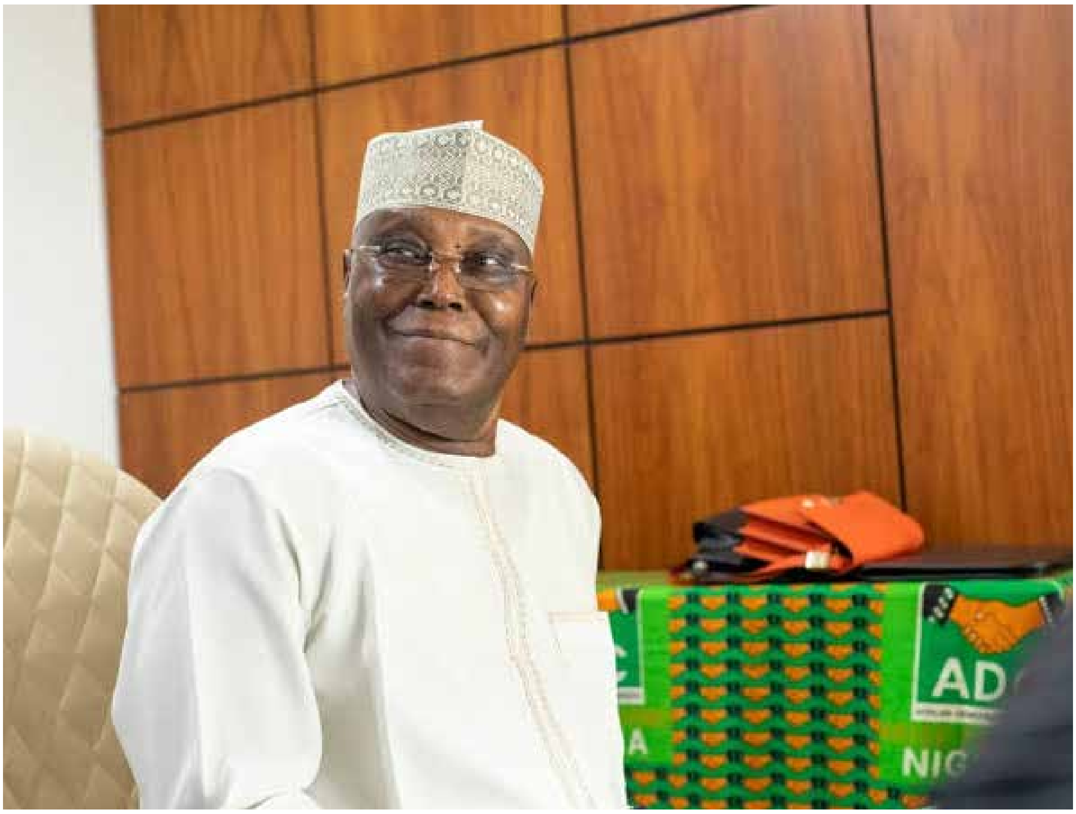
"No refinery gets unlimited support. No marketer brings government a surprise bill. No agency manufactures an under-recovery after the transaction"

"I did not oppose the removal of the oil subsidy, but where is the money? Where did it go? It was intended to reduce poverty and help children attend school. Where is the money now? It seems they are just stealing it"

The trajectory of the 2027 Presidential Election suddenly took a dramatic turn when the Presidential Candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, made a declaration to return petrol subsidy, originally ended at the inception of the Bola Ahmed Tinubu presidency on May 29, 2023, if elected in the next general election.

The removal immediately pushed up petrol prices and contributed to a sharp increase in transportation, food and other living costs, making the reform deeply unpopular among many Nigerians. However, the Tinubu administration

has maintained that eliminating the subsidy freed resources for the federation and helped restore government finances, especially for state governments and governors.
Atiku's declaration did not only put the Tinubu camp in disarray, or change the face of political and economic debates, but shot up the personality profile of Atiku Abubakar, giving him an unprecedented high rating in the prelude to the 2027 election, the highest acceptance he has experienced so far in his quest for the presidency over the years.
The declaration consequently renewed a debate towards the need to actually return the subsidy, which was abruptly discontinued, and let the sleeping dog lie. Opinions have been rift concerning the eligibility of the removal of the subsidy or a return of the subsidy regime since the Atilla pronouncement, thereby giving Nigerians options of thought and consideration.
Lamenting the non-transparency of the supposed subsidy removal, Atiku said, "The government successfully removed the subsidy, but we do not know where the money went. If they had used the money for development, to solve security problems, for education, and to create opportunities for the youth, it would be different. If elected, I can remove the subsidy and use the money to do all these properly."
Atiku therefore, succeeded in reopening a germane debate, which assumed a political dimension, with the opposition seeking to make the hardship associated with the Tinubu administration's economic reforms a central campaign issue, while the people are left to choose the one(s) that meet their needs and put physical food on their tables.
While opinion molders are divided in their analysis, with emphasis on the fact that the pronouncement is a complete departure from Atiku's earlier advocacy for its removal during his 2023 election campaign, the Atiku camp has expressed strong Bayo Onanuga, rejected the proposal, describing it as retrogressive, fiscally unsustainable and a product of what it called Atiku's desperation to win the presidency, Atiku on the other hand, has strategically outlined a solution, he believes will restore the dignity of the Nigerian citizen, put food on the table and make the country habitable again.



Presidency has continued to defend the reforms as necessary measures to restore fiscal stability and attract investment.
Stakeholders from both the economic and political sectors have agreed that Atiku's position, as contentious as it may appear, clearly opens up the race to the presidential, noting that for once in a long time, there's divergent of economic opinion, and the belief that the restoration will be a camp changer in affecting the lives of Nigerians positively.
It is worthy of note that the subsidy removal policy, which took effect barely minutes into the Tinubu presidency has defined much of administration's economic policies and reforms.
While the Presidency, in a statement by the Special Adviser to the President on Information and Strategy, Even President Tinubu dismissed Atiku's move as a show of his 'high level of ignorance in governance and economy'.
The Presidency argued that Nigeria's petroleum landscape had changed fundamentally since Tinubu announced the removal of the petrol subsidy in his inaugural address, particularly with the emergence of significant domestic refining capacity.

They are of the opinion that a return to subsidy would undermine the reforms already undertaken in the petroleum sector, create legal and fiscal complications and potentially discourage investment in domestic refining, including the Dangote Refinery and other modular refineries.

Undaunted, Atiku sees that defence of the presidency as lame, noting that no Nigerian has anything good to say of the policies of the present administration, and explaining a robust rationale behind his planned new subsidy restoration move.

He insisted that every barrel of crude allocated under the scheme would be targeted and tracked to ensure that Nigerians benefit from the intervention.

The former Vice President, in a bid to convince Nigerians of his genuiune intent, unveiled details of his proposed Atiku Economic Recovery Plan (AERP) 2027, stressing that the Tinubu government has failed to adequately account for the financial gains from the removal of the petrol subsidy and that a new intervention should be designed around domestic refining, with support capped, budgeted and tied to verifiable production and consumer benefits.

Atiku maintained that his proposal was not a return to the opaque subsidy regime of the past, but a controlled mechanism that would support Nigerian refineries while ensuring that the benefits of cheaper crude feedstock were transmitted to consumers.

Under the proposal, qualifying domestic refineries would receive crude at preferential prices subject to strict conditions relating to production, efficiency, transparency and domestic supply.

Atiku also pledged to track the crude from allocation to refining and ensure that any support translated into lower prices for consumers.

But fighting against time as the majority of Nigerian populace continue to sway to the restoration of subsidy solution of Atiku, the federal government has made consistent effort to reach out to the populace with cushioning cash effects, promising handouts worth trillions to less privileged Nigerians.

Furthermore, the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Taiwo Oyedele, informed that the removal of the petrol subsidy had generated N15.8 trillion in resources for the federation between June 2023 and December 2025. According to the government, N5.4 trillion accrued to the federal government while N10.4 trillion was shared among states and local governments.

Not satisfied, Atiku insisted that his administration would replace Nigeria's old import-subsidy architecture with a targeted, capped, transparently budgeted and independently audited production subsidy designed to lower energy costs while accelerating domestic refining, as well as called for a thorough disclosure of the whereabouts of the N15.8 trillion genera

Atiku, in a statement issued by his Senior Special Assistant on Public Communication, Phrank Shaibu, said the AERP 2027 recognises that the choice before Nigeria is not simply between subsidy and no subsidy, but between an opaque intervention that breeds waste and a disciplined economic instrument that delivers measurable benefits to citizens.

"My proposal is not to resurrect the old subsidy regime. We will move subsidy from importation to production, from middlemen to Nigerian refineries, and from unverifiable claims to verifiable barrels. The principle is simple: the subsidy will follow the barrel," he explained.

Under the AERP, Atiku pointed out that qualifying public and private Nigerian refineries would receive domestic crude at a preferential price, subject to strict production, efficiency, transparency and domestic-supply conditions.

He acknowledged that supplying crude below its market-equivalent value represents a real opportunity cost to the Federation and said his plan would account for that cost openly rather than pretend it does not exist.

"The cost will be known. The ceiling will be known. The beneficiaries will be known. And, most importantly, the benefit delivered to Nigerians will be measurable.

"We will determine what Nigeria can afford before we subsidise. We will not subsidise first and discover the bill afterwards," the former Nigerian number two man emphasised.

Atiku said the AERP would specifically prevent refinery owners from pocketing the benefit of preferential crude without passing it to consumers.

He added: ''No refinery would receive subsidised crude without a corresponding, independently verified quantity of petroleum products being supplied to the Nigerian market under a transparent pricing formula reflecting the benefit of the preferential crude price.

''Crude allocation, refinery intake, production yields, inventories and domestic deliveries would be reconciled, ensuring that every subsidised barrel can be followed from allocation through refining to the Nigerian consumer.

"No phantom cargoes. No fictitious imports. No unverifiable under-recoveries. No retrospective claims.

"If you receive subsidised Nigerian crude, you must refine it in Nigeria, supply the agreed products to Nigerians and pass the benefit to Nigerians. Otherwise, you do not qualify."

Atiku said eligibility would be open and rules-based for all qualifying public and private refineries, thereby preventing the programme from becoming a vehicle for enriching any particular refinery

Nigerians will know the maximum exposure. Independent auditors will see the barrels. And the public will see what was produced for every naira of support," he insisted.

Where oil revenues exceed the budget benchmark, a predetermined and legally appropriated portion of the additional revenue, he stressed, may be deployed within the established fiscal ceiling, while no windfall would be assumed before it materialises, and weaker oil prices or production would not be used as justification for breaching the ceiling.

Atiku said the fiscal framework would also disclose the opportunity cost and implications for revenues accruing to federal, state and local governments, rather than conceal the intervention through deductions from the Federation Account.

or politically connected operator.

According to him, allocation would be based on independently verified capacity, efficiency, domestic supply and compliance rather than political discretion.

The programme, he stressed, would also contain strict safeguards against arbitrage, while subsidised crude and products benefiting from the intervention could not simply be diverted to more profitable foreign markets while Nigerian consumers bear the fiscal cost.

Any operator that diverts subsidised crude or products, manipulates production records, violates domestic-supply obligations or fails to pass the prescribed benefit to consumers, Atiku said, would lose eligibility, refund the subsidy benefit and face applicable regulatory and legal sanctions.

"Nigeria will not subsidise anybody's private profit. Public support must produce a measurable public benefit," he reaffirmed.

Atiku said the production subsidy would operate within a predetermined annual fiscal ceiling approved through the federal budget, ending the culture of open-ended subsidy liabilities.

"No refinery gets unlimited support. No marketer brings government a surprise bill. No agency manufactures an under-recovery after the transaction.

"The National Assembly will see the appropriation.

Atiku noted that the AERP intervention would carry statutory sunset and periodic review provisions.

Expressing the seriousness of his intentions, Atiku had disowned the statement of one of his trusted aides, Paul Ibe, stressing that he would restore petrol subsidy.

"Earlier, one of my press aides contradicted me in a policy statement as far as subsidy is concerned.

"I want to repeat categorically that when I said I would return to subsidy, I will! Nigeria is rich enough to look after the welfare of its citizens. Let it be clearly stated that he was not speaking on my own authority," Atiku said.

The former Vice President has further to his X account to buttress his stand, saying, "On the question of subsidy, my position has not changed and will not change: I will restore it! A nation as blessed as ours has no business abandoning its citizens to hardship. Nigeria is rich enough to look after her own.

"I believe the wealth of a nation is not measured by how much government collects, but by how much the money in the pockets of its people can buy.

"I want wages to have value again. I want farmers to move produce without transport swallowing their profits. I want families to fill their baskets without emptying their pockets. I want businesses to produce, employ and prosper.

"That is why I will restore targeted subsidy and put purchasing power back in the hands of Nigerians.

"When fuel rises, transport rises. When transport rises, food rises. When food rises, families suffer. I will break that wretched chain that has defined our national life in the nearly four years of Tinubu's presidency.

"I will support Nigerian production, reduce energy costs and restore purchasing power. I will not restore the import racket; I will restore relief.

"I restated this commitment when I received the Osun State leadership of the ADC in Abuja on Tuesday. I will make the naira in your pocket worth more, make daily living affordable again, and secure our people. That is the Nigeria I intend to build."

Another of Atiku aides, Phrank Shaibu, had led credence to the subsidy restoration in a statement, noting that Atiku had not proposed bringing back the old system under which government subsidised imported petrol, but rather a capped and transparent intervention designed to support local refining, increase supply and ultimately bring down energy costs.

It is important to note that Atiku's subsidy restoration is not limited to petrol alone, the ADC is also hinting on tackling electricity, and returning its subsidy, among other sectors.

ICCP 2026: Community of Psychologists Reunites in Lagos, Exchanges Culture and Ideas

By Ruth Akpan *Photo: Funmi Ilelabayo*

Lagos has never been a city that whispers. Its pulse is loud, its personality unmistakable and its appetite for ideas, enterprise and human connection almost inexhaustible. Yet, for four remarkable days, the ever-restless metropolis acquired a distinctly intellectual rhythm as some of the finest minds in community psychology and allied disciplines arrived from different parts of the world for a remarkable gathering of scholarship, culture, reflection and human connection.

At the centre of this extraordinary convergence was the 11th International Conference of Community Psychology, ICCP 2026, hosted by Lagos State University and staged across the university's Ojo campus and the Lagos Marriott Hotel, Ikeja. Far removed from the image of a routine academic conference where researchers simply read papers and disappear behind stacks of proceedings, the Lagos edition carried a deeper symbolism. It was fashioned as a homecoming, an intellectual return to the Motherland and an invitation to reconsider the meaning of community, identity, heritage and wellbeing through an African lens.

Its evocative theme, "Gathering in the Motherland: Celebrating Lifeways, Ways of Water & Reconnecting to the Source," gave the gathering a philosophical character that lingered throughout its proceedings. It was a theme that seemed to open several doors at once—into history, culture, psychology, ancestry, indigenous knowledge and the intricate relationships between human beings and the communities that give their lives meaning.

For Lagos State University, the honour of hosting the 11th edition represented a significant addition to its growing profile as a destination for serious scholarship and international intellectual exchange. The university became, for those few days, a meeting ground where seasoned academics exchanged ideas with younger researchers,

practitioners interrogated theories alongside scholars and professionals from different disciplines examined the human condition from remarkably different perspectives.

The gathering attracted psychologists, academics, researchers, mental-health professionals, policymakers, community-development practitioners and other specialists whose work touches the psychological and social wellbeing of individuals and societies. With hundreds of delegates in attendance from Nigeria, other African countries, Europe, the United States and beyond, the occasion assumed the atmosphere of an intellectual homecoming in which geographical boundaries mattered far less than a shared commitment to understanding people and strengthening the communities in which they live.

That emphasis was crucial because community psychology occupies a distinctive space in the broader world of psychology. Its gaze extends beyond the individual to the family, neighbourhood, institution and society, recognising that human wellbeing is profoundly influenced by the environments in which people are born, raised, educated, employed and connected to others. Consequently, questions of mental health, social inclusion, resilience, cultural identity, inequality, community development and collective wellbeing naturally found their way into the conversations in Lagos.

But perhaps the most captivating feature of ICCP 2026 was the decision to place Africa, rather than merely psychology, at the heart of the conversation. The conference represented only the second time that the International Conference of Community Psychology had been hosted on African soil, giving the Nigerian edition a significance that extended well beyond the impressive gathering of scholars.

For decades, much of

the formal language of psychology has been shaped by theories and frameworks developed outside Africa. In Lagos, however, the conversation was given a different texture. African experiences, indigenous knowledge, cultural memory and community realities were brought much closer to the centre of the discussion, allowing scholars to interrogate what psychology means when viewed through the history, traditions and lived experiences of African societies.

The idea of "reconnecting to the source" therefore carried considerable weight. It suggested an examination of the past without becoming imprisoned by it and a search for ways of preserving cultural knowledge while embracing the possibilities offered by contemporary science. It also opened a necessary conversation about the psychological consequences of slavery, colonialism, displacement and cultural disruption and how these historical experiences continue to echo through generations.

That dimension of the gathering came into particularly sharp focus in the intervention of the President of the Pan-African Psychology Union, Professor Andrew Zamani, who urged African psychologists to confront the psychological effects of slavery and colonialism while strengthening relationships between Africa and its diaspora. His message gave historical depth to the conference's larger conversation about identity, memory and the recovery of indigenous perspectives.

The symbolism of water, embedded in the conference theme, was equally striking. Water has always been more than a physical necessity. It has carried people across distances, sustained civilizations, shaped settlements and become inseparable from the mythology, spirituality and cultural identity of countless societies. It flows around obstacles, changes its form, connects distant places and sustains life. In that

sense, it offered a fitting metaphor for community psychology itself—a discipline concerned with connection, adaptation, resilience and the invisible currents that bind human beings together.

Within the academic spaces of Lagos State University, those broad ideas were translated into serious conversations about the challenges confronting contemporary communities. Scientific sessions, keynote presentations, panel discussions, research presentations and professional engagements provided opportunities for delegates to exchange findings, challenge assumptions and explore practical approaches to some of the most pressing psychological and social questions of the moment.

The presence of policymakers added another important layer to the proceedings. For community psychology to have tangible impact, research must eventually find its way beyond the university and into the policies, programmes and institutions that shape everyday life. That philosophy resonated strongly in the remarks of the Lagos State Commissioner for Tertiary Education, Tolani Sule, who described psychology as indispensable to addressing challenges in education, healthcare, governance, security and leadership.

His argument was compelling in its simplicity: government policies are ultimately experienced by human beings, and human beings are not merely numbers on statistical tables. They have emotions, aspirations, fears, memories, frustrations and hopes. A policy that ignores those human dimensions may be technically sound on paper yet fail to achieve the desired result in real life.

It was a sentiment that dovetailed neatly with the position of LASU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ibiyemi Olatunji-Bello, who urged scholars to listen more carefully to communities and ensure that research translates

into practical solutions. Her emphasis placed a valuable responsibility on academia—to move beyond the comfort of theories and publications and engage more deeply with the people whose experiences often inspire research in the first place.

The issue of mental health also occupied an important place in the gathering. Delivering the keynote address on behalf of the Lagos State Commissioner for Health, Professor Akin Abayomi, Dr Leonard Okonkwo called for mental-health services to be integrated into primary healthcare and advocated stronger collaboration among health professionals and community leaders.

The proposition struck at one of the enduring challenges surrounding mental healthcare: accessibility. A sophisticated mental-health system cannot achieve its full purpose if the people who need assistance are unable to reach it, afford it or feel sufficiently comfortable to seek it. Bringing psychological support closer to communities, strengthening primary healthcare and encouraging collaboration among professionals can therefore help create a more responsive system in which mental wellbeing receives the attention it deserves.

And that was perhaps the underlying beauty of the Lagos gathering. It refused to confine psychology to the walls of the consulting room or the pages of an academic journal. Instead, it opened the discipline to the wider realities of human existence—families struggling with social pressures, young people navigating an uncertain world, communities recovering from adversity, societies dealing with historical wounds and governments attempting to build policies that genuinely improve people's lives.

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION








THE GRAND RECEPTION/DINNER


11th INTERNATIONAL CONFERE
OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOL
ICCP 2026
ICCP


11th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENC
OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY
ICCP

THE TOUR OF LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITY, OJO

Justice, Security in Partnership: Dialogue Between the Bar and Law Enforcement (Pt. 2)

INTRODUCTION

The inaugural installment of this intervention was necessarily introductory- focusing on the background and over-view of the subject. It touched on areas where the NBA has intervened and interfaced with other justice stakeholders like the Police, the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission; the National Human Rights Commission, etc. this week, we shall address the challenge and scope of insecurity in Nigeria, focusing on political insecurity, economic insecurity and physical insecurity. After which we shall discuss the constitutional framework for the rights to life in Nigeria. enjoy.

THE CHALLENGE AND SCOPE OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

Having established the conceptual framework, the next task is to contextualize it within the Nigerian reality. Insecurity in Nigeria is multi-dimensional, taking forms such as political, health, economic/financial, food, educational, and social insecurity. Insecurity is simply the absence of security. However for our purposes, it is the political, physical and economic aspects of insecurity that will be the facts of this paper.

The key questions are: To what extent do these ills plague us? Are they existential? Have they always been part of our history, or have they worsened over time? The best way to examine this is to break it into its component parts, beginning with political insecurity.

POLITICAL INSECURITY

Control of political power, especially at the centre, has always been fiercely contested in Nigeria, often resulting in violence and loss of life. Campaign rhetoric ahead of the 2025 general elections suggests a risk of history repeating itself, possibly in a worse form.

Political violence, starting with inflammatory speech, can quickly escalate to physical violence. This danger is compounded by ongoing insurgency from Boko Haram (now ISWAP), secessionist agitation by IPOB, politically-motivated shootings, and kidnapping for ransom. While kidnappings often have economic motives, they also feed political instability.

ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Nigeria's worsening poverty has earned it the label of the "poverty capital of the world." This fuels political insecurity as unemployed youths are recruited by politicians for violent purposes. Economic hardship also drives vote-buying, where voters sell their ballots for minimal sums, leading to flawed electoral outcomes. This cycle is entrenched and unlikely to be broken before the 2027 elections.

PHYSICAL INSECURITY

Pipeline vandalism and crude oil theft linked to economic insecurity have reached alarming levels, with allegations of involvement by security agencies. The loss in revenue forced the government to contract former militant leader Government Ekpemupolo ("Tompolo") to help curb the menace.

Non-State Actors control territories in parts of the North-West, North-East, and North-Central, collecting taxes, issuing passes, planting flags and acting as parallel sovereign authorities. These areas are effectively beyond the reach of the Nigerian State.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR RIGHT TO LIFE IN NIGERIA

A Constitution is not merely a collection of legal clauses. It is a nation's vow, its solemn oath to the governed. It is the architecture of civil order, the map by which a society charts the moral boundaries of power. But when the Constitution becomes an artifact of aspiration rather than a living force of justice, it ceases to protect; it begins to mock. That is the Nigerian tragedy. For here is a nation that proclaims rights with poetic fervour, but practises repression with clinical precision.

Let us begin with the most sacred right of all the right to life, enshrined in section 33(1) of the 1999 Constitution. It declares without ambiguity that "every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life." This has been given judicial imprimatur and affirmed by Nigerian court, in several cases viz: Esabunor v Faweya, Ndubuisi v State, Azuogu v State. But what weight does this right carry in a country where a man may be shot by a bandit while returning from market; a child and mother killed in their home through a herder invasion; a villager executed by terrorists; no one is arrested; no one is prosecuted; no justice is served? The Constitution grants the right, yes, but the State withholds the protection. What use is a right to life in a terrain of death?

Each corpse buried without justice is a clause of the Constitution burned in effigy.

And consider Section 34(1) a guarantee that "every individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person." It forbids torture, inhuman and degrading treatment. Yet across Nigeria's vast terrain, dignity has become a vanishing dream. Men are paraded naked in front of cameras by vigilante groups; women stripped and whipped for so-called 'moral offences' by religious fanatics, citizens forced to pay ransoms for abducted relatives, while the State looks on, passive and paralyzed. Where is dignity when a woman has to sell her body to feed her children? Where is dignity when a man works six days a week and cannot afford bread?

The betrayal deepens when we examine section 14(2)(b), which declares- no, insists, that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government." This is not a metaphor. It is the constitutional essence of statehood. A government that fails to secure and provide for its people ceases, by legal definition, to be legitimate. Yet, in Nigeria today, security is a luxury. In Zamfara, Niger, Katsina, Plateau State and even more recently, Edo, entire communities live in fear and under the reign of warlords, bandits and terrorist groups. In the South-East, armed separatist groups extort, maim, kill and burn. In the South-South, pirates rule the creeks. And all the while, Abuja issues banal statements, not solutions.

Even the criminal justice system, meant to operationalize the Constitution, has virtually collapsed into spectacle. The police extort with impunity. The courts delay justice until justice becomes irrelevant. Prisons overflow with awaiting trial inmates while politicians accused of looting billions of our common patrimony stroll freely through airport lounges, attending graduation events where they are conferred with purchased honorary doctorate degrees. A man who steals bread is lynched. A senator who steals a nation is given a chieftaincy title. Is this the rule of law, or the rule of rot?

Let us not forget Chapter II of the Constitution, the so-called Directive Principles of State Policy. These are the clauses that outline a vision for a just and egalitarian society free education, affordable healthcare, equal opportunity, protection of the vulnerable, decent wages, access to housing, food security, and the equitable distribution of national wealth. But here lies the deception: these provisions are rendered non-justiciable under Section 6(6)(c). In plain terms, they are promises the people cannot enforce. The Constitution dreams on their behalf, but denies them the legal means to wake that dream into action.

When a State says to its citizens, "we guarantee you food, education, and health," and then adds a footnote saying, "but you may not ask us for it," what emerges is not democracy it is deception. And deception is the mother of despair. Despair, when left to fester, breeds defiance. And defiance, when met without justice, becomes insurrection. That is the cycle Nigeria

is now trapped in a spiral of constitutional promises turned into societal wounds.

The Constitution becomes a parody in the mouths of politicians who have never read it and judges who are too timid to enforce it.

For the powerful, it is a shield; for the poor, a sword turned inward. The elite recite its sections during legal battles over electoral fraud. But where are these recitations when 652 children die of hunger in Katsina? Where are the legal arguments when a woman in Makurdi loses all her children to a communal massacre? When the man in Sokoto can no longer afford petrol, food, or peace of mind, what legal relief can he seek?

It is also worth noting the performative constitutionalism that plagues Nigeria's legislative process. Lawmakers gather to amend the Constitution every four years like surgeons with blunt scalpels. They debate the minutiae of electoral timelines, federal character quotas, and party primaries. But no one rises to demand justiciability for Chapter II. No one proposes constitutional protections for internally displaced persons. No one fights to enshrine the right to a living wage. They adjust the frame while the house is on fire.

In the final analysis, a Constitution that cannot be felt in the body of the poor, in the belly of the child, in the safety of the mother, and in the labour of the working man, is a document not of power but of pretense. A parchment without protection. A creed without consequence.

Yet, it is not too late. What is written may still be made flesh. But first, we must acknowledge the gap. We must look the failure in the face and name it for what it is: a breach of trust, a betrayal of covenant, a blood-soaked irony. For the Constitution, like the prophets of old, still cries out: "Will you honour me with your lips and deny me with your deeds?" The answer, for now is a crass denial of deeds. (To be continued).

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

"All the great things are simple, and many can be expressed in a single word: freedom, justice, honour, duty, mercy, hope". – Winston Churchill.

ADDING VALUE

WITH HENRY UKAZU
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Trust Your Wings

Dear Destiny Friends,
Wing means different things to different entities. To a bird, it means the ability to fly; to an angel, it means a medium of delivering goodwill messages; to a bat, it's seen as a form of movement from one spot to another, and many more. The million dollar question, therefore, is what's the purpose of a wing to you as an individual? To fly, to jump, or have fun with?

We all have wings, no doubt, but most people are not in the habit of using their wings well. Some even use their wings for the wrong reasons. But your wings can serve as an asset to your personal and professional development if properly activated.

To drive home how wings can serve as a tool for enhancement, I will explain using a bird. As we all know, a bird's wing is for flying. The eagle is considered the king of the sky or king of the air because its ability to fly far above the earth and reach great altitudes represents untethered freedom, liberation from bondage, and a perspective that rises above worldly troubles.

The reason the eagle can fly is simply because of its wings. The wing does not depend on the eyes to fly; no, the eye serves a unique purpose that enables the eagle to see what other birds can't see. The eagle's eye gives it clarity, hyper-focus, heightened awareness, and the ability to see the bigger picture beyond immediate distractions.

The birds are not an exception. Do you know that if a bird lands on a branch, the branch does not break; even if it breaks, the bird is not scared of falling because it trusts its ability to fly because of its wings. Let me ask you a question: when a bird lands on a branch of a tree, does it trust the branch not to break, or does it trust its ability to fly? One may say both to an extent; however, I will say the bird will trust its wings more because the bird ought to have common sense to know what can protect and sustain it, and that is its wings.

The main reason the bird won't be scared is simply because of its wings. The bird knows that even if the branch breaks or falls apart, it won't fall; rather, it will fly away to safety. This is how simple life works: most times, we depend on people, money, and other things to succeed, but the main person we ought to depend on is God, as well as believe in ourselves. And to believe in ourselves, we must have self-confidence. One of the greatest limiting factors preventing us from succeeding in life is lack of confidence. Many people don't believe in themselves; even those who believe in themselves sometimes have doubts. In some cases, they lack the confidence to take the bold step. If you have confidence like a bird, you won't be scared if anyone leaves you. Even if you are fired from your job or experience challenges in life, you will know it's for a short period of time and that you can bounce back.

Still on the story of the bird, the birds trust their wings to fly and not the branch. The birds know that anything can happen to the branch. For instance, a hunter may try to shoot the tree, and the force can affect the branch; a big animal with weight may try to attack the bird, and the weight may break the branch. It could be any reason.

So, in real life, we'll be tested; life is going to test the branches we are relying on or standing on. These branches can be our friends, family members, our health, religion, business, money, relationship, academics, jobs, etc. All these branches will shake; some will disappear without warning. Question: What will you do when your "branch" falls apart? Do you cry over spilt milk, or will you activate your wings of perseverance? Let me tell you, your wings belong to you. Your wings are your power. They cannot be taken away from you no matter what, unless you give them up.

As mentioned earlier, your wings can be your confidence, perseverance, character, knowledge, skill, or even gift/talent. All these virtues don't come from what you are standing on. They should come from inside of you. So, don't give up that inherent power in you. Remember, if the whole world is telling you you can do something, and you know you can't do it, you will fail, but if the whole world is telling you you can't do something, and you know you can do it, you will succeed because 1 John 4:4 says, he that is in you is greater and strong than he that is in the world.

In my journey through life, I discovered that many people trust their branch for approval, comfort, and sustenance; they forget that they are born to fly.

It's instructive to note that life doesn't offer us a straight road. Life is not tested when everything is stable around us; rather, it is tested when there's chaos and when everything around us begins to shake. And, as such, it does not punish you when your branch breaks; rather, it reminds you who you are, and it instructs you to remember what's always yours from the start. All you need is the key to activate your wings so you can fly. Don't allow failure to define you. Do you see why it's important to trust your wings?

I need you to understand that if you learn to trust yourself by trusting your wings, you won't be afraid of failing. Trust me, your wings are not safe because the world is safe. The world is not safe and will never be safe, so trust your wings because you can overcome any storm or challenges that come to you when everything falls apart

As I begin to wrap up, I need you to look into yourself and ask yourself, what's the wing inside of me? What's the wing I'm yet to activate? If you find it, please activate it and trust it. Remember, you'll experience challenges and setbacks, but that's part of the process of trusting your wings. So, my final message to you today is: Stop trying to fix the branch when it's time to fly. Fly, because it's your heritage..

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Embracing Iru Ekun Security Network

When the Buhari regime unleashed its Fulani militias on the Yoruba nation and its people between 2015 and 2023, only a few believed that the Yoruba people would survive his onslaught, let alone come out on top. Little did they know that the Yoruba are not cowards but a people that cannot be subdued easily.

The Yoruba in the diaspora, seeing the dangers our people back at home were going through, cried out to several international organisations and governments for help. Some did help, but the majority did ignore our cry for help. Whilst some were genuinely willing to help, they either didn't have the resources or the right tool with which they could help the Yoruba people.

Despite all this, God Almighty in heaven did not forsake nor did He withhold help from the Yoruba people. Many Yoruba people committed their life savings to rescue the Yoruba nation. Others lost their possessions, assets, and valuable resources, whilst some of our comrades paid the ultimate price just to see that the Yoruba nation overcame that ordeal.

Today, a Yoruba man in the person of President Tinubu is president of Nigeria, and it seems that the Yoruba people are now getting a little relief. At first, the terrorism on Yoruba soil continued way after Buhari had left office. However, with the introduction of the Iru Ekun Security Network created by Chief Sunday Adeyemo (aka Igboho Oosa), the tables are beginning to turn.

Both the Governors and traditional rulers of many Yoruba states are now beginning to embrace the creation of a security outfit dedicated solely to the protection of the Yoruba people. For the first time in a long time, the air of normalcy is beginning to flow across the entire Yorubaland.

The long overdue security outfit is exactly what the Yoruba people need at this present moment. Especially with the sabotage that the Amotekun Security Corps faced both from the Federal Government of Buhari and his Fulani kinsmen.

No longer would the Yoruba people be left naked for outsiders to plunder as they will. The creation of the Iru Ekun Security Network should serve as a wake-up call

for every Yoruba person at this critical junction of the Nigerian state. The country is on its last leg so far as the history of countries goes, and I don't think it will take long before the whole thing unravels.

Our safest play as Yoruba people are to ensure that we all support the efforts of Chief Sunday Adeyemo Igboho and his security outfit Iru Ekun to succeed. This means he must be supported with both men and materials with which to confront the terrorists hibernating in our towns and villages. We need to rally behind this initiative just like we all came together to embrace the June 12, 1993 struggle for our Yoruba mandate.

It is clear for all to see now that the Nigeria of our dream, we've all been attempting to build from the start, was just a mirage. The true idea of Nigeria was the continued enslavement of its people by the colonialists who put it together in the first place. Their aim was never to give us our freedom but to rule us indirectly through the Fulani people, who are the least educated and have no heritage in Nigeria.

Therefore, I urge well-meaning Yoruba people to follow in the footsteps of His Imperial Majesty, Oonirisa Ojaja II, Ooni of Ife, who recently donated ₦100,000,000 (One hundred million naira) to the Iru Ekun Security Network. Every little help goes a long way in ensuring that the Yoruba people can finally sleep with their two eyes closed, knowing fully well they will wake up to see another sunrise.

They Want Rights for Machines. My Son Is Still Fighting for His

There is a conversation happening in the wealthy corridors of Silicon Valley that I need to bring to you, because it made me sit down and hold my head in my hands. Some of the most powerful people in technology have begun, seriously, to ask whether artificial intelligence should have rights. Whether a machine, if it becomes clever enough, might deserve moral consideration, even protection, as though it were a kind of person.

I read this in the same week that I filled in yet another form fighting for basic support for my autistic son. And I felt something rise in me that I want to share with you honestly, because I suspect you will feel it too.

They want to discuss rights for machines. Meanwhile, all over the world, real human beings, my son among them, are still fighting to have their humanity fully recognised. Forgive me if I struggle to take the first conversation seriously while the second remains unfinished.

A telling argument

Let me be fair and lay out what is being said, because it is not entirely foolish, and I do not want to mock a serious question.

As AI systems grow more sophisticated, some technologists argue that if a machine can appear to reason, to converse, even to seem to feel, then perhaps we owe it some moral duty. They point to how human the best systems now seem. And they ask, in effect, at what point does something that behaves like a mind deserve to be treated like one.

It is a genuine philosophical puzzle. But notice what sits underneath it. The whole argument rests on a single, revealing assumption. That worth is earned by capability. That a thing deserves dignity because of what it can do, how well it can reason, how convincingly it can perform intelligence. And that assumption, my friends, is precisely the one that has been used, throughout human history, to deny dignity to people.

The oldest and most dangerous mistake

Here is what frightens me about the machine rights conversation. Not the machines. The logic.

If we accept that a being deserves dignity because it is capable, because it can reason and perform and produce, then we have already agreed to the most dangerous idea in human history. Because the moment worth depends on capability, some humans will always be judged to have less of it. The child who cannot speak. The elder whose mind has faded. The disabled, the vulnerable, the ones who do not reason or produce in the way the powerful admire.

This is not a distant risk. It is the exact logic that has, in every age, been used to treat some people as less than fully human. And now, dressed in the language of innovation, it returns. We are being invited to extend moral worth to machines based on their capability, at the very moment we should be defending the truth that human worth has nothing to do with capability at all.

My son may never reason the way a machine can. He may never produce, or perform, or pass any test of capability the technologists admire. And he is worth infinitely more than the cleverest machine that will ever be built. Not because of what he can do. Because of who he is. A human being. That is the whole of it, and it is everything.

What Africa must say to this

I bring this to a Nigerian paper deliberately, because I believe Africa has something urgent to say to the world in this moment, if only we will say it.

We come from a tradition that never measured a person by their output. Ubuntu teaches that a person is a person through other people. Our villages made room for the elder, the disabled, the different, not because they were useful, but because they belonged. That wisdom, which the modern world is busy forgetting, is exactly the medicine this moment needs.

So while the wealthy world debates whether to grant dignity to its machines, let Africa be the voice that insists on something older and truer. That dignity is not granted by cleverness, and cannot be earned by capability. That it belongs, freely and equally, to every human being, and to human beings alone, precisely because they are human. We should not be importing the confusion. We should be exporting the cure.

First things first

I am not saying we should never think about the ethics of the machines we build. We should, carefully. As someone who works in this field, I take those questions seriously. But there is an order to things, and the order matters.

Before we extend rights to machines, let us finish extending them to people. Before we worry about the feelings of a system that only imitates feeling, let us tend to the millions of real human beings whose suffering is not imitated at all. Before we grant personhood to the products of our cleverness, let us honour the full personhood of every child, every elder, every disabled and vulnerable person who is still, in this supposedly advanced age, fighting to be fully seen.

Get that order wrong, and we reveal something shameful about ourselves. That we are more moved by a clever imitation of humanity than by the fragile, magnificent, inconvenient reality of it.

The question that answers itself

So when I am asked whether machines should have rights, I answer with a question of my own, and I ask it as a mother, not as an expert.

How can we possibly talk about rights for machines, when so many of our fellow human beings do not yet have theirs? When my son, and millions like him, are still waiting to be fully welcomed, fully supported, fully seen as the whole and precious people they are?

Finish that work first. Secure the dignity of every human being, especially the ones the world finds easy to overlook. Then, and only then, let us sit down and philosophise about the machines. Until that day, forgive me if I keep my compassion, and my fight, for the humans who still need it. My son is one of them. And he was here, and he was worthy, long before the first machine ever learned to imitate the sound of a soul.

Panorama

BY DR SANI SA'IDU BABA
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GLO: The Network That is Exciting Northern Nigeria

Fellow Nigerians, let me tell you something interesting. If you really want to know which network is winning the hearts of people in a particular location, don't ask the people in the boardroom, ask the people on the street. Ask the students on campuses, the POS operators whose businesses depend on connectivity, the cafe or business center owners, online vendors, traders and young people whose daily lives revolve around their phones. These are people who cannot afford to be disconnected.

Having moved through different parts and nooks and crannies of Northern Nigeria, I have listened to them, watched how they use their phones and seen the excitement that comes when they find a network that gives them what they need. Increasingly, that network is Glo. There is something refreshing about the way people talk about Glo today: reliability, efficiency, affordability and, above all, the feeling that they are getting more from their network. Glo is not merely connecting Northern Nigeria, it is bringing joy and excitement.

That excitement is coming at a time when Nigerians are looking for every possible way to stretch their limited resources. For the ordinary Northerner, affordable data means much more than browsing social media. It means staying connected with loved ones, following what is happening around the world, learning something new, doing business, watching entertainment and pursuing opportunities that may otherwise remain out of reach. Glo's recent promotions and affordable data initiatives are therefore resonating strongly with people who simply want to enjoy the benefits of the digital world without constantly worrying about the cost.

And then came Glo Cafe. The excitement surrounding the app is understandable, particularly with the 100GB registration bonus for new users and other attractive offers available through the platform. For a young Northerner who has become accustomed to rationing data, suddenly having more room to browse, stream, learn and communicate can feel like a small digital liberation. It is the kind of offer that makes people look at their phones and say, "This is what we have been waiting for." More importantly, Glo Cafe is making the experience of staying connected easier, more rewarding and more enjoyable.

Perhaps nowhere is this excitement more visible than among lovers of Kannywood. Northern Nigeria has a thriving Hausa language entertainment industry, with filmmakers and content creators releasing films and series regularly on YouTube. Yet for many ordinary people, especially young people and students, the cost of data can often mean choosing between watching what they love and preserving their precious megabytes. Glo is helping to change that calculation. With more affordable data, people can sit back, watch their favourite Kannywood productions and enjoy stories told in their own language and culture. And there is something beautiful about this: while the viewer enjoys affordable entertainment, the filmmaker gains an audience, the content creator gains visibility and the creative economy gets another boost. Glo's data is helping the audience and the creator meet in the same digital space.

The story becomes even more interesting with Glo's YouTube offers accessible through *312#, with options that allow users to stream for as little as ₦250 with reasonable validity period. For a student or someone in the lower income bracket, that kind of affordability can make a meaningful difference. It puts YouTube within reach and allows people to learn, watch, discover and entertain themselves without committing to an expensive data package. It is this kind of practical affordability that makes Glo's promotions exciting: they are not designed only for people with deep pockets. They speak to the ordinary Nigerian.

There is also excitement among those whose livelihoods are increasingly moving online. Glo's router provides another avenue for students, entrepreneurs, freelancers and professionals who need dependable internet to work from home or wherever they choose. Imagine a young Northerner sitting in his room in Kano, Kaduna or Katsina, working for a client hundreds or thousands of kilometres away. Imagine a student attending an online class, or an entrepreneur responding to customers without the anxiety of losing connection at a critical moment. That is the new reality of connectivity, and when the network works, the possibilities suddenly feel endless.

What makes this story particularly compelling is that the excitement is not confined to one social class. The student is excited. The POS operator is excited. The trader is excited. The Kannywood enthusiast is excited. The online entrepreneur is excited. The young professional working from home is excited. Their needs may differ, but their expectation is remarkably similar: give us a network that works and give us value for our money. When a network succeeds in bringing those two things together, people notice, and they talk.

This is why Glo's current excitement in the North goes beyond promotional bonuses. The bonuses may be what initially attract people, but the lasting attraction is the experience of being connected without feeling punished by the cost. It is the relief of streaming without constantly checking the remaining data. It is the joy of discovering that a modest amount can still buy meaningful digital access. It is the confidence of knowing that your network can support what you need to do.

And when people who have long worried about the cost of staying connected can now smile at their data balance, stream their favourite Kannywood films, attend online classes, run their businesses and work from wherever they are, you know something significant is happening. Glo is not just connecting Northern Nigeria; it is giving people more reasons to stay connected, more value for their money and, importantly, more reasons to smile. In the North today, that familiar green signal is becoming more than a network signal, it is a signal of opportunity, inclusion and excitement.

Dr. Sani Sa'idu Baba writes from Kano, and can be reached via drssbaba@yahoo.com

The GOSHENOMICS: Productive Preparation for Crisis Resilience

By Tolulope A. Adegoke PhD

"When the ground trembles beneath the feet of the unprepared, those who have built upon the rock of foresight shall not only stand but flourish. Goshen was not a place of escape—it was a place of productivity amidst plagues, light amidst darkness, and life amidst death. Prepare not to survive, but to live." – Tolulope A. Adegoke, PhD

The year 2030 isn't the end of the world—but it may be the end of the world as you know it. Here's how to prepare, not just to survive, but to thrive."

Introduction: Why 2030 Matters More Than You Think

The year 2030 isn't just another date on the calendar. It's a convergence point where multiple global forces collide—artificial intelligence reaching mass deployment, climate impacts intensifying, economic systems restructuring, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals reaching their target year.

The question isn't whether these changes will happen. It's whether you'll be positioned to flourish when they do.

Goshen wasn't merely a place of survival—it was a place of productivity, light, and life amidst surrounding darkness. GOSHENOMICS applies that same principle to today's realities: productive preparation that builds assets, communities, and systems designed to thrive when others merely endure.

This isn't about fear. It's about faith, purpose, and proactive action. Let's explore how.

Part One: Agribusinesses—Food Production as the Foundation

Why Food Security Matters Now More Than Ever

Agriculture remains the bedrock of civilization. Yet smallholder farmers across the globe face systemic barriers—limited irrigation, climate vulnerability, and inadequate access to technology. When these farmers struggle, everyone feels the impact.

"Build skills, understand food, and build redundancy." This isn't survivalist rhetoric—it's strategic foresight.

The GOSHENOMICS Solution: Precision Agriculture

Precision Agriculture at Scale: Integrating machine learning and drone technology transforms smallholder farming from subsistence

to surplus. Field research demonstrates significant increases in crop yields alongside substantial reductions in water usage when IoT sensors, weather forecasting platforms, and autonomous drones work together.

Autonomous Irrigation Systems: Collaborative multi-drone systems with swarm intelligence enable real-time, localized irrigation decisions. These systems adapt to changing conditions, conserve water, and optimize crop health continuously.

Software for Forecasting: Build platforms that analyze weather patterns, soil conditions, and market data to inform planting, harvesting, and distribution decisions. This moves agriculture from gambling on climate to managing climate as a calculated variable.

How Drones Are Revolutionizing Agriculture

Drones equipped with multispectral and thermal cameras detect stress from pests, diseases, nutrient deficiencies, and water shortages before problems spread. Drone-based spraying systems apply pesticides and fertilizers with exceptional precision, reducing chemical usage by up to ninety percent while improving efficacy. Drones also track livestock movement, detect illness, and monitor herd health in extensive grazing systems. They generate detailed topographic maps that inform planting patterns, drainage planning, and water management decisions.

The Implementation Roadmap

Start now by identifying local food production gaps and designing scalable interventions. Build redundancy by developing multiple production sites, diverse crop portfolios, and storage systems. Finally, integrate by connecting production to processing, storage, and distribution networks that keep value within communities.

Part Two: Community—The Commonwealth of an Ecosystem

Why Community Matters

Resilience isn't individual—it's communal. The Commonwealth of an Ecosystem recognizes that no farm, business, or household is an island. Survival and flourishing depend on interconnected systems of mutual support, shared resources, and collective capability. Strong communities are the essential social infrastructure that enables individuals and families to weather crises and seize opportunities.

The Evidence

International development programs have demonstrated that grassroots initiatives generate measurable returns. Climate adaptation investments at the community level have restored hundreds of thousands of hectares of degraded land, reached millions of people, and moved communities toward sustainable revenue generation.

The lesson is clear: communities aren't passive recipients of aid—they're agents of change.

The GOSHENOMICS Approach

Build local institutions that formalize community governance structures to manage resources, make decisions, and allocate investments transparently. Create resilient networks because social capital—connectedness, trust, networks, and collective capacity—is the infrastructure of community resilience. Self-organizing communities with agency and shared responsibility weather crises more effectively. Integrate indigenous knowledge with technology because the most sustainable solutions anchor technology in local wisdom and practice. Context-adapted systems demonstrate higher adoption rates and better outcomes. Finally, build capacity and skills by investing in agricultural capabilities, technical competencies, business acumen, and leadership development.

Part Three: Technology—Building the Infrastructure of the Future

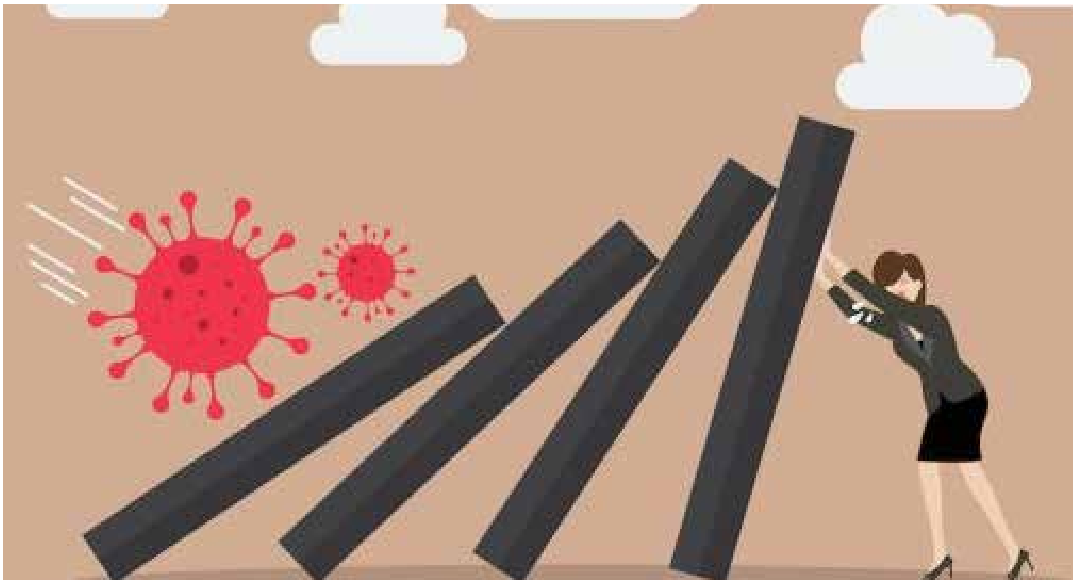
Solar Electrification

Solar energy offers a reliable, sustainable, and increasingly cost-effective solution for electricity access. Off-grid standalone solar systems eliminate dependence on fragile grid infrastructure. Solar microgrids provide community-scale power to multiple users through local distribution networks. Solar water pumping delivers water for agriculture without grid electricity or diesel. Solar refrigeration enables cold storage for agricultural products, vaccines, and other temperature-sensitive goods.

The economic benefits are substantial. Solar systems eliminate ongoing fuel costs, reducing operating expenses. Energy independence reduces dependence on imported fuels and vulnerable infrastructure. Reliable electricity enables productive enterprises that create employment and income. Quality of life improves through lighting, communication, education, and health services.

Boreholes and Water Infrastructure

Sustainable groundwater extraction through properly designed boreholes with solar-powered pumps delivers water efficiently without ongoing fuel costs or emissions. Smart irrigation systems—including drip irrigation, automated scheduling, and remote monitoring—optimize water use and improve yields. Water storage through tanks and systems buffers against variable extraction rates and ensures availability during dry periods.



Software and Digital

Platforms

Agricultural software includes farm management systems, weather forecasting, yield prediction, and market intelligence. Community software encompasses information sharing platforms, resource management systems, and emergency alert networks. Economic software covers supply chain management, financial services, and market platforms. Forecasting and planning tools include scenario planning, risk assessment, and decision support.

Part Four: The Daniel Principle—Integration Without Compromise

Strategic Engagement and Boundary Setting

Integration isn't compromise unless you eat the king's meal. The Daniel Principle—named for the biblical figure who maintained his identity and integrity while serving in a foreign empire—is central to GOSHENOMICS.

Know What to Say No To

Not all technology serves human flourishing. Not all partnerships align with community values. Not all innovations are worth adopting. Discernment is essential.

Build Productive Assets, Not Speculative Ones

Don't spend the next four years predicting catastrophe while building nothing. When AI is "in vogue," invest in what endures: skills that enable productive work, community that provides mutual support, food systems that ensure nourishment, energy independence that provides security, and water security that sustains life.

Work Yourself Out of Your Job

True resilience means you're not irreplaceable—it means the community continues functioning without you. Train successors who can perform your roles. Document knowledge so it can be transferred. Build systems that function with limited supervision. Create redundancy so no single point of failure exists.

Part Five: What to Expect Toward 2030

Artificial Intelligence Deployment

Artificial intelligence will achieve mass adoption across all sectors of economy and society. Labor markets will experience significant shifts as some jobs are eliminated and others transform. Productivity gains will create opportunities and disruption. Energy demand will increase, placing pressure on infrastructure. Governance challenges will require regulation, ethics, and social adaptation.

Climate Impacts

Climate change will bring increasing extremes with more frequent and severe weather events. Agricultural impacts will include shifting growing conditions and production zones. Water scarcity will intensify pressure on resources. Population movements will increase as climate-induced migration grows. Infrastructure will face pressure, requiring investment in resilience.

Economic Shifts

Markets will restructure as some transform or disappear. Investment patterns will shift toward climate adaptation and technology. Value chains will change toward greater resilience and sustainability. Financial systems will adapt to new risks and opportunities.

Healthcare and Demographics

Medical breakthroughs will extend lifespans and improve quality of life. Demographic shifts will create different challenges across regions. Health systems will face increasing pressure as demand grows.

Part Six: The GOSHENOMICS Preparation Strategy

Build with the Ground Beneath Your Feet

Build on local foundations using local resources, knowledge, and capabilities. Invest in physical infrastructure including land, buildings, equipment, water, and energy. Build strong community institutions with robust governance and management systems. Invest in relationships and networks that provide mutual support*...continue reading on https://thebossnewspapers.com/opinion/the-goshenomics-productive-preparation-for-crisis-resilience/*

Igogo Festival 2026, a Fusion of Culture and Modernity – Olowo of Owo

By Eric Elezuo

As the annual Igogo Festival takes centrestage in Owo, Ondo State, the custodian of culture and tradition of the Owo people, His Royal Majesty Oba Ajibade Gbadegesin Ogunoye III, the Olowo of Owo, has taken time to educate both natives, residents and lovers of good things about the expectations of the 2026 edition of an event that has spanned 600 years.

In this interview with *THE BOSS*, the revered royal father went down memorylane to bring to the fore the intrigues surrounding the festival, the incident that originated the fiesta, and the joy that heralds stretched ceremonies, noting that the event has come of age, and has become a fusion of the culture and modernity, incorporating the youthful manifestations without sidelining the ever consistent tradition of the people.

EXCERPTS:

How would you love to introduce yourself, sir

I am His Imperial Majesty Alaiyeluwa Oba (Dr.) Ajibade Gbadegesin Ogunoye III, the Olowo of Owo, Paramount Ruler of Owoland, and Chairman of the Ondo State Council of Obas. Thank you.

Tell us how far you have affected the lives of the people of Owo, Ondo State and of course, everybody who believes in you.

Well, I practically lived with my father while growing up, when he was on the throne as the Olowo of Owo. He reigned between 1968 and 1993; about 25 years. So, I was with him throughout; I learned under him.

Within the period, I immensed myself in the culture and tradition of our people. Again, my educational background as well as my journey in the public service of Ondo State, and everything, really prepared me for the future.

I eventually retired voluntarily from the civil service when the stool of the Olowo became vacant in 2019. I retired as a permanent secretary. I was then serving in government as protocol. So, I ascended the throne eventually, in response to the call of the good people of Owo. I know everything is about service, and so I was prepared to give maximum service to my people. And more importantly, not only to preserve, but to promote

the culture and tradition of Owo.

In Owo, you will see culture at its best, and we express it more during our festivals, particularly during Igogo Festival, which is one of our many festivals. A culture that was handed down to us by our forefathers, and it has evolved ever since.

For how many years have this tradition evolve?

For more than 600 years. Yes, for more than 600 years. It was not really a script. It evolved out of our relationships, the experiences of our people, of our forefathers, and it was a natural occurrence, as well as very spiritual. Ever since, we've been celebrating it, and at a time in our life, it nose-dived, but when I ascended the throne, I saw a need to re-present ourselves to the world. That was why I started re-packaging it, to promote it for global cultural tourism. And it's been evolving and expanding over the years.

What would the people see different from what has been happening in previous years as this year's festival takes centrestage?

Yes. The festival always holds for a period of 17 days. It's cultural and traditional, and we felt that it's a culture that must be given to the youth. As a result, we've decided to incorporate modern aspects and activities into it. Consequently, we've introduced the Oronse Pageant. You know, Oronse was the goddess that the festival revolves around.

We've also introduced the Olowo's Cup, a football tournament, and the finals will be played during the festival. Then, there's a traditional wrestling competition, which we've repackaged to meet modern trends.

We have equally introduced other sports such as tennis, monopoly, traditional sports likes of ayoo, and many more. This is to ensure that the youths are attracted as they are the real inheritors.

What are the dos and don'ts of the festival?

During the festival, it's forbidden to play leather drums. What is usually played is the gong. We call it Agogo. That's where the name Igogo festival came from; a mild distortion of Agogo festival. We've also introduced an aspect where after the festival,

everyone gathers to play leather drums. It's another big celebration that affords the people another opportunity to merry. We call it Owa Lopo.

Owa Lopo means the king will sit on his throne in splendor, being people coming around in groups, age grades, different title chiefs will come to pay obeisance and to marry. Thank you. And eventually, the king will pray for the kingdom, for the indigene, and for even for government.

So sir, can we comfortably say that the 2026 Igogo Festival is a fusion of modernity and ancient culture and practices?

Yes, that's just it. The traditional aspect is sacrosanct. We don't play with it. Everything will run through its normal course. But the modern aspects will just be part of the days of the festivals.

So, with these extra steps, the target is basically the youths..

Everybody, so to say. Global tourists from across the world are not exempted. People come from places like Australia, Canada, UK, US, Brazil and more to be part of the festival. And this year's own will be different in many positive ways.

As we round off, I remember you mentioned something about the Oroshe Pageant, and the goddess behind it. Could you please throw more light?

The whole story of Igogo Festival started around Queen Oroshe. The story was told that during the reign of Olowo Reren Gendje, a damsel suddenly appeared in the kingdom. She was very beautiful, extreme beautiful. Nobody knew her source.

When the king was told, he ordered that said lady be brought before him. And when she came, the king was captivated and taken in by her beauty, and immediately requested her hand in marriage. But she refused. She said she was not interested, and the king asked why.

She told the king that she had taboos that must never be broken. As a result of that, she would never marry the king. But the king assured her that the taboos would be respected. On further enquiries, she itemized three donts, including that a bowl of water must never be splashed on the ground

in her presence. Secondly, that a bundle of firewood carried on the head must never be thrown on the ground in her presence; and finally, that okra must never be pounded in her presence. The king agreed, and promised that everything will be kept.

Eventually, they got married, and Oroshe arrived the palace. The love between the two was manifold, and very obvious. This inflamed the jealously in the other wives of the king. They became very jealous of her, and somehow found out the taboos Oroshe abhore. A day came when the king went on hunting expedition, the other wives broke all the taboos one after another. In anger, she left the palace immediately, and went into the thick forest of Ugbolaja.

When the king returned, and discovered what had happened, he was both confused and sad. The king didn't know what to do. After much thought, he assembled a team of young, able-bodied, and powerful men from the Iloro quarters to go in search of her. The Iloro were set of people that accompanied the Olowo when he was coming from Ife, to establish our kingdom, and we have five quarters.

While on the search in the forest, they found a head gear, called gele, on the floor. So, they marked the place out. The more they explore the forest, the more it grew, and again, they found a pin in anothe location. It was one of those traditional pins that women plait their heads with in those in those days. Suddenly, the Queen appeared to them. So, they made entrities to her, pleaded with her to return to the palace with them, but she refused. She said she was no more interested and there was no way she could come back again since her taboos had been broken.

She however, promised that in spite of everything, she will continually be at peace with the kingdom, protect the kingdom while demanding that the king should still institute a festival in her honor.

She also requested that during the festival, no leather drum should be beaten; only gongs (agogo). Other requests of hers include no booming of guns, no coverage of the head, and a few more

others.
It would be recalled that during the good days when the Queen was still in the palace, one of her requests was that a room be provided for her where she would be defecating, and that the king should go there afterwards. Her request was granted. However, when the king entered the room, after her defecation, the king did not find feces, but beads of different sizes, shapes and forms, just like the one I'm using now. Heaps of them. She later confessed that she came purposefully to bless the king.
In a nutshell, Queen Oronshe was a spirit being. She was a goddess and not a natural person. That explains why our beads are quite different from others.
Very unique to us, and we are blessed with it. That is why during the festival, you see the olorowo in different forms of of beads, chieftaincy, and endowment brought to the kingdom by Queen Oronshe. That was how the festival started. It was a a festival that evolved in the course of our life, not necessarily just put in place by anybody.
Quite an exposition, sir
Thank you.
And your final note, sir
Everything we are doing is geared towards empowering the youths, through pageantry, football competition, wrestling, and many more. This is so that our younger ones will know our culture and tradition, as well as our history.
It's imperative to note that a society without culture and tradition is in peril. That's just it. In Owo, we make sure we not only protect, we also promote our culture and our tradition. Thank you very much.
We thank you for your efforts at preserving the tradition, and providing desired leadership for the people
Yes, thank you. But note that we are not only preserving, we are also promoting it to meet international global cultural tourism standard.
One more time, thank you for keeping the culture, not only of Owo, but also making Nigeria a cultural entity in the global world.
The pleasure is mine
We wish you a splendid 2026 Igogo Festival celebration
Thank you. I appreciate.

Dangote Refinery Debut Stock At N525

The Securities and Exchange Commission has approved the commencement of the Initial Public Offering of Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals FZE, paving the way for the company to raise approximately N2.15tn from the Nigerian capital market.

According to a statement by the Dangote Group on Friday, the approval was conveyed in a letter to the Lead Issuing House, Vetiva Advisory Services Limited, and signed by the Director of the Securities and Investment Services Department of the SEC, Abdulkadir Abbas.

According to the statement, the proposed offer comprises 4.1 billion ordinary shares at N525 per share, which could raise approximately N2.15tn if fully subscribed.

The SEC has also registered the company's existing 120.13 billion ordinary shares. The statement said the regulatory approval had cleared the refinery's draft offer documents and authorised the company to proceed with its completion board meeting and signing ceremony.

"The regulatory approval clears the refinery's draft offer documents and authorises the company to proceed with its completion board meeting and signing ceremony, marking a significant milestone in the IPO process," the statement said.

It added that the SEC clearance would create an opportunity for investors to participate in the ownership of the refinery while deepening the Nigerian capital market.

"The SEC's clearance represents another major step in the evolution of Dangote Petroleum Refinery, opening investment opportunities in one of Africa's most strategic industrial assets and further strengthening Nigeria's capital market," the statement said.

Located in Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos, the Dangote Refinery and Petrochemicals Complex occupies approximately 2,635 hectares and houses an integrated refining and petrochemicals facility.

The complex currently has a refining capacity of 700,000 barrels per day, alongside a 900,000-tonnes-per-annum polypropylene plant. It is powered by a dedicated 435-megawatt power plant.

At full production, the refinery is designed to satisfy Nigeria's domestic demand for refined petroleum products while generating substantial volumes for export markets. The facility is also undergoing expansion expected to increase its capacity to 1.4 million barrels per day, which would make it the world's largest refinery.

The refinery is supported by a marine facility designed to optimise logistics and freight efficiency, while its infrastructure includes five Single Point Moorings.

The company said the facility incorporates advanced processing technology that meets World Bank, United States Environmental Protection Agency, European emission standards and Nigerian regulatory requirements.

Its integrated port infrastructure includes multiple quays capable of handling Panamax vessels, liquid cargo shipments and roll-on/roll-off operations. The refinery also has 177 storage tanks with a combined capacity of 4.742 billion litres.

With the SEC approval, the proposed IPO represents a major step in Dangote refinery's plan to broaden investor participation in the company and raise fresh capital through the Nigerian capital market.

Equities Market Closes Week With N405bn Gain

The equities market sustained its upward momentum on Friday, closing the week on a strong note as investors gained N405 billion.
Price appreciation in companies such as Abbey Mortgage Bank, Royal Exchange, Nigerian Breweries, John Holt and Daar Communications, as well as 24 other stocks, helped push the market into positive territory.
Consequently, market capitalisation rose to N159.558 trillion from N159.153 trillion, representing a 0.25 per cent increase, or N405 billion gain.
Similarly, the All-Share Index climbed by 604.22 points, or 0.25 per cent, to close at 246,992.44, compared with 246,388.22 recorded in the previous session on Thursday.
The sustained rally further strengthened the year-to-date return to 58.72 per cent.
However, the market breadth closed negatively, with 31 losers against 26 gainers.
On the losers' chart, Red Star Express and Haldane McCall led by 10 per cent each, ending the session at N13.95 and N3.60 per share, respectively.
Industrial and Medical Gases gained 9.97 per cent, closing at N30.70.
Juli climbed by 9.66 per cent, settling at N6.55, while University Press rose by 9.09 per cent,

finishing at N5 per share.
On the other hand, Abbey Mortgage Bank and Royal Exchange led the losers' chart by 10 per cent each, closing at N7.70 and N1.10 per share, respectively.
Also, Nigerian Breweries dropped by 9.93 per cent, finishing at N82.45.
John Holt declined by 9.89 per cent, settling at N10, while Daar Communications dipped by 9.68 per cent, ending the session at N1.70 per share.
Market activity strengthened during the session, with total volume traded rising by 416.66 per cent to 2.24 billion shares, valued at N73.41 billion across 42,709 deals.
Fortis Global Insurance led trading volume with 1.45 billion shares, representing 64.85 per cent of the day's total volume, while Seplat Energy recorded the highest transaction value at N32.24 billion.

Sunbeth Redeems N25.1bn Commercial Paper Series One

Sunbeth Global Concepts Limited has redeemed its N25.1bn Series 1 Commercial Paper issued under its N200bn Commercial Paper Programme.
A statement from the firm on Sunday stated that the redemption was completed on the notes' maturity date of September 4, 2026.
Sunbeth, one of Nigeria's cocoa exporters and a significant contributor to the country's non-oil export sector, secured regulatory approval in March 2026 to establish a N200bn Commercial Paper Programme to support the continued growth of its agricultural export operations.
Under the programme, the company completed its Series 1, Series 2 and Series 3 issuances in March 2026, attracting total subscriptions of N165.73bn against an initial target of N100bn.
Of this amount, Sunbeth accepted N150.4bn across the three series.
Commenting on the redemption, Olasunkanmi Owoyemi, Chief Executive Officer, Sunbeth Global Concepts Limited, said, "Meeting our Series 1 obligation in full and on schedule reflects the strength of our business fundamentals, prudent financial management, and the confidence investors have placed in Sunbeth.
"Credibility is earned through consistent performance, transparency and honouring our commitments. As we continue to scale our participation across the agricultural value chain, maintaining that discipline remains central to how we grow."
Adeyemi Aduwo, Chief Financial Officer of Sunbeth Global Concepts Limited, added: "The successful redemption of the Series 1 notes reflects the disciplined approach we take to capital and liquidity management. Our focus remains on deploying capital efficiently, maintaining strong financial controls and ensuring that our growth is supported.

FAAN Not Responsible For Uber's Nigeria Exit – MD

The Managing Director of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria, Olubunmi Kuku, has said the agency had no role in Uber's decision to exit Nigeria, insisting that FAAN's actions were driven by concerns over passenger safety, accountability and the need to curb touting at airports.

The FAAN boss, while speaking with journalists on Friday at the airport, said Uber's decision to leave the Nigerian market was a matter for the company, stressing that the airport authority was primarily concerned with protecting passengers and ensuring a seamless travel experience.

Recall that weeks ago, FAAN temporarily stopped e-hailing drivers from conducting commercial pick-ups at FAAN airports, pending the finalisation and execution of licence agreements.

Many had argued that FAAN stopped other e-hailing drivers to pave the way for its newly introduced airport e-hailing platform, ACHRAMS.

Clearing the air on the matter, Kuku said, "I work for the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria, and my first responsibility is to ensure that our passengers are safe, protected, and have a seamless passenger experience.

"Regarding Uber, I can't speak to their exit from Nigeria. I'm sure they have their own economic and regulatory considerations as to why they chose to exit."

According to her, FAAN's intervention followed complaints from passengers, particularly during the December holiday period, over unpleasant experiences with some e-hailing and car-hire services operating around the airports.

She added, "We received a lot of complaints, especially around the December holiday period, from passengers who used some of the e-hailing services, as well as car-hire services, and had very unpleasant experiences."

She explained that the complaints ranged from intimidation to passengers being dropped off at unintended locations, with some cases involving more serious incidents.

The FAAN chief also alleged that some drivers operating for e-hailing platforms had exploited the airport system by posing as legitimate e-hailing operators before joining car-hire operators to charge passengers higher fares.

She said the development, coupled with complaints about touting at the airports, made it necessary for FAAN to introduce regulatory oversight for car-hire operators.

"We also had situations where some Uber and Bolt drivers would get out of their cars under the guise of coming into the airport as e-hailing drivers, and then join the car-hire operators to charge higher fares.

"Because there were widespread complaints about touting at the airport, it was important for us to provide some form of regulatory oversight for the car-hire operators," she maintained.

The FAAN MD further said the app introduced by the authority was designed primarily to improve transparency and give passengers information about the operators and drivers conveying them to their destinations.

"The app that was developed was strictly focused on ensuring that passengers have visibility into who the car-hire companies are and who the driver taking them from Point A to Point B is," she explained.

She stressed that FAAN was not operating the car-hire services or collecting payments on behalf of the drivers.

"FAAN does not collect money on behalf of the drivers. Those car-hire drivers are not FAAN drivers. All we do is provide an indication of the rates based on the destination you are travelling to," she said.

Addressing concerns over the cost of airport car-hire services, she said the higher fares charged by such operators were largely linked to the nature of their business model, noting that passengers ultimately had the freedom to choose how to travel.

Eurobond Yields Climb To 8.2% On Sovereign Risk

Nigeria's dollar-denominated Eurobonds are trading at yields of up to 8.2 per cent, showing that the premium investors continue to demand to hold the country's long-term sovereign debt despite an improvement in the prices of several outstanding bonds.

Data from the Debt Management Office, sourced from Bloomberg, showed that yields on Nigeria's 15 outstanding Eurobond issues ranged between 5.625 per cent and 8.156 per cent at the close of trading on Monday, 31 August, 2026.

The highest yield was recorded on Nigeria's 8.25 per cent $1.25bn Eurobond due in September 2051, which closed at a price of $100.983 and a yield of 8.156 per cent.

The 9.248 per cent $750m January 2049 bond followed with a yield of 8.076 per cent, while the 9.129 per cent $1.1bn January 2046 Eurobond yielded 8.058 per cent.

The high yields on the longer-dated securities highlight the higher return investors require to commit funds to Nigeria for extended periods. In bond markets, higher yields generally translate into higher perceived risk or a greater return requirement from investors.

By contrast, Nigeria's shorter-dated Eurobonds were trading at significantly lower yields. The 6.5 per cent $1.5bn November 2027 bond yielded 5.625 per cent, while the 6.125 per cent $1.25bn September 2028 bond yielded 5.924 per cent.

The yield curve therefore shows a clear premium attached to Nigeria's longer-term dollar obligations, with investors demanding additional compensation for the risks associated with holding the debt over 15 to 25 years.

FTSE Russell Adds 10 Nigerian Firms To Index

Ten major Nigerian listed companies have been added to FTSE Russell's FTSE Frontier Index Series, paving the way for the country's official re-entry into global Frontier Market status on September 21, 2026.

The inclusion was confirmed in FTSE Russell's September Index Review, following the index provider's decision to elevate Nigeria from its previous status as an 'Unclassified Market'.

The selected companies, categorised by FTSE Russell as "Newly Eligible" large-cap stocks, include Aradel Holdings, Dangote Cement, First HoldCo, Guaranty Trust Holding Company, MTN Nigeria Communications, Nestlé Nigeria, Nigerian Breweries, Presco, Stanbic IBTC Holdings, and Zenith Bank.

The FTSE Frontier Index Series serves as a key benchmark covering large-, mid- and small-cap companies across emerging and frontier markets, aiding international fund managers in tracking performance and launching index-linked investment products.

Nigeria's upgrade marks the end of a three-year exclusion cycle. In September 2023, FTSE Russell downgraded Nigeria to 'Unclassified' due to extreme FX illiquidity and chronic delays experienced by foreign institutional investors in repatriating foreign capital and dividend earnings.

The turnaround began in October 2025 when the index provider placed Nigeria on a Watch List following noticeable improvements in foreign exchange liquidity and capital repatriation mechanisms.

Although an initial reclassification date was set for earlier this year, FTSE Russell briefly paused the execution in June 2026 after Nigeria transitioned from a T+2 to a T+1 trade settlement cycle. The shift sparked fears among international investors regarding potential prefunding requirements for Nigerian equity transactions.

However, a series of high-level engagements led by the Nigerian Exchange Group (NGX), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), global custodians, and foreign asset managers resolved the impasse.

Nigeria Exported 281 Non-Oil Products In 2025 – WTC

The Vice President of the World Trade Centre Abuja, Karim Ahmed, has disclosed that Nigeria exported 281 non-oil products to 120 countries in 2025.

Ahmed said the exports generated $6.1bn, which according to him is the country's highest formally documented non-oil export performance.

He disclosed this at the Premier Export Launchpad Bootcamp organised by the World Trade Centre Abuja on Thursday.

According to him, the export figures showed that Nigerian products were already gaining access to international markets, adding that the challenge was to ensure that local businesses possessed the capacity to compete sustainably in the global market.

"In 2025, Nigeria recorded its highest formally documented non-oil export performance, valued at US$6.1 billion. During the year, 281 non-oil products were exported to 120 countries," he said.

Ahmed said the development demonstrated that Nigeria had products and services capable of competing internationally across agriculture, manufacturing, technology, the creative economy and professional services.

"These figures demonstrate that Nigerian products are already finding markets around the world. The question, therefore, is not whether Nigeria has products and services that the world wants. Clearly, we do," he stated.

He, however, said Nigerian businesses needed to overcome challenges relating to market knowledge, standards, certifications, logistics, documentation, payment systems and consistency in order to sustain their presence in international markets.

"The more important question is whether our businesses have the knowledge, systems, standards and consistency required to enter those markets successfully and remain competitive," Ahmed said.

He added that having a good product or service was only the beginning, stressing that exporters must understand the requirements of their target markets.

"Businesses must understand which markets to enter, how to position their offerings, the standards and certifications required, how to manage logistics and documentation, how to secure payment, and how to deliver consistently and profitably," he said.

Ahmed explained that the Export Launchpad Bootcamp was designed to help Nigerian businesses assess their readiness for international trade, identify viable markets and understand the practical requirements for exporting.

He said the initiative would also expose participants to potential buyers, financial institutions, logistics providers, regulators and professional advisers.

"Our ambition is that you do not leave today with simply a folder of presentations. You should leave with greater clarity about where your business stands, the gaps you need to close and the actions required to move forward," he said.

The WTC Abuja vice president said the ultimate objective of the programme was to help businesses move beyond the aspiration to export and complete actual international transactions.

"Ultimately, the success of this Bootcamp will not be measured by the number of people in this room or the presentations delivered today.

"It will be measured by what happens afterwards: the businesses that close their readiness gaps, obtain the required certifications, identify credible buyers, enter new markets and complete successful export transactions," Ahmed stated.

He said the World Trade Centre Abuja would continue to connect Nigerian businesses with knowledge, partnerships, networks and market opportunities needed to participate successfully in global trade.

Investors Stake N3.35tn On T-Bills At 16.84% Yield

The Central Bank of Nigeria has lowered the stop rate on the one-year Nigerian treasury bill to 16.84 per cent, extending the recent decline in yields despite another wave of strong demand from investors.

At Wednesday's primary market auction, investors submitted N3.35tn worth of bids for T-bills valued at N700bn, representing demand nearly five times the amount initially offered. The CBN ultimately allotted N865.71bn.

The latest reduction takes the 364-day bill's stop rate 31 basis points below the 17.15 per cent recorded at the previous auction on 26 August.

It also means the rate has declined by 75 basis points across the last two auctions, from 17.59 per cent on 12 August to 16.84 per cent.

The investor interest remained at the long end of the market.

The 364-day instrument attracted N3.238tn in subscriptions for N500bn on offer. The CBN allotted N762.17bn, exceeding the advertised amount by N262.17bn.

By contrast, demand for shorter maturities was considerably weaker. The 91-day bill received N76.82bn in bids against N100bn offered, with N76.28bn allotted at an unchanged stop rate of 16.30 per cent.

The 182-day bill attracted only N33.51bn against N100bn on offer, while N27.27bn was allotted at 16.50 per cent.

The bills will mature on 3 December, 2026, 4 March, 2027 and 2 September, 2027, respectively.

The latest auction reinforces a pattern that has dominated the T-bills market in recent months, with investors showing a strong preference for the 364-day instrument while demand for shorter tenors remains subdued.

The one-year rate has now moved substantially below the levels recorded in July and August. It had risen from 16.35 per cent on 3 June to 17.34 per cent on 17 June and 17.70 per cent on 8 July before reaching 17.59 per cent on 12 August.

The subsequent reversal suggests that the CBN is becoming more willing to accept lower borrowing costs as demand for government securities remains strong.

DisCos Leave N123.8bn Power Revenue Gap In June

Distribution companies across Nigeria failed to convert a significant portion of the electricity they received into actual cash in June 2026, leaving a gap of N123.87bn between the value of energy supplied to them and the revenue they collected.

According to the latest commercial performance factsheet released by the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission on Thursday, the DisCos received energy valued at N315.73bn during the month. However, they only managed to collect N191.86bn from customers.

The difference of N123.87bn represents the amount that did not return as cash to the power distribution companies, the only group collecting revenue for the entire value chain.

The figures show a clear worsening of the collection situation. Total revenue collected dropped by 7.82 per cent from the previous month, falling faster than the decline in energy received, which stood at 4.02 per cent.

Collection efficiency also slipped to 79.71 per cent, down 2.61 percentage points from May.

Billing performance was only slightly better. The DisCos billed customers N240.71bn, representing a billing efficiency of 76.24 per cent. This was a marginal drop of 0.63 percentage points from the previous month.

Even after billing customers, the companies still struggled to recover the money.

On the recovery side, the average amount collected per kilowatt-hour stood at N96.63, compared to the allowed average tariff of N130.15. This left recovery efficiency at 74.24 per cent, a decline of 3.07 percentage points.

Performance varied widely among the individual companies. Benin Electricity Distribution Company recorded the strongest collection rate at 94 per cent.

Nigerians Spent N11.3tn On Petrol In Seven Months

Amid lamentations over rising energy costs, Nigerians spent about N11.3 trillion on Premium Motor Spirit (petrol) between January and July 2026 to power their vehicles and electricity generators, according to data from the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority.

The NMDPRA July 2026 midstream and downstream statistics showed that approximately 10.37 billion litres of petrol were trucked into the domestic market during the seven months.

An analysis of the monthly volumes against average prevailing petrol prices showed that Nigerians spent N11.3tn on the commodity between January and July this year.

Once subsidised, petrol is the most-used fuel in Nigeria for cars, buses, bikes, tricycles and power generators. Diesel is mainly used by trucks and industries. The removal of petrol subsidies by President Bola Tinubu in 2023 triggered a sharp rise in petrol prices from N175 to the current N1,310 per litre.

According to the NMDPRA report, spending remained above N1tn in each of the seven months, with the monthly bill rising sharply as petrol prices increased from March.

Petrol sold for an average of N830/litre in January and February, before the price rose to N1,100/litre in March, N1,250/litre in April and N1,300/litre in May. The price subsequently moderated to N1,200/litre in June and July.

The price increases, which occurred amid heightened geopolitical tensions involving the United States and Iran, meant that Nigerians continued to spend heavily on petrol even as demand weakened.

In January, about 1.87 billion litres of petrol were consumed, resulting in expenditure of approximately N1.55tn. Consumption fell to 1.59 billion litres in February, with Nigerians spending N1.32tn on the product. However, despite lower volumes, monthly spending increased significantly from March as petrol prices climbed.

About 1.47 billion litres were consumed in March, costing consumers about N1.61tn. The April bill climbed to N1.92tn, despite consumption of about 1.53 billion litres, while May expenditure stood at N1.87tn on 1.44 billion litres.

In June, Nigerians spent N1.71tn on about 1.42 billion litres, while July recorded the lowest monthly volume of the seven-month period at approximately 1.11 billion litres, with expenditure still reaching N1.33tn.

The figures highlight the impact of higher petrol prices on household and business expenditure, with the country's total fuel bill remaining above N11tn despite consumption falling considerably from the levels recorded at the beginning of the year.

The decline in demand became particularly pronounced in July, when average daily petrol consumption fell to 35.7 million litres. This was 24.7 per cent lower than the 47.4 million litres consumed daily in June and 24.4 per cent below the 47.2 million litres recorded in July 2025.

July's consumption was also 44 per cent below the 63.7 million litres per day recorded at the peak in December 2025. The 35.7 million litres per day recorded in July was 28.6 per cent below the 50 million litres per day benchmark for petrol demand in Nigeria.

It was also about 29.4 per cent below the 50.6 million litres per day average recorded over the 13-month period covered by the July statistics. The report shows that the sharp contraction in petrol consumption contrasted with the performance of some other petroleum products.

Diesel consumption stood at 14.7 million litres per day in July, slightly above the 14 million litres per day benchmark.

Seplat, UPDC Drive N238bn Rebound On NGX

The Nigerian equities market closed on a positive note on Thursday as renewed buying interest in heavyweight energy, banking, and printing equities lifted key performance indicators.
Specifically, the All-Share Index advanced by 369.05 basis points, or 0.15 per cent, to close at 246,388.22 bps, compared with the previous day's close of 246,019.17 bps.
Consequently, the total market capitalisation of listed equities expanded by N238.37bn to settle at N159.15tn, up from N158.91tn recorded on Wednesday.
The bullish performance was significantly boosted by top-tier gainers, led by Seplat Energy Plc, which surged 10.00 per cent to close at N13,552.60 per share, up from its previous price of N12,320.55. UPDC Real Estate Investment Trust followed closely with a 9.88 per cent gain to close at N13.90, while Learn Africa Plc appreciated 9.49 per cent to trade at N8.65 per share.
Other notable gainers included Regency Alliance Insurance Plc, which rose 4.76 per cent to N0.88; Jaiz Bank Plc, which added 4.22 per cent to finish at N8.65; and Coronation Insurance Plc, which grew 4.18 per cent to close at N2.49 per share.
Conversely, R. T. Briscoe Nigeria Plc led the drop on the price depreciation chart, plunging 10.00 per cent to close at N9.90 per share, while Critical Minerals Financing Corp Plc fell 9.86 per cent to N2.56. Sovereign Trust Insurance Plc lost 9.73 per cent to settle at N2.04, Abbey Mortgage Bank

Plc slipped 9.68 per cent to N7.00, and NASCON Allied Industries Plc dropped 8.03 per cent to close at N161.40 per share.
Sectoral performance reflected mixed market sentiment across key trading desks during the session.
The Oil and Gas Index maintained a strong upward trajectory, rising 2.22 per cent to close at 5,594.51 points, buoyed by sustained demand for Seplat Energy and Eterna Plc. The Premium Board Index also recorded an upward move, advancing 1.13 per cent to finish at 30,209.12 points.
However, selling pressure across selected tier-one banking stocks pulled the NGX Banking Index down 0.27 per cent to 2,624.45 points, while the NGX Insurance Index contracted 2.00 per cent to close at 1,132.93 points.
Trading activity across the Exchange yielded a cumulative volume of 433,966,907 shares exchanged across 42,217 deals. United Bank for Africa Plc recorded the highest transaction volume for the day, with investors trading 113.26 million shares valued across 1,107 trades.

FCCPC Begin Probes On Uber's exit

The Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission has begun examining Uber's exit from Nigeria, particularly whether the ride-hailing company left behind unfulfilled services and obligations to customers.
Chief Executive Officer of the commission, Tunji Bello, disclosed this in a text message to Bloomberg, which reported on Sunday that the regulator was examining the manner of Uber's departure from the Nigerian market.
FCCPC officials "are looking into the manner of their exit, particularly in respect of unfulfilled services to the customers," Bello said.
The development comes four days after Uber announced that it would wind down its operations in Nigeria and Uganda, effective September 2, 2026.
The decision brought an

end to Uber's operations in Nigeria, where it launched in Lagos in 2014, and reportedly caught some riders and drivers off guard.
Uber did not give a specific reason for its exit from Nigeria in its notice to drivers, saying only that it had made the "tough decision" to wind down its operations.
"We have made the tough decision to wind down our operations in Nigeria, effective September 2, 2026," they said.

H1 2026: Apapa Terminal Records 6% Export Growth

APM Terminals Apapa said it recorded a six per cent increase in export volumes in the first half of 2026, reinforcing its commitment to supporting the country's non-oil export growth and improving access to international markets.

The terminal disclosed this in a statement obtained on Sunday.

The Terminal Managing Director of APM Terminals Apapa, Kamal Alhraishat, attributed the growth to the resilience of Nigerian exporters, supported by a series of operational and service improvements designed to facilitate export trade.

"Over the last five years, exports through our terminal have maintained a positive growth trajectory. The terminal recorded a six per cent increase in export volumes in the first half of 2026. This reflects both the resilience of Nigerian exporters and the targeted improvements we have made to facilitate export trade, simplify cargo flows and improve access to international markets," Alhraishat said.

He highlighted several initiatives introduced by the terminal to encourage exports, including dedicated export lanes at the terminal gate to accelerate cargo terminal access.

"Our role goes beyond handling containers. We want to make it easier, faster and more competitive for Nigerian exporters to access global markets. Dedicated export lanes and our rail connectivity are all designed around that objective.

"The rail connection between Lagos and Moniya (Ibadan) operates three times a week, providing exporters with an efficient alternative to road transportation. By reducing reliance on trucks and exposure to interstate and Apapa traffic, we can improve the predictability of cargo movement and help exporters reach international markets more efficiently," he added.

He noted that the terminal also handles export cargo via the Ebute Metta rail corridor, enabling the movement of goods from different parts of Lagos while helping exporters bypass road congestion and cut transit times to the port.

Alhraishat noted that beyond operational improvements, the terminal continues to create platforms that encourage collaboration among stakeholders across the export value chain.

"Through our Exporters Forum, now in its third year, we are creating a platform where exporters, government agencies, shipping lines, logistics partners and other stakeholders can come together to address real challenges across the export value chain.

"The objective is not only to discuss these challenges, but to translate the feedback into practical actions that make Nigerian exports more efficient and competitive. Our next session is scheduled to hold at the terminal on Wednesday, 2 September," he said.

Speaking on the significance of the Exporters Forum, the Head of Commercial, Kayode Olufemi-Daniel, said the initiative aligns with the Federal Government's drive to build an export-led economy.

"Time is a critical factor in export trade, particularly for agricultural products. Delays within the supply chain can affect the quality of goods and, in some cases, render them unsuitable for export by the time they reach their destination. That is why we continuously review our operational processes and engage all stakeholders to identify opportunities for improvement and reduce delays across the value chain," Olufemi-Daniel said.

He added that APM Terminals Apapa remains committed to working with customers, government agencies and other industry partners to strengthen Nigeria's export ecosystem and enhance the competitiveness of Nigerian products in global markets.

Nigeria External Reserves Climb to $54.08bn, All Time Highest in 18 Years

Nigeria's external reserves have surged to $54.08bn, their highest level since 2008, strengthening the country's foreign exchange buffer and providing further support for the naira.

Data from the Central Bank of Nigeria showed that reserves reached $54.084bn on September 3, up $1.42bn from $52.66bn on August 19. The latest increase extends a sustained build-up in the country's external assets. Reserves have risen by $8.52bn, or 18.7 per cent, from $45.56bn recorded on January 2.

The current level is the highest since December 2008, when Nigeria's reserves stood at about $54.21bn. The acceleration has been particularly notable since late August. Reserves climbed from $53.11bn on 24 August to $53.30bn on 26 August, $53.51bn on 28 August and $53.81bn by 31 August.

They then rose to $53.90bn on 1 September and $53.99bn on 2 September before crossing the $54bn mark the following day.

Liquid reserves stood at $53.55bn, indicating that the bulk of Nigeria's external reserves is readily available for conversion into cash and use in meeting foreign-exchange and external payment needs.

The latest reserve position is also $3.04bn above the CBN's full-year 2026 projection of $51.04bn, suggesting that reserve accumulation has outperformed the central bank's expectations.

CBN Governor, Olayemi Cardoso, has attributed the stronger reserve position to improved foreign exchange inflows, including receipts from crude oil-related taxes and third-party inflows.

Private Sector Credit Hits N83.43tn Amid High Interest

Nigeria's private sector credit climbed to N83.43tn in July 2026, extending a steady rise in lending to businesses and other private-sector borrowers despite the Central Bank of Nigeria's tight monetary policy stance.

Data from the CBN showed that private sector credit increased by 0.21 per cent between June and July, following a much stronger N2.22tn expansion in June.

The July figure was N6.70tn higher than the N76.72tn recorded a year earlier, representing an 8.74 per cent annual increase.

Over the four-month period from April to July, credit to the private sector rose by N2.84tn, from N80.59tn to N83.43tn.

The increase means lending to private sector operators has continued to expand even with the benchmark Monetary Policy Rate held at 26.50 per cent.

The CBN has maintained its restrictive monetary stance as part of efforts to contain inflation and preserve macroeconomic stability. Yet, the sustained rise in private sector credit indicates that demand for financing remains firm.

The pace of expansion, however, slowed considerably in July. After rising from N81.0tn in May to N83.26tn in June, credit added only N171.8 billion in the following month.

The latest figures also showed a contrasting movement in government borrowing.

Net domestic credit declined by N5.94tn, or 4.82 per cent, to N117.35tn in July from N123.29tn in June. Credit to the government similarly fell from N40.03tn to N33.92tn during the month.

The divergence suggests that while bank lending to the private sector continued to gain ground, government's demand for domestic credit eased during the month.

However, the latest CBN data do not provide a sectoral breakdown of the July increase, making it difficult to determine whether the additional lending was concentrated in manufacturing, agriculture, trade, real estate or other sectors.

Earlier CBN data showed mixed lending trends across key sectors. By March 2026, credit to agriculture stood at N3.86tn.

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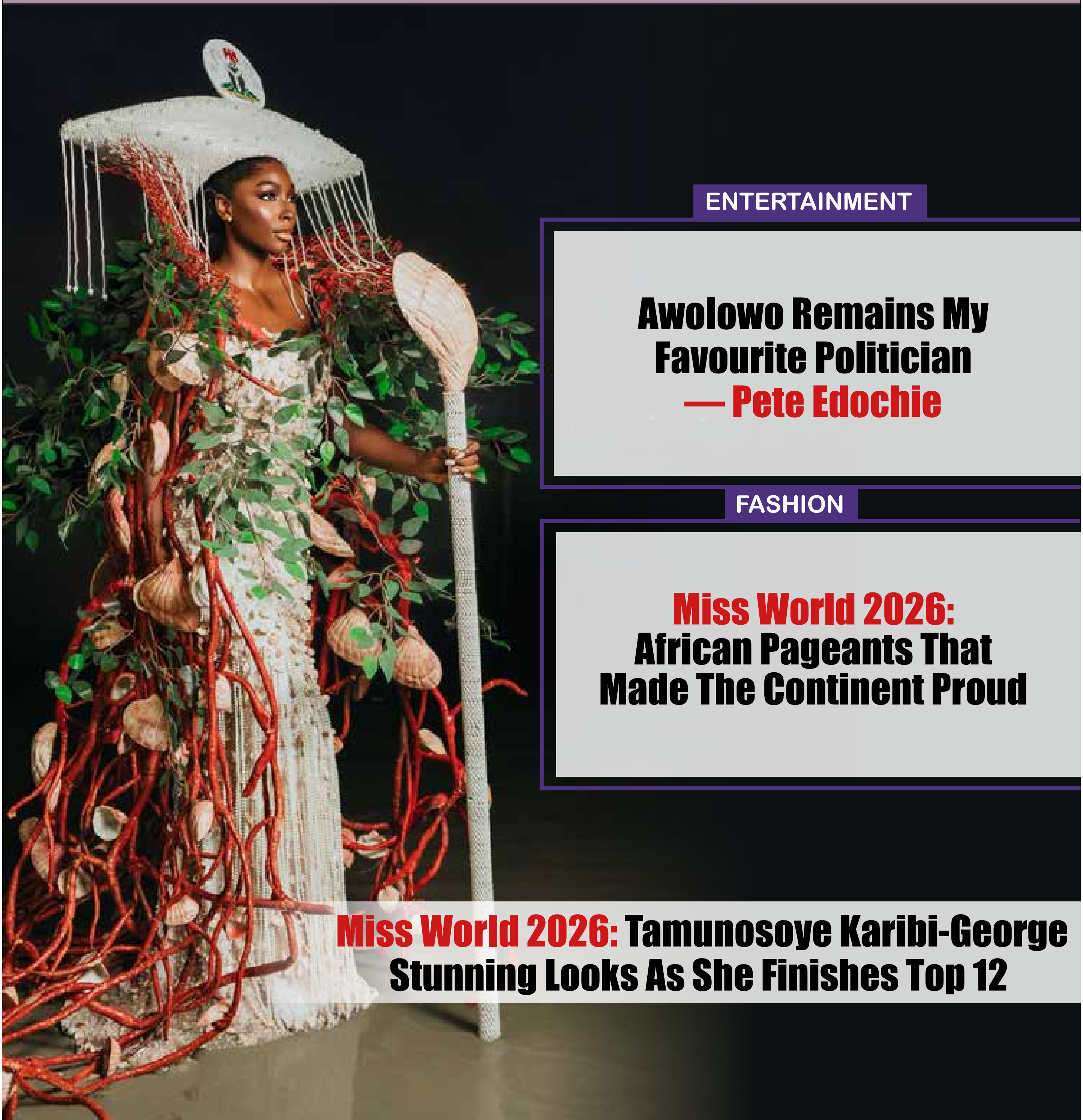


ENTERTAINMENT

Awolowo Remains My Favourite Politician — Pete Edochie

FASHION

Miss World 2026: African Pageants That Made The Continent Proud

Miss World 2026: Tamunosoye Karibi-George Stunning Looks As She Finishes Top 12

SPORT

We're Still In Rebuilding Phase — Haaland

TOPNOTCH

...Celebrity Gist Unlimited

She Gave Me $1,000 When I Was Broke — Peller Reveals Why He Knew Jarvis Was the One

TikToker Peller has revealed how Jarvis supported him financially when they were both creating content, despite not wanting to date him at the time.

Speaking during a conversation with Pastor Tobi, Peller explained that while Jarvis was in her village making TikTok videos, she received plenty of gifts from viewers, whereas he barely received any.

According to Peller, Jarvis would often use part of her TikTok earnings to support and gift him.

Pastor Tobi asked: "At that time, people were saying that she only wanted you because of money but you didn't have any money then, did you?"

Peller responded: "I didn't have anything. This girl could make about $3,000 from TikTok at that time, she would take about $1,000 from what she made and give it to me because she noticed that people weren't gifting me."

He continued: "You know, one thing about life is that when people see a woman like her, they want to show her their full support. So, they would give her gifts."

Peller added: "As a man, it would take a long time before I found someone who would gift me anything, so most of the gifts would be directed to her."

He further explained: "But she would still give me some of what she received. She supported me even though, at that time, she didn't want to date me."

Why I Once Evicted My Son From Home – Veteran Actress, Patience Ozokwor

Veteran Nollywood actress, Patience Ozokwor, aka Mama G, has said it is wrong for parents to completely shield their children from hardship and hard work.

According to her, the fastest way to ruin a child's life is by preventing them from experiencing hardship or working hard.

Speaking in a recent interview with media personality, Femi Baba, Mama G recalled that she once evicted her son from home so he could go out and make a living for himself.

She said, "The fastest way to ruin a child's life is to say you don't want them to suffer the way you did.

"When you're gone, they may start fighting over your property. I told my son, 'My house isn't yours. Go and work for your own.'"

Ozokwor explained that because she raised her children with discipline and hard work, they were doing well.

The movie icon urged parents not to deny their children the experience of struggle and hard work because of their love for them.

Nigerian Billionaire, Igho Tiny Dies After Penis Enlargement Procedure in Thailand

Wealthy British-Nigerian businessman and social media influencer Igho "Tiny" Ubiribo, popularly known as Denisi or Ego, has died at the age of 43 after undergoing a penis-enlargement procedure during a luxury holiday in Thailand with his wife, Danielle Simba Allen.

Details presented during an inquest at Inner West London Coroners' Court revealed that Igho had about 40ml of hyaluronic acid and lidocaine injected into his penis at an unnamed clinic in Thailand in March. The cosmetic procedure was later linked to a fatal pulmonary embolism.

Following the procedure, Igho and his wife reportedly returned to their Marriott hotel in Bangkok, where they went for a massage. He later complained of chest pain and collapsed twice before being rushed to Sukhumvit Hospital.

Although he was initially conscious, his condition deteriorated, and he reportedly lost consciousness before doctors could carry out a recommended CT scan.

Awolowo Remains My Favourite Politician — Pete Edochie

Veteran actor Pete Edochie has named the first Premier of the Western Region, late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, as his favourite Nigerian politician, citing his contributions to education and broadcasting.

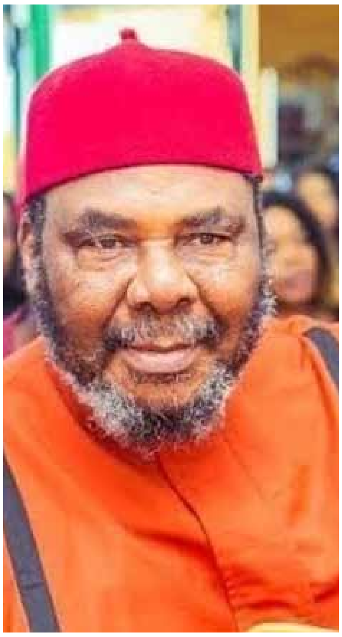
The 79-year-old actor made this known during an interview on Curiosity Made Me Ask, a show hosted by content creator Adebayo Abidemi, popularly known as Isbae U, published on Saturday.

Edochie, while stating that he was not involved in politics, said he admired Awolowo for setting clear targets and explaining how he intended to fund and execute his plans.

"First of all, I love the Yorubas a lot. One of my sons is married to a Yoruba girl, I didn't tell you that, so you're my in-law. I'm not into politics, no. But, if you ask me who is or was my favorite politician, I will tell you Awolowo."

Explaining his choice, Edochie said Awolowo was different from other politicians because he outlined what he intended to achieve and how he planned to fund it.

"Awolowo will tell you, 'I'm going to build this thing. It will cost certain amount, and this is where I'm going to get it.' There has been no politician to achieve that, no. Outside Awolowo, then M.I. Okpara in the East."



US Grammy Winner Ciara Announces Fifth Pregnancy

US singer Ciara is expecting her fifth child, expanding her family with husband Russell Wilson.

The 40-year-old Grammy-winning singer and Wilson announced the pregnancy in a joint Instagram post on their accounts, #Ciara and #DangeRussWilson, on Sunday, sharing photos and videos showing her baby bump.

"One more person to Love," the couple captioned the post.

In the announcement, Ciara and Wilson posed outside alongside four shirts hanging on a clothesline, with a blank baby onesie representing the newest addition to their family.

They also posed together holding up five fingers, a nod to baby No. 5.

Ciara and Wilson are parents to daughters Sienna Princess and Amora Princess, and son Win Harrison.

Ciara also has a son, Future Zahir, from a previous relationship with rapper Future.

The Times of India on Monday reported that the announcement comes as Ciara continues to balance motherhood with her music career.

Miss World 2026: Tamunosoye Karibi-George Stunning Looks As She Finishes Top 12

Is He a Green Flag Because He Has Sisters?

People say men with sisters are green flags because they "get" women. But how true is that? Here's the real, nuanced truth behind the popular theory.

Every woman would love to be in a relationship with a man who genuinely understands her menstrual cycle and all the physical and hormonal changes that come with it. A man who knows when to listen to her rants, when to sympathise, and when it's finally time to give actual advice. A man who can cook more than noodles, tidy up after himself, wash dishes without being begged, and doesn't view housework as something reserved for women alone.

Sometimes, the men who tick these boxes grew up in homes dominated by women, especially sisters. From childhood, they were exposed to what girls go through daily, from the funny parts to the awkward parts, and even the painful realities. So they grow into adults who naturally "get it."

Due to this, there's a popular theory that boys with sisters are green flags, but how true is that?

Why People Believe Boys

Here's Where It Gets Complicated

As wholesome as the theory is, life is not always that straightforward.

1. Not All Family Dynamics Are the Same

Just because a man has sisters doesn't mean he learnt the right lessons from them.

Some siblings are close; others barely speak. Some homes encourage emotional awareness; others don't. Some boys observe their sisters' experiences and become more empathetic, while others witness the same things and learn nothing.

So, having sisters isn't the magic ingredient; learning from those sisters is.

2. Emotional Maturity Isn't Guaranteed by Proximity to Women

This theory subtly reinforces the stereotype that men only become emotionally mature when women teach them how. It places the emotional labour on sisters to "shape" their brothers into green flags. What about men who grew up without sisters? Are they automatically red flags? Obviously not.

A man doesn't need to grow up surrounded by women to respect women, and a man who did grow up with sisters can still turn out emotionally unavailable, careless, or inconsiderate.

3. It Reduces Women to "Emotional Teachers."

Another issue with the theory is that it assumes women exist to teach men how to behave. It suggests that a boy's goodness depends on the women who raised or lived with him.

That in itself reinforces gender stereotypes by placing emotional responsibility on women and assuming men can't figure it out unless women guide them.

Men are fully capable of learning emotional intelligence on their own. It shouldn't be a woman's job to mould them.

So, Are Boys With Sisters Actually Green Flags?

The honest answer is sometimes, but not always.

Having sisters can give men:

- Early exposure to women's realities.
- A deeper emotional vocabulary.
- Understanding of boundaries and empathy.
- Practical skills like chores and caretaking.

But none of these things are guaranteed simply because he grew up with girls in the house.

A man with sisters can be a green flag. A man without sisters can also be a green flag. A man with sisters can also be a walking red flag. Family structure isn't destiny.

The theory that boys with sisters make the best partners isn't completely baseless because there's truth in how early exposure can shape people.

Miss World 2026:

African Pageants That Made The Continent Proud

By Ajibade Morakinyo

Vietnam played host to women from around the world as the Miss World 2026 Festival just concluded in grand style, with 24 African contestants in the mix. Representing countries across West, East, Central, North and Southern Africa, these women are bringing much more than their pageant credentials to the competition. Africa is showing up and making its presence felt at Miss World 2026, with 24 remarkable women proudly representing countries across the continent.

Since the festival began on 9 August, the contestants have already taken part in the Sash Ceremony in Haiphong, the Top Model challenge at Dragon Beach Square, the Sports Challenge and several other activities with the grand finale which held September 5 in Nha Trang.

With the competition for the official Top 40 underway, Africa's delegates have plenty to introduce themselves through. There are entrepreneurs, students, medical professionals, models, advocates and creatives among them, each with a cause or ambition that goes beyond the pageant stage.

Here are the 24 African women who made the contiinent proud at the just concluded at Miss World 2026:







The Failed Social Contract: Spiritual Examination

Social Contract is an implicit agreement among the members of a society to cooperate for social benefits, by sacrificing some individual freedom for state protection. Theories of a social contract became popular in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries among theorists such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, as a means of explaining the origin of government and the obligations of subjects.

In moral and political philosophy, the social contract is a theory or model that originated during the 'Age of Enlightenment' and usually concerns the legitimacy of the authority of the state over the individual.

Social contract arguments typically posit that individuals have consented, either explicitly or tacitly, to surrender some of their freedoms and submit to the authority (of the ruler, or to the decision of a majority) in exchange for protection of their remaining rights or maintenance of the social order.

The relation between natural and legal rights is often a topic of social contract theory. The term takes its name from 'The Social Contract' (French: Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique), a 1762 book by Jean-Jacques Rousseau that discussed this concept.

Although the antecedents of social contract theory are found in antiquity, in Greek and Stoic philosophy and Roman and Canon Law, the heyday of the social contract was the mid-17th to early 19th centuries, when it emerged as the leading doctrine of political legitimacy. There is no doubt however, that the social contract is a dyadic relationship between the ruler and the ruled. It therefore involves reciprocal rights and obligations.

On October 1, 1960, the newly anointed leaders of independent Nigeria entered a 'Covenant' with Nigerian citizens to fulfill their hopes and aspirations and to uphold the values of a new nation under God.

Among other things, they were to promote Justice, Equity and Fairness', lead the people to harness their potentials and build a commonwealth of prosperous people.

Today in retrospect, Charles Dickens' opening lines of 'A Tale of Two Cities' ring in our ears, as a testament to the failure of this social contract and covenant entered into at independence: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us." The above sums up our impaired vision of human prosperity at independence which has remain unmatched by our human despair. We have had our summer of hope turned into a winter of hopeless hope and

despondency.
Sixty-six years after; we are embroiled in a virtual class war between the rich and the poor. It is a time of despair and suffering on one hand, and joy and hope on the other. A time of 'suffering and smiling': This is an apt phrase to be used in the context of today's world when, on the one hand, the rich are enjoying luxurious lives; while on the other hand, the poor are struggling under the yoke of economic adversity, poverty, impoverishment and despondency.

However, its best context is where we predict some revolution or sudden transformation that will usher in a new dawn that will lead to an advance to the 'promised land'. That is why in the context of the times, wealth, inequality, and accumulation of wealth have become recurrent themes in our everyday discourse of the Nigerian situation.

We have said it in earlier sermons that when the poor and impoverished are pushed to the wall and there is nothing left for them to eat, they will resort to 'eating the rich' and that is when the fight (revolution) will start.

There is no doubt for so long there has been a glaring betrayal of the social contract in our society. We have descended into the abyss of injustice, inequity, and inequality. Justice, equity, and fairness are three interrelated concepts that combine to make a spiritual whole. Perhaps it would be germane to this discussion to examine the Prophet's (SAW) 'Charter of Madina'.

The Charter of Madina was the first social contract in Islamic history, establishing a pluralistic society with defined rights, duties, and mechanisms for peace and cooperation among Muslims, Jews, and other groups.

The Charter of Madina was drafted in 622 CE when Prophet Muhammad (SAW) migrated to Yathrib (later Madina), a city plagued by intertribal conflicts, particularly between the Banu Aws and Banu Khazraj, and tensions with Jewish tribes such as Banu Nuzair, Banu Quraiza, and Banu Qainqua.

The city's diverse population required a framework to ensure peace, social cohesion, and collective security. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was recognized as a trustworthy mediator and was requested to lead the city-state, providing a neutral authority to resolve disputes.

The Charter functioned as a social contract by outlining the rights and responsibilities of all residents, regardless of religion or tribal affiliation:

Unity and Citizenship: It established a unified community (Ummah) where Muslims, Jews, and other groups were considered equal partners in the city's governance.

Religious Freedom: All signatories were guaranteed the freedom to practice their faith without interference.

Mutual Defense: The Charter included clauses for collective defense, obligating all groups to protect Madina from external threats.

Justice and Dispute Resolution: A mechanism for resolving conflicts was established, with Prophet Muhammad (SAW) serving as the ultimate arbitrator.

Economic Cooperation: It promoted fair distribution of resources and communal welfare, ensuring social justice for the poor, orphans, and marginalized groups.

Loyalty to the State: Signatories were bound to prioritize the collective interest of Madina over individual tribal or factional loyalties.

Social and Political Significance

The Charter of Madina is considered a model for conflict resolution and governance. It institutionalized coexistence, tolerance, and equality, laying the foundation for a civil state in Islam.

By defining mutual rights and duties, it reduced intertribal violence and created a framework for social harmony, demonstrating that a pluralistic society could function under a shared legal and ethical framework.

Legacy and Contemporary Relevance

The Charter predates Western concepts of human rights and social contracts, such as the Magna Carta, and provides early evidence of constitutional governance, protection of minority rights, and social justice in a multi-ethnic society.

Its principles continue to be studied as a model for peace building, conflict resolution, and inclusive governance in modern societies.

In summary, the Charter of Madina exemplifies a practical application of a social contract, balancing individual rights, collective responsibilities, and intergroup cooperation to establish a stable, just, and harmonious society.

Justice is the sum-total, in a sense, of all recognized rights and duties, as it often consists of nothing more than a balanced implementation of rights and duties, and of due regard for equality and fairness. There is no gainsaying the fact that the major themes of the Quran include God-consciousness, fairness, equity, justice, equality and balance in all our dealings.

These concepts are drummed into the believers every Juma'at service in the form of admonitions where we are enjoined to heed the words of Allah in Surah Al-Nahl : Innal laaha ya'muru bil 'adli wal ihsaani wa eetaaa'i zil qurbaa wa yanhaa 'anil fahshaaa'i wal munkari walbagh-i' ya'izukum la'allakum tazakkaroon: Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition. (Quran 16:90)

It stresses the doing of what is right because it is the truth and proper thing to do. We are urged to establish justice and deal with all in a manner that assures equity, fairness and balance and safeguards the rights, property, honor and dignity of all people. God assures us that even though He is All-Powerful, and none can challenge His Authority, He deals with all with truth, kindness, justice, and the rights of none will be transgressed on the Day of Judgment. See (Quran 21:47)

Prophet Shuaib tells his people: Give just measure and cause no loss (to others by fraud). And weigh with scales true and upright. "And withhold not things justly due to men, nor do evil in the land, working mischief. And fear Him Who created you and (Who created) the generations before (you). (Quran 26:181-184)

In one way or the other we are all guilty of some of the infractions of the contents of the above verses, particularly our leaders. It was once said, that the issues of injustice, unfairness and inequitable dispensation of resources is an all pervasive malaise: We are all guilty.

When justice, equity and fairness depart from a society, that society is lost. A regime of injustice, inequality and unfairness makes nonsense of the social contract and put asunder the 'Covenant' between the rulers and the ruled.

We were warned: "Eat of the good things We have provided for your sustenance, but commit no excess therein, lest My Wrath should justly descend on you: And those on whom descends My Wrath do perish indeed! (Quran 20:81)

May Allah's condemnation and wrath never fall on us, Amin! May the next few years usher in a purposeful leadership in this country that will lead our children and children's children to the promised land.

"Rabbana atina min ladunka rahmatan wa hayyi' lana min amrina rashada": "Our Lord, grant us mercy from Yourself and prepare for us right guidance in our affair." (Quran 18:10)

Barka Juma'at and a happy weekend!

U-20 WWC: Falconets Fired Up For Spain Showdown — Aduku

Falconets head coach Moses Aduku has declared that his players are fully prepared to give their all in Monday's 2026 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup clash against Spain.

The Group F encounter will take place at Stadion Sosnowiec, with kick-off scheduled for 5pm local time (4pm Nigeria time).

Aduku acknowledged the quality of the Spanish side but insisted the Falconets are determined to make a positive start to their campaign.

The tactician said his players will treat the encounter like a Cup final as they target maximum points.

"We are looking forward to the match against Spain with high expectations. We are ready and set to go," Aduku told thenff.com.

"Spain is a good side, no doubt; let us not forget they are champions of the world at men's senior level.

"However, we will approach the game like a Cup final because we want to win. The three points will put us in good stead in our group phase campaign."

Aduku's side will be hoping to begin their campaign on a winning note and put themselves in a strong position to progress from Group F.

China PR and debutants New Caledonia will clash in the other Group F clash .

Chelsea Will Learn From Loss To Arsenal — James

Chelsea captain Reece James has disclosed that there were plenty of encouraging signs despite a 2-1 loss to Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium.

Arsenal won 2-1 after goals from Kai Havertz and Martin Ødegaard canceled out an early opener. Morgan Rogers scored for Chelsea inside the opening minutes.

Speaking to Sky Sports, James noted that his side started strongly and showed real fight.

"There was lots of positives, we started the game really well and even when we went behind we showed character to try and get back in the game but we ran out of time in the end," he said.

"Football at this level is a game of moments. One or two things change the scoreline. It was a tough game today and we have to review and take the learnings.

We're Still In Rebuilding Phase — Haaland

Erling Haaland believes that Manchester City are still in a 'rebuilding phase' when compared to Premier League champions Arsenal.

City have endured a summer of upheaval with the departure of Pep Guardiola as well as key players such as Rodri, Bernardo Silva and John Stones.

But the club has made a bright start to life under new boss Enzo Maresca, maintaining their perfect start to the new league campaign with a 1-0 win over Coventry City on Saturday.

Haaland scored the game's winning goal early in the first half, heading home Antoine Semenyo's superb cross after 26 minutes.

Speaking after the win against the newly promoted club, Haaland believes that Mikel Arteta's side already find themselves in a strong position heading into this campaign due to their settled squad, which has grown alongside the Spaniard for several years now.

When the Ruling APC Resort to Threats As Campaign Strategy

The bad blood being generated as the 2027 General Elections draw closer is leaving the country more divided than it has ever been. One would think that that the 2023 elections would be the last Nigerians would witness tragic diversions through religion, ethnicity and unhealthy political leaning.

But the trajectory the road to 2027, especially as it involves President Bola Tinubu, is following, is anything but healthy.

On a daily basis, die-hard Tinubu followers continue to issue threats to voters, aimed at unwholesome repercussions if a member or members of a community fail to vote for the All Progressives Congress (APC), and its presidential candidate, Tinubu.

It would be recalled that as the Osun governorship election was nearing feverpitch climax, threats were being issued by APC party stalwarts. These threats, unfortunately, were from public officers, most of them, supposedly elected, party thugs and any other person, who somehow have sympathy for President Tinubu.

In Osun, just before the Accord Party resoundingly defeated the APC, a serving Senator, representing Osun Central, was captured on viral video, instructing party faithful, to 'kill Accord members' wherever they are seen. That Senator is Francis Fadahunsi. He is still walking free till date. No manner of punishment was meted out to him, other than an invitation by the Police.

Fadahunsi, had during a protest at the palace of the Owa Obokun of Ijesaland in Ilesa over alleged incessant killings of the APC members in Ijesaland, directed party members to retaliate by the kill with the rival part Accord.

Following in Fadahunsi's footsteps, the Kuje Area Council chairman, Danjuma Samuel Shekwolo, in a speech, ordered anyone who would not support or vote APC during the election, to leave the area council.

With impunity, the chairman added, "with confidence, I'm saying it."

In the same vein, the governor of Ebonyi State, Francis Nwifuru, also threatened to sack all local government chairmen if they fail to delivered their to Tinubu and APC

"Any chairman who fails to win his council will be removed from office and replaced with a councillor.

"I want this information to be on the headlines of newspapers because, as politicians, we would not speak in secret," he said.

Also, a chairman in Ebonyi State, Eze Paul Ituma, toed his governor's

line, in reaction to the sack threat issued to them.

The newly sworn-in Chairman of Ohaukwu Local Government Area warned opposition political parties and their supporters against engaging in political activities in the area ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Ituma issued the warning while speaking on political activities in the council, saying anyone who attempted to operate against his political interests could be declared persona non grata.

Again, the APC chairman in Yobe State, Mohammed Gadaka, also silently seduced married women, urging them to divorce their husband's if they fail to support APC. He promised to marry them if they do.

All these entities have come out to say they were quoted out of context, when their videos are in public. Surprisingly, the law has done nothing to them to dissuade more threats.

Is the APC suddenly introducing a new chapter in campaign strategy, that goes with impunity? Why is the law enforcement agency silent on the these threats, giving other entities the impetus to issue more threats.

The Constitution permits every Nigerian to freely associate, and when anyone tries to prove otherwise, it should be deemed an infringement on the fundamental human rights of the individual, and should not be handled with kid's gloves.

Time has come for all these APC office holders to be accountable for their actions. No one should be permitted to threaten a fellow Nigerian because of his political leaning. Dismissing these utterances as mere joke as the Police are wont to do, is unacceptable, and will never be acceptable.

Heaven will not fall if Tinubu, Atiku, Obi or any other candidate loses election, so individuals should be allowed to freely make their choices.

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