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OFALA FESTIVAL

Igwe Nnaemeka Achebe Hails **Globacom**



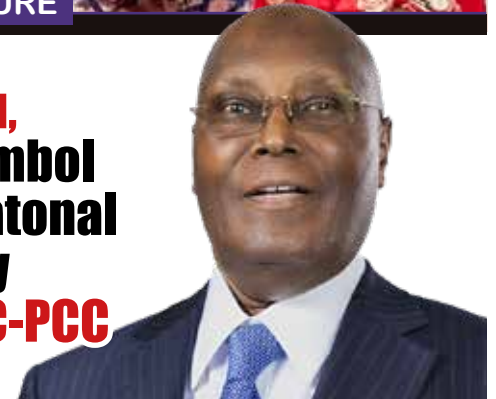
BOSS OF THE WEEK

FEATURE



**HIM Oba Enitan
Ogunwusi:
Celebrating a
Classy King
at 52**

**Atiku,
a Symbol
of National
Unity
- ADC-PCC**



Oba Enitan Ogunwusi: Celebrating a Classy King at 52

By Eric Elezuo

The Ooni of Ife, Oba Enitan Adeyeye Ogunwusi, is a classic example kingship without stress. He cuts across as one royal father, who has effortlessly combined royalty with modernity, exuding glamour, harmony and developments in his strides.

It is therefore, not a surprise when the entire kingdom of Ife, the Yoruba race and men of goodwill across the world, whose lives he has positively touched, raised a toast of long life, great tidings, sound health and more prosperity to the one endeared as Ojaja the second, as he marked five decades and two of existence on the surface of the earth.

It is worthy of note that much as the revered monarch has a crucial birthday to celebrate, he chose to attend the traditional wedding ceremony of two young persons, Toya and Mekanju, in Lagos. His presence at the Harbour Point venue of the event lent classic reverence to the gathering, giving the young couple a sound wedding present that does not easily come by. That is the vintage Ooni of Ife; doing as much as possible to put smiles on as many faces as he can reach at all times.

But the audience and the organisers of the event capitalized on



the opportunity of his presence, and showered on him a surprised birthday celebration, with loud songs of happy birthday tunes taking

over the event venue. The Ooni was highly elated and appreciative.

In his address shortly afterwards, via a statement, signed by his

senior media officer, Sodiq Lawal, on behalf of the director of media and public affairs, Otunba Moses Olafare, the Ooni, whose stock in trade has



remained the need for peace at all times and at all levels, chose to use the space to further perpetrate sustained peace, unity and progress in Nigeria.

The A-list monarch reaffirmed his commitment to promoting Yoruba cultural heritage, fostering national unity and supporting initiatives aimed at improving the welfare of Nigerians.

The Ooni who is also the co-chairman of the National Council of Traditional Rulers of Nigeria (NCTRN) called on Nigerians, irrespective of their ethnic, religious and political differences, to embrace peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding and collective responsibility as essential ingredients for national development.

The Ooni further emphasised the need for

citizens to work together towards building a country where peace, justice, economic prosperity and equal opportunities remain priorities.

He described his birthday

as an opportunity to reflect on the importance of purposeful leadership, service to humanity and the preservation of cultural values.

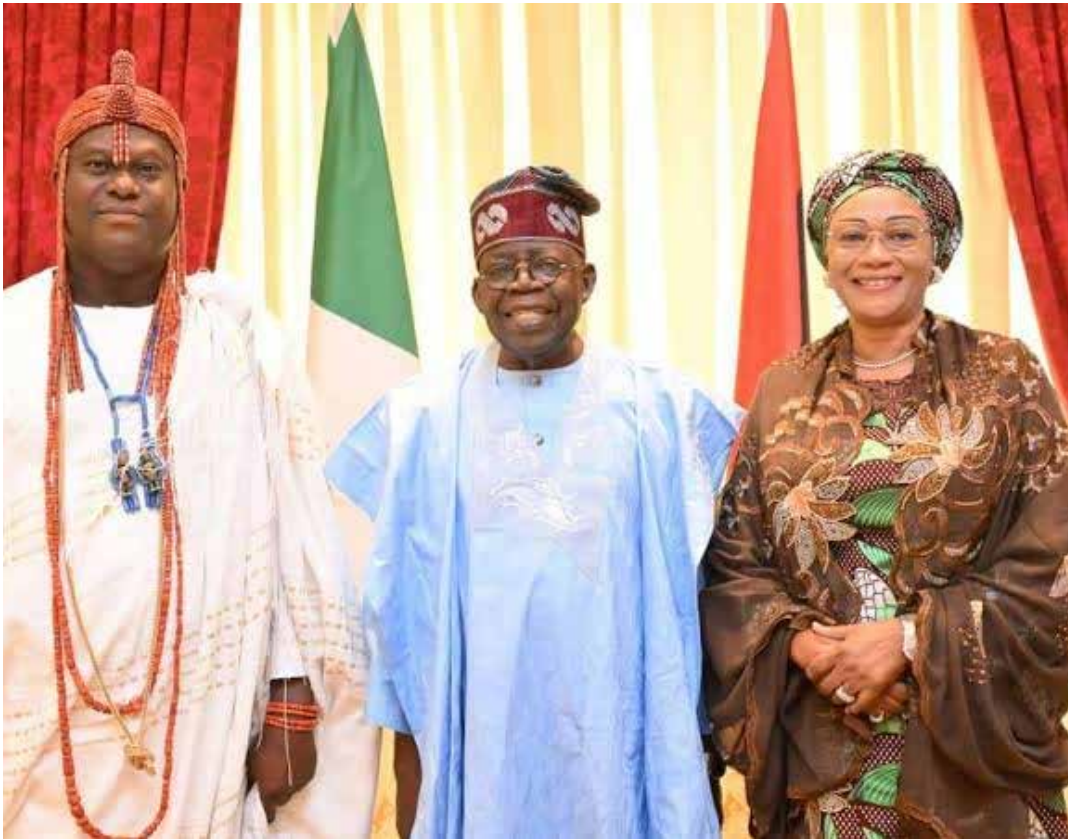
“Peace and unity

remain central to my responsibilities as the Ooni of Ife. I will continue to use my position and influence to strengthen relationships among communities, promote peaceful coexistence and celebrate the cultural diversity that makes Nigeria unique.

“I believe that our diversity should be a source of strength rather than division. I therefore urge Nigerians, irrespective of their ethnic, religious and political differences, to embrace mutual understanding, respect and cooperation in the collective pursuit of a united and prosperous nation.

“Throughout my reign, I have remained committed to promoting Yoruba culture and traditions while projecting the





historical significance of Ile-Ife as the ancestral home. I will continue to support initiatives that preserve our heritage, strengthen cultural diplomacy and promote understanding among

people across Nigeria, Africa and the global community.

“Since ascending the ancient throne of my forebears, I have continued to support initiatives focused on

cultural preservation, youth development, entrepreneurship, community development and humanitarian service. I firmly believe that traditional institutions have important roles to

play in fostering peace, inspiring development and complementing efforts by government and other stakeholders to improve the lives of our people.

“In my capacity as the Permanent Chairman of the Osun State Council of Obas and Co-Chairman of the National Council of Traditional Rulers of Nigeria, I remain committed to promoting dialogue, strengthening traditional institutions and encouraging collaboration among leaders for the benefit of our communities and the country at large.

“I also recognise the importance of engaging with traditional rulers across Africa and members of the Yoruba diaspora to strengthen our cultural connections, promote our shared heritage and create opportunities for meaningful partnerships



that will benefit present and future generations.

“As I celebrate my 52nd birthday, I call on Nigerians, particularly our youths, to remain hopeful and committed to building a country where peace, justice, economic progress and equal opportunities are accessible to all. I urge leaders across every sector to place the collective interests of the people above personal considerations and work together towards a better Nigeria.” the statement quoted the Ooni as saying.

Born October 17, 1974 as Prince Adeyeye Enitan of Giesi, one of the four royal families of the House of Oranmiyan, the Ooni started his elementary education at Subuola Memorial Nursery and Primary School, Ibadan, and Ibadan District Council, Akobo, Ibadan. He then proceeded to Loyola College, Ibadan, and later to St. Peters Secondary School, Ile-Ife, where he received his secondary school certificate (SSCE). He graduated as an accountant from The Polytechnic, Ibadan.

He is married to many wives, and blessed with many children. His latest addition, a prince, was added to the family, in August.

We wish the stylish king a gracious celebration as he continues to affect humanity in more positive ways than one.



Glo-Sponsored Ofala Festival Opens with Spectacular Youth Carnival in Onitsha

The 2026 Globacom-sponsored Ofala Festival in Onitsha, Anambra State, commenced in spectacular fashion on Wednesday with a vibrant Youth Carnival organised by the Onitsha Ado Youth Council (OYC), heralding the commencement of a celebration in which cultural heritage, youthful exuberance and royal tradition converge in magnificent harmony. The carnival featured an array of cultural groups, including the Otu Odu Onitsha, Egwu Odu and Agbalanze, whose members, resplendent in elaborate traditional regalia, danced through the streets of Inland Town, Onitsha, in honour of the Obi of Onitsha, Igwe Alfred Nnaemeka Achebe. Beyond its festive allure, the procession provided a compelling showcase of the rich cultural heritage, enduring customs and collective identity of the Onitsha people.

One of the most captivating highlights of the carnival was the imaginative manner in which young participants recreated the grandeur of Nigeria's traditional institutions. Adorned in meticulously crafted costumes representing eminent traditional rulers, including the Obi of Onitsha, the Oba of Benin and the Ooni of Ife,



the youths transformed the streets into a living tableau of royal splendour, underscoring the capacity of cultural expression to bridge generations and keep ancestral traditions alive.

Following the street procession, the participants converged on the old Ime Obi, along St Stephen Anglican Church Road, where fashion parades and a variety of competitions among the participating groups added further colour, excitement and creative expression to the festivities.

The Ofala celebrations will continue with the Iru Ofala on Friday, October 16, and the Azu Ofala on Saturday, October 17. A Royal Banquet, organised by Globacom in honour of

Igwe Achebe, is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21, at the Ime Obi, Onitsha. The festivities will culminate in an Ofala Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, October 25, at St Stephen's Anglican Church.

In a statement, Globacom said its enduring association with the Ofala Festival reflected a corporate philosophy that recognises culture, alongside connectivity, as a vital instrument of national development.

"Ofala is far more than an annual cultural celebration; it is a living testament to identity, continuity and collective aspiration. It embodies the enduring spirit of a people, preserving the wisdom of their past

while illuminating the possibilities of their future.

"Our sustained partnership with this magnificent institution reflects our conviction that preserving our heritage and advancing society are not competing imperatives, but mutually reinforcing pillars of a progressive nation. Culture provides the roots from which collective identity draws its strength, even as innovation creates new pathways to shared prosperity.

"This is the essence of Globacom's clarion call, 'Never Settle for Less': to honour what is worthy, preserve what is precious and continually aspire to something greater," the company added.

Tokunbo Adeola Celebrates 70 Years of God's Goodness

By Ruth Akpan

Photos: Funmi Ilelabayo

Some occasions are best understood not through the splendour of their surroundings or the prominence of those gathered, but through the depth of gratitude that brings everyone together. For Tokunbo Adeola, the attainment of 70 years offered a personal opportunity to look back upon the winding corridors of life, acknowledge the hand of God through its triumphs and trials, and give thanks for the immeasurable blessings that have accompanied her journey. With hearts lifted in worship and voices united in praise, family members, friends, associates and distinguished personalities converged on the Redemption Pavilion Parish of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Victoria Island, Lagos, for a thanksgiving service that placed faith, reflection and gratitude at the very centre of the milestone.

The atmosphere within the church was imbued with reverence and spiritual warmth as worshippers gathered to celebrate the life of a woman whose 70th birthday was being marked, first and foremost, as a testimony to God's enduring faithfulness. Beyond the significance of the milestone itself, the service provided a sacred setting for reflection on the years behind her,



the experiences that had shaped her and the countless reasons to remain thankful for the gift of life. The gathering brought together people from different spheres of her life, united by a shared desire to rejoice with her and offer prayers for the years ahead.

The service opened with a vibrant session of praise and worship, as melodious songs of adoration filled

the sanctuary and lifted the hearts of the congregation towards the Almighty. There was a palpable sense of joy as voices rose in harmony, accompanied by the rhythmic expressions of worship that gave the opening moments both spiritual depth and celebratory energy.

An opening prayer offered by Pastor Taiwo formally ushered the congregation into the

service, committing the proceedings and the celebrant's new chapter into God's hands. The prayerful beginning established the tone for a gathering in which every hymn, scripture reading, sermon and expression of gratitude was woven around the central theme of divine faithfulness. For those present, it was an opportunity to pause amid the demands of everyday



life and reflect on the extraordinary privilege of witnessing a loved one attain three score and ten years.

Music played a particularly memorable role in the thanksgiving service, adding emotional intensity and uplifting energy to the proceedings. One of the outstanding moments came with an electrifying performance by Yinka Erinle, whose presentation brought an invigorating dimension to the worship experience. The performance stirred the congregation, drawing worshippers into the atmosphere of praise and reinforcing the celebratory spirit of the occasion. The special performance by the Worship Medley Band further enriched the service, offering a musical experience that complemented the solemnity of the sanctuary while allowing the congregation to express

its joy through worship.

The carefully woven programme also featured the rendition of cherished hymns, Bible readings, a sermon and dedicated thanksgiving sessions, each contributing to the spiritual significance of the gathering.

The sermon brought the congregation's attention to the deeper meaning of gratitude, particularly as

it relates to the privilege of attaining 70 years. Drawing from the Christian understanding of thanksgiving, the message centred on the importance of acknowledging God as the ultimate source of life, strength, wisdom and every good gift. Seven decades represent far more than the passage of time; they encompass seasons of growth, lessons learned,

challenges overcome, prayers answered and opportunities to experience the goodness of the Almighty in different circumstances.

The scriptural readings complemented this message, providing a spiritual foundation for the occasion and reinforcing the importance of living with a grateful heart. Together, the hymns, readings and sermon gave the service a thoughtful rhythm, moving from praise to reflection and ultimately to personal expressions of thanksgiving.

The atmosphere was one of reverence and appreciation, as worshippers were reminded that longevity is a gift whose true value lies not merely in the number of years accumulated, but also in the experiences, relationships and opportunities for service that those years make



possible.

Then the moment for tributes came as family members, friends and associates took turns to celebrate the woman behind the milestone, sharing affectionate tributes that reflected the bonds they had built with her over the years. Their words added a personal dimension to the service, bringing the celebrant's relationships and the memories she had created into focus. Beyond the prayers and hymns, their presence was a reminder that a life journey is enriched not only by the years lived, but also by the people who share its defining moments.

The emotional high point of the service came during the thanksgiving session, when Tokunbo Adeola, accompanied by family members and fellow worshippers, danced joyfully towards the altar in an exuberant expression of gratitude. With hearts lifted and the congregation sharing in her joy, the celebrant gave thanks to God for the gift of life, good health and the abundant blessings that had accompanied her through seven decades.

The service also featured the ceremonial cutting of the birthday cake, with Erelu Abiola Dosunmu and Yeye Moremi Olufunso Amosun supervising the memorable moment. Their presence added a touch of distinction to the proceedings as the

celebrant marked her 70th birthday with the warmth and affection of family and friends.

The distinguished attendance further reflected the breadth of the celebrant's social connections and the esteem in which she is held. The congregation included prominent figures from traditional institutions, public service, politics, business and social circles, all of whom joined the family and friends in honouring

her 70th birthday. Their presence lent additional distinction to the occasion while reinforcing its character as both a spiritual gathering and a significant social milestone.

Among those in attendance were former Deputy Governor of Lagos State, Alhaja Sinatu Ojikutu; the Aro of Ile-Ife, Chief Alex Duduyemi; Aremo Olusegun Osoba; Mrs. Nike Akande; former Inspector-General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun, His Imperial

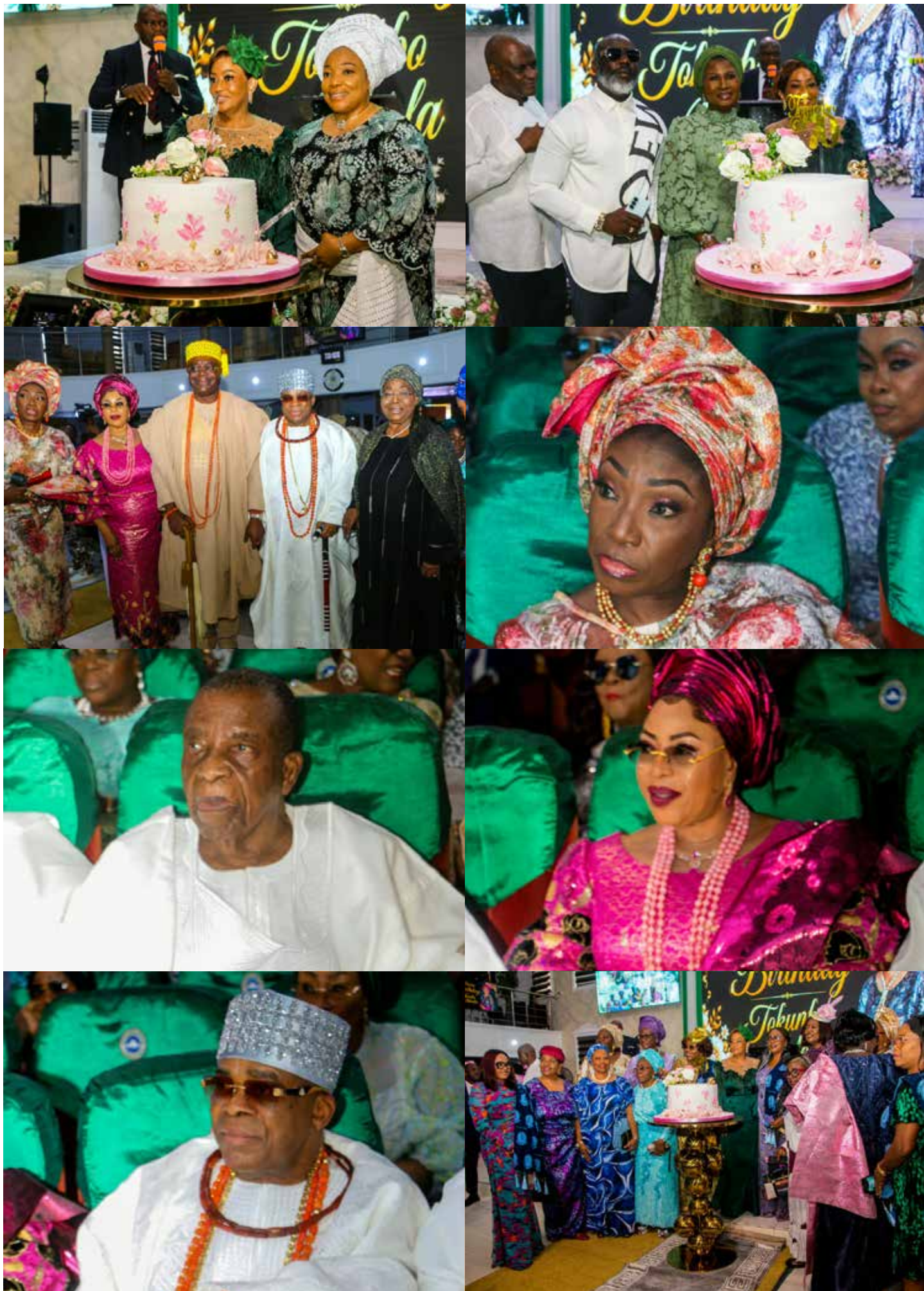
Majesty, Oba Clement Adesuyi Haastrup, Ajimoko III, alongside Olori Vicky Haastrup, His Royal Majesty, Oba (Dr.) Olufolarin Olukayode Ogunsanwo; Olori Olusola Adedoyin-Alao; Olori Ladin Sijuwade; Prince Bisi Olatilo; Prince Samuel Adedoyin and his wife; Mrs. Sena Anthony; Mr. Lai Oriowo; Mr. Reuben Abati and Mrs. Kike Abati, among other distinguished guests.











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British Airways Pledges Support for NANTA Training Institute

The long-standing partnership between the National Association of Nigeria Travel Agencies (NANTA) and British Airways received a major boost on Wednesday as the Agencies' national executive paid a courtesy visit to the newly opened Country Office of British Airways in Lagos.

The delegation was led by NANTA National President, Dr. Yinka Folami, in company with other members of the National Executive Council. The visit was to congratulate the airline on its new strategic office and explore fresh areas of collaboration for the growth of the travel trade in Nigeria.

The team was warmly received by the airline's Regional Commercial Manager for West Africa, Mrs. Adetutu Otuyalo, alongside other top management staff.

Speaking during the visit, Dr. Folami commended British Airways for its decades of resilience, professionalism, and unwavering confidence in the Nigerian market. He described the move to the new country office as self-renewing and strategic.

"British Airways is not just an airline in Nigeria; it is an institution that has become part of our aviation history. For over 50 years of NANTA's



existence, BA has been a dependable partner. Your new office is proof that you are here for the long haul, and NANTA is proud to be associated with this commitment," Dr. Folami stated.

He briefed the BA management on a flagship project of his administration – the NANTA Training Institute, aimed at professionalizing travel agency practice, bridging knowledge gaps, and producing the next generation of globally competitive travel professionals.

According to him, the Institute is designed to drive Nigerian travel professionals towards becoming certified Global Travel Ambassadors.

In her response, Mrs.

Otuyalo expressed appreciation to NANTA for the solidarity visit and continuous support. She noted that travel agents remain the backbone of British Airways' commercial success in Nigeria and West Africa. "We at British Airways believe that investment in people is the best investment. The standard of your profession determines the quality of experience our mutual customers get. On behalf of British Airways, I want to assure you of our full professional support for the NANTA Training Institute," she pledged.

According to her, the airline will support the Institute in areas of professional training, product knowledge,

global distribution best practices, customer service excellence, and exposure to evolving airline technologies.

She added that British Airways will work out a structured training program with NANTA to ensure members are constantly updated and globally competitive.

The visit ended with an inspection tour of the new British Airways Country Office, with both parties reaffirming commitment to a stronger, mutually beneficial relationship.

The NANTA-British Airways relationship, spanning over five decades, remains one of the most enduring airline-trade partnerships in Nigerian aviation.

Nobody Trusts Tinubu to Conduct Free and Fair Elections – Dele Momodu

Accomplished media entrepreneur and chieftain of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Chief Dele Momodu, has said that nobody trusts President Bola Tinubu to conduct a free and fair election, including the President's own supporters.

Momodu also noted that there is a belief that if the President does not win in 2027, he will not want to relinquish power.

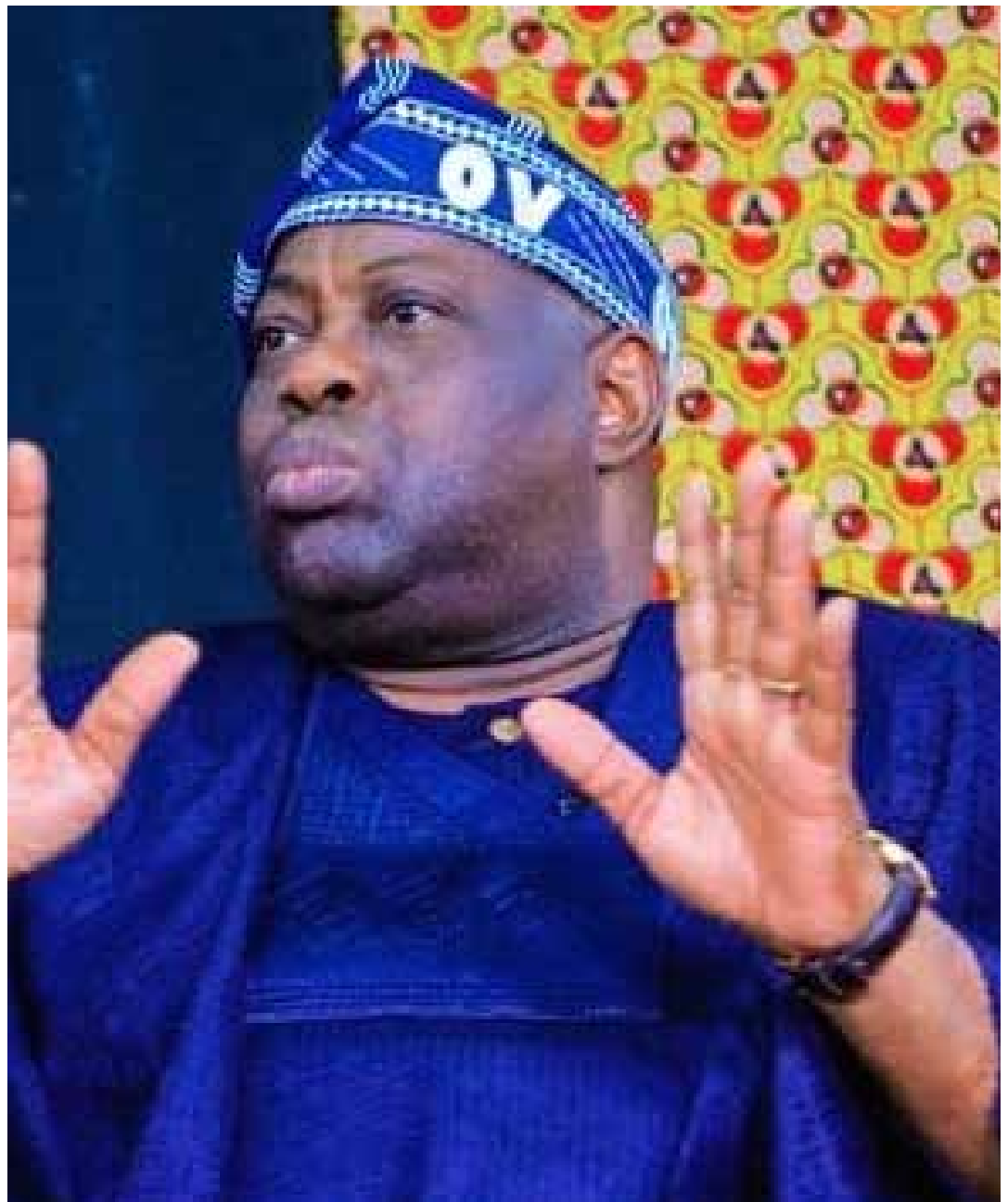
He added that if Tinubu refuses to step down, he would be chased out of the Presidential Villa.

Momodu made the revelations while speaking on Arise News Prime Time belt.

“If you ask an average Nigerian today about Tinubu, ‘Do you trust Tinubu to conduct a free and fair election?’ I can tell you, 90 per cent of them will say no.

“Look, nobody trusts Tinubu to run a free and fair election, including his own supporters. They will tell you, ‘Oh, we are going to win. There is no way we won’t win.’ Ask them why, and they will say, ‘Oh, you know our oga now.’

“In fact, some people are even suggesting that if Tinubu loses the election, he will not agree to step down. I say, why won’t he agree? We will chase him away.



“Look, you do not know the determination of Nigerians. And now, I’m not resting my confidence on just my party. I’m talking about the ordinary man on the street who cannot imagine Tinubu coming back again. They just can’t.

“I can’t tell you our strategy in public. What we know is that, once upon a time, Tinubu fought for himself to secure a second

term as governor of Lagos State.

“So, others are also working very hard behind the scenes. We are not going to come out in public and say this, but we know what to do to make sure that he does not get that second term. We also know that some of the people pretending to support him today—and I’m not trying to trivialise this thing.

“I know some of them. They are praying fervently that they will not have to go through this situation where governors become like houseboys. Governors are scared. Judges are scared. Legislators are scared.

“So, Tinubu has become a god whom nobody is ready to confront and say, ‘Oga, you’ve done your best. Please, go home.’”

Nigerians Better Off Under Tinubu, APC Spokesman Insists

The National Publicity Secretary of All Progressives Congress (APC), Felix Muoka, has insisted that Nigeria and Nigerians are better off than ever before, saying the party will win the 2027 presidential election based on its positive records.

Muoka said the APC is working hard to secure voters' support, adding that the party would not take Nigerians' votes for granted.

Speaking on Politics Today, a Channels Television programme, Thursday, Muoka said the party's preparations and campaign efforts are aimed at securing as many votes as possible in the next general elections.

He said: "Qualitatively speaking, our country is better. Nigerians are better today than they have ever been. Is there a country that has transited from this depressed economy, like we have had for decades, to that level of prosperity that didn't go through these stages?"

"Nigerians also understand that. So what the president has done is to give this country a fighting chance, not just at recovery, but at building the prospects for sustainable prosperity."

On the inauguration of the APC Presidential Campaign Council, he said: "What you saw today and what we've



been up to is really taking ourselves seriously. If we thought this was all said and done, we wouldn't put in this level of energy and work in an effort to really get to the last vote within the electorate. We are not taking this for granted. We're taking it very seriously. I'm sure that if our party was docile and we were doing nothing to campaign or put out our information, you would also bring me here to say that we had been very docile. We're a political party.

"We are a party for a reason. We are in this to compete with other political parties and to win the support of Nigerians. Since 2023,

there's a reason that our party has been very successful. Since the last general elections, we've won fantastically all elections in which we have contested. There's a reason for that. It's because we prepare. We do our homework.

"Nigerians bought in and voted for our party massively in 2023. We won that election, even though there are elements who want to claim that they won without evidence. But we won that election without question. As I said a few minutes ago, in every other election that has been called since then, Nigerians voted, not Indians. Nigerians voted

in all the other elections since 2023. We won by upwards of 90 per cent.

"Let me remind you that the APC is the governing party in this country, put in office by Nigerians. Already, the answer to your question has been codified in an election in which the APC is governing, not just at the centre, but in so many states in our country."

On the APC's chances in 2027, he said: "We will win the election. We are working hard to win the election. I think that Nigerians are going to stand tall, shoulder to shoulder with the APC to win the next election."

Makinde Insists on NLNG Funds Claim, Tasks Tinubu to Make Full Disclosure

Oyo State governor, Seyi Makinde, has insisted that the Federal government is withholding N250 billion in Nigeria LNG Limited (NLNG) dividends for each State in the country. His reaction was after the Presidency, on Sunday, denied the allegation, tagging it as “false”.

At the 2027 Budget Stakeholders’ Consultative Engagement held at the Olola Ogunlana Hall, International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan, on Friday, Governor Makinde claimed the funds would not be released until after the 2027 elections. The Allied Peoples Movement (APM) presidential candidate also claimed that the Federal Government had spent the money.

“Each State was supposed to get N250 billion. We had already identified projects that would expand Oyo State’s economy. But they have now said the money will not be paid until after the election. Is the election more important than the people of Nigeria?” the governor asked.

However, presidential spokesman Bayo Onanuga, in a statement on Sunday, countered, saying: “Makinde’s latest claim that the Federal government is withholding the NLNG dividend windfall is false and should be disregarded.”



Onanuga detailed how the Federation Account is managed and how money is shared among the three tiers of government and said, “Even as a one-off distribution, N250 billion to each of the 36 states amounts to ₦9.0 trillion, excluding the Federal Government, the FCT, and the 774 local councils. “Under the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) formula, states receive 26.72% of the distributable Federation Account revenue. For the states’ share alone to reach N9 trillion, total NLNG dividends paid into the Federation Account would have to exceed N33.68 trillion (about \$25 billion) in a single declaration.” The presidency said, “NLNG has never paid \$25 billion in dividends to the Federation Account in a single payout.” Reacting to Onanuga’s response, in a release

signed by the Special Adviser to Makinde on Media, Sulaimon Olanrewaju, it noted: “We have read the Presidency’s response to Governor Seyi Makinde’s statement on the Federal government’s withholding of NLNG dividends due to states and local governments. “The response sidestepped the central issue: the Nigeria Governors’ Forum (NGF), with the Federal government’s support, engaged a consultant to reconcile NLNG dividend payments.

“The exercise identified a shortfall of about N9 trillion due to states and local governments. The Federal government accepted the findings.

“The report remains in the custody of both the Federal government and the NGF.

“We trust the Presidency will not deny its existence. “Governor Makinde is the NGF’s incumbent Vice-

Chairman.

“The Presidency stated that NLNG had paid \$21.5 billion in dividends into the Federation Account since inception, including \$3 billion received under the current administration. But it did not explain how these funds were disbursed”.

“Have states and local governments received their shares? How much did they receive, and how were those amounts calculated? What happened to the \$3 billion received under this administration?

“Governor Makinde conducts public discourse with decorum and does not make unfounded claims or quote figures without a basis.

“We remain ready to provide further clarification while we urge the presidency to address the substance of the matter,” Makinde’s statement added.

Atiku a True Pan-Nigerian Leader, Deserves 2027 Electoral Victory – ADC-PCC

The African Democratic Congress (ADC) Presidential Campaign Council (ADC-PCC) has described its presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, as a true Pan-Nigerian leader and a detribalised statesman deserving of victory in the January 16, 2027 presidential election. The Director of Media and Publicity of the ADC-PCC, Kola Ologbondiyan, stated this in Abuja at the weekend while receiving the leadership of the Grassroots Mobilization Network (GMN), led by its National Coordinator, Engr. Sadiq Abubakar Adamu Lwafu, during a visit to his office.

Lwafu said the organisation was embarking on a nationwide mobilisation campaign to rally Nigerians across the country behind Atiku's presidential ambition and ensure the defeat of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in the 2027 election.

He lamented that the Tinubu administration had subjected Nigerians to severe economic hardship, worsening insecurity and what he described as an increasingly authoritarian political environment.

"President Tinubu's administration has made life so difficult for Nigerians. The hardship is too much. Nigerians are now living in fear of



insecurity. It appears that governance has collapsed, as a group of greedy politicians have ganged up against the poor, and democracy has been abused and replaced with an authoritarian regime," Lwafu said.

He warned that Nigeria was drifting towards the path of failure like come African countries where, in his view, democratic institutions had been weakened and political power increasingly concentrated.

"The only man who can rescue Nigeria is Atiku Abubakar, and we are on a mission to ensure that the APC is thrown out of power through the ballot box next year," he added.

Lwafu described the ADC as a credible platform bringing

experienced politicians, patriotic Nigerians and leaders committed to national development.

"ADC is the only platform with great minds and patriotic leaders. Look at our National Chairman, David Mark; Atiku Abubakar; Rotimi Amaechi; Tunde Ogbeha; Rauf Aregbesola; Kashim Imam; Senator Austin Akobundu; Senator Aminu Tambuwal; Emeka Ihedioha; Ralph Nwosu; Dele Momodu; Dino Melaye and others.

"These are not jokers like what we have in the APC. Look at the characters in the APC and compare: propagandists, deceitful, pretenders and certificate forgers," he said.

Responding, Ologbondiyan commended the GMN

leadership for its commitment to national development and grassroots mobilisation, insisting that the difference between Atiku and President Bola Ahmed Tinubu was evident in their respective approaches to national leadership and political inclusion.

According to him, Atiku represents a unifying national figure whose political relationships and personal outlook transcend ethnic, religious and regional boundaries.

"In the last three years, Tinubu has shown clannishness in governance. His appointments, his policies, his body language—everything screams sectionalism and exclusion.

"Atiku Abubakar, on the

other hand, is a natural Nigerian devoid of ethnic, religious or sectional inclination. He is a leader for all tribes and regions", Ologbondiyan said.

He argued that Atiku's family, business and political relationships reflected the diversity of Nigeria and demonstrated his capacity to unite people across the country's multiple ethnic and religious identities.

"Check the people around him over the years. Take a close look at his immediate family, his businesses and his political associates. Atiku represents Nigeria and Nigeria is in him.

"He is married across the Niger, his children represent our diversity, and his associates cut across every tribe and religion. That is the definition of a Pan-Nigerian leader," he said.

Ologbondiyan also accused the APC of exploiting Nigeria's ethnic and religious differences for political advantage rather than promoting national unity and addressing the welfare of citizens.

"The APC has so much capitalised on our fault lines to divide the country. "They don't care about the welfare of the people as far as they can remain in power.

"They are not concerned about our unity but about winning elections against the peace and harmony of the nation," he further alleged.

He also accused the ruling party of deploying divisive political strategies to retain power, expressing confidence that Nigerians would reject such an approach at the next general election.

"No government in the history of our country has ever used divisive means to hold on to power more than the APC. But Nigerians are wiser now and ready to kick them out through the ballot," he said.

The ADC-PCC Director maintained that the administration's alleged sectional approach had failed to translate into improved governance or better living conditions for Nigerians.

He argued that the government could not justify its approach to national leadership

without delivering tangible results to the people.

Ologbondiyan said Atiku's record, policy proposals and commitment to economic recovery positioned him as the best suited candidate to address the country's current challenges.

"Atiku Abubakar's track record speaks for itself. Nigeria is at a crossroads and needs Atiku for the task ahead. He is the only one with a clear blueprint for our economic recovery," he said.

On fuel subsidy, Ologbondiyan said an Atiku administration would restore the policy under a transparent and properly managed framework designed to protect vulnerable Nigerians and stimulate production.

"Atiku is going to bring back subsidy in a transparent and well-managed manner that will directly benefit the poor and stimulate production.

"Other candidates do not have solutions to the challenges confronting us. Ask other candidates about fuel subsidy and they will not give you a straight answer; it will be full of reprobate, back and forth and incoherent policy somersaults. Atiku is clear, consistent and prepared," he added.

The ADC-PCC assured the GMN that the council remained committed to working with patriotic Nigerians and grassroots organisations genuinely interested in ending the APC misrule, restoring public confidence in governance and rebuilding the country.



2026 CAF Awards In Lagos: Governor Sanwo-Olu Pledges Full Support For Dec 7

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, has pledged the state government's full support for the successful hosting of the 2026 Confederation of African Football Awards in Lagos on December 7.

Sanwo-Olu gave the assurance while receiving a CAF delegation led by the Project Lead for the CAF Awards and CAF General Assembly, Dr Christian Emeruwa, during a courtesy visit to Lagos House, Marina, on Sunday.

According to a statement issued on Sunday by the Governor's Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Gboyega Akosile, the governor assured the delegation that key arrangements, including security, logistics, branding and venue access, would receive the necessary attention.

The statement partly read, "The Governor of Lagos State, Mr Babajide Sanwo-Olu, has pledged the State Government's full support for the successful hosting of the prestigious 2026 Confederation of African Football (CAF) Awards in Lagos on December 7.

"Governor Sanwo-Olu assured a CAF delegation visiting Lagos that key arrangements, including security, logistics, branding and venue access, would receive the



necessary attention.

"He gave the assurance while receiving the delegation, led by the Project Lead for the CAF Awards and CAF General Assembly, Dr Christian Emeruwa, during a courtesy visit at Lagos House, Marina, on Sunday.

"The Governor described Lagos as a major commercial, cultural, entertainment and technology hub in Africa, highlighting its diversity, youthful population and economic significance as key assets for hosting international events.

"He said Lagos had committed to giving CAF officials, football stakeholders and international visitors

a positive experience, adding that the event would provide an opportunity to showcase the state's hospitality and capacity to host major international engagements."

According to the statement, Emeruwa said the CAF delegation was in Nigeria for a five-day mission to inspect proposed venues and assess preparations for the CAF Awards in Lagos and the CAF General Assembly in Abuja.

He described the CAF Awards as one of the continent's major annual non-competitive football events, recognising outstanding players, officials and national teams for their achievements during the

year under review.

"The CAF Project lead noted that the December 7 ceremony would attract prominent figures in African and international football, including representatives of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), as well as other international guests.

"Emeruwa called for support from the Lagos State Signage and Advertisement Agency (LASAA) to facilitate publicity and branding across the state. He also requested that the security operations be led by the Lagos State Government in coordination with CAF's security team", the statement concluded.

Tinubu Mourns Ex-Envoy Patrick Dele Cole

President Bola Tinubu has expressed sadness over the death of Ambassador Patrick Dele Cole, describing him as a distinguished diplomat, journalist, politician and public servant.

Cole died at 86.

In a statement on Saturday, Tinubu said Cole devoted his life to national service and brought distinction to his work in diplomacy, journalism and politics.

“His career reflected the enduring value of dialogue, tact, mutual respect and the pursuit of shared interests in advancing

national development and international cooperation,” the President said.

Tinubu noted Cole’s contributions to Nigeria’s media landscape, particularly as Managing Director of the Daily Times, where he upheld the role of the press in holding public officials accountable, speaking truth to power and strengthening democratic governance.

“His legacy in journalism and public life remains an enduring part of our national story,” he said.



The President said at 86, Cole witnessed defining moments in Nigeria’s history and contributed to national development, adding that his life stands as a testament to experience, principled engagement and commitment to public good.

Tinubu extended condolences to Cole’s family, friends,

professional associates and all whose lives he touched, praying that memories of his remarkable life will bring comfort and strength.

“May Almighty God grant Ambassador Cole eternal rest and give his family and all who mourn him the fortitude to bear this profound loss,” he said.

Kogi LG Poll: APC Wins All 21 LG Seats, 239 Councils

The ruling All Progressives Congress has won all 21 chairmanship seats and 239 councillorship positions contested in the Kogi State Local Government elections held on Saturday, October 17, 2026.

The Chairman, Kogi State Independent Electoral Commission, Mamman Nda-Eri, announced the results at a press conference at the Commission’s headquarters in Lokoja, the state capital, on Sunday, declaring APC candidates across all 21 LGAs and 239 electoral wards in the state as winners of the contest.

Eri said the electoral exercise covered 3,508 polling units across the state, adding that the collation of results from

all 21 LGAs had been completed.

He declared that the APC candidates emerged victorious after satisfying the requirements of the law and securing the highest number of valid votes cast in the respective contests.

“Having fulfilled all requirements of the law and having scored the highest number of valid votes cast, the candidates of the All Progressives Congress (APC) are hereby declared winners and returned elected as Chairmen of the 21 Local Government Areas and Councillors of the 239 Wards of Kogi State,” the KOSIEC chairman stated. The Commission said the elections were conducted in accordance with the Kogi State Independent



Electoral Commission Law, 2025, and the Electoral Act, 2022.

Nda-Eri described the exercise as peaceful, free, fair and credible, commending political parties, security agencies, accredited election observers, journalists, traditional rulers, civil society organisations and voters for their cooperation before, during and after the polls.

He disclosed that the Commission had undertaken voter education programmes and stakeholder

engagements ahead of the election, while providing what he described as a level playing field for the 12 political parties cleared to participate in the exercise.

According to him, no petition challenging the electoral process was received before or during the election.

The KOSIEC chairman added that Certificates of Return would be issued to the elected chairmen and councillors at a later date, which would be communicated in due course.

2027: South-East APM Chairmen Reject Makinde's Campaign Coordinators

The state chairmen of the Allied Peoples Movement in the South-East have rejected the appointment of zonal and state coordinators for the Seyi Makinde/Daura Presidential Campaign Council, describing the arrangement as one that sidelines the party's recognised state executives.

The chairmen made their position known in a communiqué read by the Enugu State Chairman, Ken Ikeh, at a press conference in Abuja after their meeting on Sunday. The communiqué was signed by the state chairmen of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states: Victor Umunna, Uzochukwu Eminent, Ohakam Kate, Ken Ikeh and Clinton Edoziem, respectively, who all pledged their support for Makinde's presidential ambition and his 'RESET Nigeria' agenda.

However, they objected to the creation of coordination structures without proper consultation.

"Notwithstanding our support for the presidential ambition of our party and our commitment to the RESET Nigeria Agenda, we hereby express our strongest objection to the appointment or imposition of zonal and state coordinators



for the Makinde/Daura Presidential Campaign Council in a manner that sidelines or usurps the responsibilities of the duly recognised state chairmen and established party structures," the communiqué said.

The chairmen described such an arrangement as inconsistent with the party's principles, particularly where there is inadequate consultation with state chairmen.

"We consider any such arrangement, particularly where it operates without adequate consultation with the relevant state chairmen, to be inconsistent with the principles of internal democracy, collective responsibility, and respect for the party's established legal framework.

"It is, therefore, counterproductive to establish parallel structures that could create confusion, undermine

existing leadership, encourage unnecessary rivalry, and weaken the unity required for a successful presidential campaign," the statement added.

They appealed to the party's presidential flagbearer and the APM national leadership to dissolve the state coordinatorship structures.

The chairmen also asked that all campaign materials meant for mobilisation in the states, including vehicles, branded equipment and publicity materials, be handed over to the respective state chairmen for distribution. "We further appeal that all campaign materials, whether vehicles, branded campaign equipment, publicity materials, logistical resources, or other items intended for political mobilisation within the various states, be made available to the respective State Chairmen

for effective distribution and utilisation.

"Campaign resources are most effective when entrusted to recognised party structures that possess the capacity to deploy them strategically, transparently, and in accordance with the peculiar needs of each state," they stated.

They urged the party's National Leader, Senator Bala Mohammed, and Makinde to intervene urgently, warning that the continued operation of parallel campaign structures could generate unnecessary tension, weaken the party's organisational cohesion, and undermine the progress already recorded. The chairmen warned that failure to address their grievances immediately and satisfactorily could lead them to reconsider their continued participation in the present campaign arrangement.

2027: NDC Won't Withdraw For ADC, Other Parties — Kwankwaso

The Vice Presidential candidate of the Nigeria Democratic Congress, Senator Rabiul Kwankwaso, has ruled out any possibility of the party's presidential ticket withdrawing from the 2027 general election in favour of the African Democratic Congress or any other political party. Kwankwaso stated this on Sunday in a post on his verified Facebook page, expressing concern over the conduct of the ADC Presidential Campaign Council.

The ADC-PCC accused Kwankwaso of advancing President Bola Tinubu's political interests by calling on former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar to step down for Peter Obi ahead of the 2027 presidential election.

The council's Director of Media and Publicity, Kola Ologbondiyan, made the allegation in a statement on Friday while reacting to Kwankwaso's interview on Channels Television.

He described Kwankwaso's intervention as self-serving and capable of deepening divisions within the opposition.

Ologbondiyan questioned why Kwankwaso was directing his attention at opposition leaders rather than challenging the Tinubu administration, which the ADC-PCC said Nigerians were eager to vote out over economic



hardship, hunger, poverty, and insecurity.

However, in his statement, Kwankwaso accused the campaign team of directing unnecessary attacks at him, the NDC presidential candidate, Peter Obi, and the party.

He alleged that rather than concentrating on presenting the credentials and policy proposals of its own candidate, the ADC campaign team had resorted to making claims suggesting that the NDC was working for the ruling All Progressives Congress.

Kwankwaso also dismissed suggestions that the NDC might withdraw from the presidential race at the last minute to support the ADC candidate, describing such claims as unfounded.

“Let me state clearly and unequivocally: we will not withdraw our candidature for the ADC or any other party. We remain confident in our capacity, competence, and

readiness to lead Nigeria,” he said.

He warned that similar claims could be circulated on the eve of the election to mislead NDC supporters, insisting that the party would remain in the contest.

“The OK ticket is neither working for nor acting on behalf of the APC or any of its candidates,” Kwankwaso said, adding that there was neither a reason nor any possibility of withdrawing in favour of the ADC candidate.

The former Kano State governor urged the ADC-PCC to focus on addressing allegations reportedly levelled against its candidate by Vice-President Kashim Shettima rather than targeting the NDC leadership.

He also criticised both the APC-led government and the ADC, arguing that neither offered the alternative Nigeria needed.

According to him, the

NDC presidential ticket, which he referred to as the “OK ticket,” is committed to national unity and addressing the country's challenges across critical sectors.

He listed security, education, agriculture, infrastructure, healthcare and the economy among the areas requiring urgent attention.

Kwankwaso maintained that the ticket had the capacity, credibility and support needed to pursue its proposed agenda, with backing across northern and southern Nigeria.

He described the ticket as one committed to healing national divisions and bringing Nigerians together while tackling the country's major social and economic challenges. Kwankwaso urged party supporters and other well-meaning Nigerians to remain committed to the party and its participation in the presidential contest.

Only 1.03% Of Residents Recieves Water From Lagos State Network — LWC

The Lagos Water Corporation says its water network serves 34,424 registered households, representing an estimated 1.03 per cent of the state's 20 million residents.

The corporation, through the Deputy Director, Corporate Affairs and Brand Management, Mr Rasaq Anifowoshe, disclosed this in an exclusive interview with the News Agency of Nigeria in Lagos, NAN reports on Sunday.

Anifowoshe said this while responding to questions bordering on the LWC's water coverage and expansion plans.

"Using an estimated average household size of six persons, the number of residents associated with these connections is 206,444, equivalent to approximately 1.03 per cent of the state's estimated population of 20 million," he said.

Anifowoshe disclosed that the corporation had an installed water production capacity of approximately 210 million gallons per day.

This, he said, was against an estimated state's daily water demand of approximately 540 MGD, as stated in the Lagos State Water Supply Master Plan. "A review of the corporation's 2025 production records indicates an aggregate



annual production of approximately 2,633.22 million gallons, equivalent to an average daily production of about 7.21 MGD.

"Based on these records, actual daily production is three per cent of the installed capacity," he said.

NAN reports that the above figures highlight a substantial gap between installed capacity, actual output and estimated water demand across Lagos State.

Anifowoshe identified ageing distribution pipelines, increasing demand arising from population growth and rapid urbanisation, as well as the need to rehabilitate and expand existing water infrastructure as the major constraints.

NAN reports that these challenges affect the corporation's ability to extend public water supply, particularly to

communities relying on boreholes and private vendors.

Across Lagos, residents spend thousands of naira on alternative water sources as irregular public supply and inaccessible connections increase household costs.

Some Lagos residents interviewed by the NAN across Iponri, Oworonshoki, Costain, Apapa Road and Ebute Metta revealed concerns about unreliable supply, failed facilities and inadequate water pressure. At the Iponri Housing Estate, Mr Adebayo Solomon said his household spent about N1,500 daily on vendor-supplied water, amounting to N45,000 monthly.

Solomon said the expenditure would total approximately N547,500 if sustained throughout the year.

He said electricity shortages sometimes

disrupted water availability, forcing his household to manage stored supplies or pay higher rates, adding that he would welcome an LWC connection if it provided regular supply and reduced dependence on vendors.

Another Iponri resident, Mr Abdulkareem Ibrahim, said he relied on public boreholes provided by philanthropists because his community received no LWC supply.

"I depend on public water, the one provided by philanthropists. I fetch it in the morning or when I return from work at night," he said.

Ibrahim said the boreholes helped him avoid direct water expenses, although power interruptions sometimes disrupt pumping, forcing him to buy from vendors.

"I am just happy that we have water at all, all thanks to our magnanimous

neighbours,” he said. In Oworonshoki, Mrs Amanda Ogbodo said she spent between N2,200 and N3,600 weekly on vendor-delivered borehole water. Ogbodo said the

expenditure amounts to between N8,800 and N14,400 over four weeks. She said the LWC water had flowed more consistently in parts of her area over the preceding

four months, mainly from Friday afternoons into Saturday, among other interviewed residents in the state.

Residents’ accounts show how irregular supply,

failed facilities and inadequate pressure leave households paying for alternatives, including in communities with existing public connections.

Second Term: Oyeibanji Promises Prosperity For Ekiti

Ekiti State Governor, Biodun Oyeibanji, has thanked President Bola Tinubu, the people of Ekiti State and Nigerians at large for their support and goodwill during his inauguration for a second term in office on Friday. This is just as he promised shared prosperity for the state in the second term.

Oyeibanji said he was “deeply humbled by the overwhelming show of love, solidarity and goodwill that accompanied the historic occasion.”

This was contained in a statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Yinka Oyebo, made available in Ado Ekiti on Sunday.

He said the successful inauguration marked the beginning of another phase of service to the people of Ekiti State.

He reaffirmed his administration’s commitment to building on the achievements of its first term and pursuing policies and programmes that would promote shared prosperity, inclusive development and improved living standards for all citizens of the state. “Together, we shall continue to work towards shared prosperity for all



Ekiti citizens and make our dear state the number-one destination of choice for those seeking a place to live, work, invest and relax,” Oyeibanji said.

The governor stated, “We owe Mr President a huge debt of gratitude for his love and support for Ekiti State. The impact of his policies and the resources made available to subnational governments have contributed significantly to the achievements recorded by our administration.”

He also thanked Vice President Kashim Shettima for attending the inauguration on behalf of the President and presiding over the ceremony, noting that the Vice President’s presence marked his third visit to Ekiti State in 2026. Oyeibanji also appreciated the Senate President, Senator Godswill Akpabio; Deputy Senate

President, Senator Jibrin Barau; All Progressives Congress National Chairman, Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda; and members of the party’s National Working Committee for their support and participation in the historic event.

He also thanked the state governors and deputy governors in attendance, as well as former governors of Ekiti State, Niyi Adebayo, Ayodele Fayose, Segun Oni and Dr Kayode Fayemi, for their presence and support.

He also appreciated former governors from other states, as well as National and State Assembly members who graced the event.

He thanked the judiciary in Ekiti State, under the leadership of the Chief Judge, Justice Adekanye Ogunmoye, for its support, with particular

acknowledgement of Justice Ogunmoye for administering the oaths of office and allegiance during the inauguration, as well as the retired Presiding Justice of the Court of Appeal, Justice Oyebisi Omoleye, for her presence and support.

Oyeibanji also thanked traditional rulers, including the Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi; the Chairman, Ekiti State Council of Traditional Rulers and the Ogoga of Ikere Ekiti, Oba Adejimi Adu-Alagbado; and the Ewi of Ado Ekiti, Oba Adeyemo Adejuyigbe, as well as other eminent personalities, political leaders and co-contestants in the 2026 Ekiti governorship election who honoured him with their presence at the inauguration.

Aiyedatiwa Renames Ondo Event Centre After Mimiko

Ondo State Governor, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, has renamed the International Centre for Culture and Events, popularly known as The Dome, in Akure, after former Governor Olusegun Mimiko. The facility will henceforth be known as the Dr. Olusegun Mimiko International Centre for Culture and Events, in recognition of the former governor who constructed it during his

administration.

According to a statement issued by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor of Ondo State, Ebenezer Adeniyen, Aiyedatiwa announced the renaming on Saturday, at a birthday celebration organised in honour of Mimiko in Abuja.

“The facility would now officially bear the former governor’s name,” the statement read.

Mimiko governed the state from 2009 to 2017,



during which the cultural and events centre was built.

The renaming places the former governor’s name on the facility, which was established during his tenure as part of the state’s infrastructure for cultural activities and public

events.

The statement confirmed that the International Centre for Culture and Events in Akure would henceforth be called the Dr. Olusegun Mimiko International Centre for Culture and Events.

World Maritime Day: NIWA Reaffirms Commitment to Safer Waterways, Excellence

The Acting Managing Director of the National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA), Alhaji Yusuf Girei has reaffirmed the Authority’s commitment to translating maritime policies into practical results that ensure safer waterways, reliable infrastructure and sustainable economic growth. Delivering his goodwill message on the occasion of the 2026 World Maritime Day celebration, Alhaji Girei congratulated stakeholders and commended their dedication to advancing Nigeria’s maritime sector. This year’s celebration, themed “From policy to practice: Powering excellence,” was graced by the Honourable Minister of Marine and Blue

Economy, His Excellency Dr. Adegboyega Oyetola, CON; the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Mrs. Fatima Sugra Mahmood, FSM, MCIPM; Chairperson and Keynote Speaker, Mrs. Mfon Usoro; Directors and Heads of Departments, CEOs of Parastatals under the Ministry, members of the diplomatic corps, industry stakeholders and the media.

According to Alhaji Yusuf Girei, “This year’s theme reminds us that strong policies create value only when they are translated into meaningful action. In the maritime sector, that means safer waterways, reliable infrastructure, environmental stewardship and services that support trade and economic growth.”

He noted that NIWA



remains committed to working with State Governments, industry stakeholders, host communities and development partners to improve navigation, strengthen safety standards, modernise facilities and protect the waterways on which many livelihoods depend.

He stressed that excellence in the maritime sector is a shared responsibility that requires skilled professionals, effective regulation, investment in innovation and a culture that places safety and sustainability at the heart

of operations.

“By working together, we can build a maritime sector that is competitive, inclusive and prepared for the future,” he added.

He commended President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the Honourable Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, the Permanent Secretary and all stakeholders whose commitment keeps the maritime industry moving, and urged participants to turn shared ambition into practical results.

In a highlight of the celebration, the Acting Managing Director joined in the award presentation

for the Primary School Children's Essay Competition category sponsored by NIWA. The first position went to Idris Jibril Oladimeji of Holy Cross Primary

School, Lagos, who won N200,000 cash and a laptop computer. The second position went to Suleiman Aisha of St. Paul's Anglican School, Lagos Island, who

received N150,000 and a laptop computer, while the third position went to Yahaya Aliyah of St. Mathias Girls Primary School, Lagos, who received N100,000 cash

and a laptop computer. On behalf of the Board, Management and Staff of NIWA, he wished all stakeholders a successful World Maritime Day celebration.

2027: Tambuwal Debunks Defecting To APC

The media office of former Sokoto State Governor and Senator Aminu Tambuwal has dismissed reports suggesting that the African Democratic Congress chieftain is planning to defect to the All Progressives Congress. It described the claims as false and baseless.

The office said Tambuwal remained committed to the ADC and was focused on strengthening the party and mobilising support ahead of the 2027 general elections.

In a statement issued on Monday, the Special Adviser on Media and Strategy to the senator, Prince Daniel, said there was no plan for Tambuwal to return to the APC, urging the public to disregard the speculation circulating on social media.

"For the avoidance of doubt, Senator Tambuwal has no plans to join the APC. Suggestions to the contrary are false, baseless and should be disregarded," the statement said.

The denial followed the circulation of photographs and video clips on social media, which reportedly fuelled speculation about a possible political



realignment involving the former governor.

However, Tambuwal's media office argued that his interactions with politicians across party lines should not be interpreted as evidence of an impending defection.

"Political civility is no proof of political realignment. Exchanging greetings or interacting with members of another party does not amount to negotiating a change of allegiance," Daniel said.

The statement described Tambuwal as a statesman with longstanding relationships across political divides, adding that such relationships were built over years of public service and mutual respect.

It maintained that his political allegiance remained with the ADC, where he was committed to building cooperation and mobilising Nigerians

ahead of the next general elections.

"Senator Tambuwal remains firmly committed to the ADC. His focus is on strengthening the party, building broad cooperation and mobilising Nigerians ahead of the 2027 general elections," the statement added.

The media office also urged political supporters, media organisations and social media commentators to verify information before publishing reports about the senator's political activities.

"Speculation must never be presented as fact," it warned.

The office further argued that public discourse should focus on the country's economic difficulties, security challenges and governance concerns rather than unsubstantiated claims about politicians' party affiliations.

Tambuwal, who governed Sokoto State from 2015 to 2023, was elected senator representing Sokoto South Senatorial District in 2023, the year he completed his two terms as governor.

A former Speaker of the House of Representatives, he has remained a prominent figure in Nigeria's opposition politics and previously contested the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) presidential ticket.

His move to the ADC places him among opposition figures positioning themselves ahead of the 2027 general elections.

The latest denial comes amid growing political realignments and discussions over possible alliances among opposition parties seeking to challenge President Bola Tinubu and the ruling APC in 2027.

Missing N126bn Electoral Funds: SERAP Sues INEC Over Failure To Account For Funds

The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project has sued the Independent National Electoral Commission over its failure to account for more than N126.46bn appropriated for electoral operations, which it alleged was diverted, lost, mismanaged or otherwise unaccounted for.

SERAP is seeking an order of mandamus compelling INEC to disclose details of the expenditure, utilisation and disbursement of the funds, which were meant for the procurement of ballot boxes, electoral devices and materials, result sheets, vehicles and accreditation devices, as well as audit and consultancy services. The suit, marked FHC/ABJ/CS/2507/2026, was filed last week at the Federal High Court in Abuja, according to a statement issued by SERAP Deputy Director, Kolawole Oluwadare, on Sunday.

No date has been fixed for the hearing of the suit.

However, the organisation said the allegations were contained in the 2023 audited report of the Auditor-General of the Federation, published on August 7, 2026. The alleged infractions covered periods between January and December 2022 and, in some cases, extended to December 31,



2023.

In the suit filed by its lawyers, Kolawole Oluwadare, Kehinde Oyewumi and Andrew Nwankwo, SERAP is seeking “an order of mandamus to direct and compel INEC to promptly disclose detailed information on the expenditure, utilisation and disbursement of over ₦126.46 billion appropriated for electoral operations, including the procurement of election materials, equipment, and vehicles.”

It is also seeking “an order of mandamus to direct and compel INEC to disclose a full financial and documentary account of the over ₦126 billion appropriated for electoral operations, including amounts released and paid, payment beneficiaries, details of contractors and their beneficial owners.”

SERAP argued, “Electoral resources are public resources. INEC must

be able to account for every naira, demonstrate that it was lawfully spent and show that it served the purposes for which it was appropriated. These allegations are particularly disturbing given the constitutional importance of INEC and the fact that the expenditure concerns resources appropriated for the administration of Nigeria’s electoral system. “With the 2027 general elections approaching, transparency and accountability in the management of these funds are essential to safeguarding public confidence in the electoral process and ensuring that resources intended to support credible elections are properly utilised.

“These findings by the Auditor-General suggest a grave violation of the public trust and the provisions of the Nigerian Constitution 1999 (as amended), national anti-corruption laws, and the

country’s obligations under the UN Convention against Corruption.

“Democracy requires an informed citizenry. That principle is directly relevant to public expenditure by an electoral management body: citizens are entitled to know how resources entrusted to INEC for the conduct of elections have been used.”

According to the suit, the Auditor-General reported that INEC “irregularly paid” more than ₦112bn (₦112,155,597,845.00) “for ballot boxes, electoral devices, items and materials without competitive bidding or a BPP Certificate of No Objection. The Auditor-General found ‘no evidence that the items were procured.’ The ‘contracts were awarded to companies whose competences, experience, capacities, addresses and factory locations were unknown.’ He is

concerned that the money 'may have been diverted.' He wants the money recovered."

The suit also alleged that INEC "paid over ₦1 billion [₦1,058,925,000.00] for Toyota Prado TXL 2021 Model without advertisement, competitive bidding, bid evaluation or a BPP Certificate of No Objection. The Auditor-General fears that the money 'may have been lost' and that the contracts 'may have been inflated.'"

On payments for electoral materials, SERAP stated that INEC "paid over ₦3 billion [₦3,136,806,050.00] to four contractors for ballot guides, sensitive

materials and result sheets before the contracts were awarded, with no evidence of payment. The Auditor-General is concerned that the money 'may have been diverted.' He wants the money recovered and remitted to the treasury."

The organisation further alleged that INEC "paid over ₦9 billion [₦9,245,965,502.60] for 22 contracts for similar goods and services", with the contracts "split to circumvent procurement procedures and awarded on the same day."

It said the Auditor-General reported that the money "may have been lost" and that "the payment may have been made for items not supplied."

On payments to accounting firms, SERAP stated that INEC "paid over ₦129 million [₦129,375,000.00] to 19 accounting firms for financial audit services without evidence of utilisation or requests and expenditure by the consultants. The Auditor-General raised concerns that the money 'may have been diverted.' He wants the money recovered and remitted to the treasury." The suit also stated that INEC "paid over ₦504 million [₦504,492,641.00] for accreditation devices without due procurement process. The 'APG had expired before the security licence key

was delivered and the software was valid for only four months, raising questions about economy and value for money.' The Auditor-General also raised concerns that the money 'may have been diverted.'"

On other alleged procurement irregularities, SERAP said INEC "paid over ₦235 million [₦235,103,000.00] to unqualified contractors for sleeping mats and digital archiving. The Auditor-General identified 'serious concerns regarding the eligibility and capacity of the contractors', and raised concerns that the money 'may have been lost.' He wants the money recovered."

FG To Deploy 1m CNG Vehicles To Cut Transport Costs

The Federal Government has renewed its drive to deploy one million compressed natural gas-powered vehicles across the country, directing officials to accelerate investments in refuelling infrastructure and vehicle conversions to reduce transportation costs.

The Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), Ekperikpe Ekpo, gave the directive in Abuja over the weekend while receiving progress reports from the Presidential Initiative on Compressed Natural Gas and Electric Vehicles and the Decade of Gas Secretariat. Ekpo said the government

must translate its autogas policy into tangible benefits for Nigerians, particularly lower transport fares following the removal of petrol subsidy.

According to a statement issued on Sunday by the minister's spokesman, Louis Ibah, Ekpo tasked the leadership of both bodies with identifying critical interventions, expanding infrastructure and strengthening programmes to increase nationwide adoption of compressed natural gas.

The statement read, "The Federal Government has pledged to intensify efforts to promote compressed natural gas



as a cheaper alternative fuel for transportation, with a renewed focus on accelerating the rollout of one million CNG-powered vehicles across the country."

"To this end, the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), Rt. Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo, has tasked the leadership of the Presidential Initiative on Compressed Natural Gas and Electric Vehicles and the Decade of Gas Secretariat to focus on

critical interventions, step up investments, expand CNG infrastructure and strengthen programmes to drive nationwide adoption."

The renewed push comes amid persistent concerns over the cost of public transportation following the removal of petrol subsidy in 2023, which increased the cost of running petrol-powered vehicles and placed additional pressure on household incomes.

Nigeria Spends \$1.19bn On Food Imports In Six Months

Nigeria spent \$1.19bn in foreign exchange on food imports in the first half of 2026, an increase of \$121.52m or 11.41 per cent from the \$1.07bn recorded in the corresponding period of 2025.

This is despite the Federal Government's efforts to boost local food production. This was revealed in an analysis of the Central Bank of Nigeria's Quarterly Statistical Bulletin for the second quarter of 2026, which showed a sustained demand for FX to finance food imports.

A breakdown of the figures showed that forex utilisation for food imports stood at \$232.05m in January 2026, up from \$213.11m in the corresponding month of 2025, representing an increase of 8.89 per cent. However, spending declined by 22.90 per cent to \$150.87m in February from \$195.68m a year earlier, before recovering to \$153.73m in March, compared with \$141.30m in March 2025.

The sharpest increase occurred in April, when the amount surged by 54.28 per cent to \$217.74m from \$141.13m in the corresponding period of the previous year.

In May, forex utilisation rose by 8.59 per cent to \$220.26m from \$202.83m, while June recorded a 23.92 per cent increase to

\$212m from \$171.08m.

Further analysis showed that food import forex spending increased in five of the six months under review, with February recording the only year-on-year decline.

On a quarterly basis, the amount declined by 2.57 per cent from \$550.79m in the first quarter of 2025 to \$536.65m in the corresponding period of 2026.

However, the trend reversed in the second quarter, with spending rising by 26.38 per cent from \$514.34m to \$650m. This indicates that the increase recorded in H1 of 2026 was driven by higher FX utilisation between April and June, which more than offset the decline in the preceding quarter.

The development comes as the Federal Government continues to pursue agricultural policies aimed at expanding domestic food production and reducing dependence on imported commodities. The President of the Association of Small Business Owners of Nigeria, Femi Egbesola, recently explained that insecurity and low technological adoption in agriculture were among the main reasons Nigeria continued to rely on food imports.

Egbesola said, "Most of the farmers are no longer on the farms because



of insecurity. Many farmlands have been deserted. That is where the primary products come from. It is when the farmers plant and harvest. That is when the manufacturers and other users can buy from them and use them as their inputs. This time, many of the farms are deserted."

He noted that Nigeria's agricultural productivity remained well below global standards due to outdated tools and practices.

He urged the government to integrate technology into farming, upgrade equipment for smallholder farmers, and invest in agricultural mechanisation to close the production gap.

The Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi, earlier warned that Nigeria's decision to open its market to food imports, including rice from Thailand, wiped out local rice mills and left banks grappling with bad loans from investments in the agricultural value chain.

He said that although the policy helped lower food prices following the removal of the petrol subsidy, it undermined domestic production and threatened long-term food security, urging the government to support poor households without exposing local farmers and businesses to overwhelming competition from imports. The emir spoke at the Sustainable Table Series held at Federal Palace Hotel, Victoria Island, Lagos on Thursday, where he highlighted the need for governments to prioritise nutrition, education, infrastructure and productive investment to improve economic development.

Sanusi argued that making food affordable for poor households should not come at the expense of domestic production, adding that the government could support vulnerable citizens without exposing local farmers and agricultural businesses.

Tinubu Committed To LG Autonomy — Uzodimma

The Chairman of the Progressive Governors Forum, Hope Uzodimma, has “reaffirmed President Bola Tinubu’s commitment to Local Government autonomy, institutional strengthening and financial viability, amid calls for reforms to improve grassroots administration.”

Uzodimma, who is also the Imo State Governor, gave the assurance in Abuja at the 2026 General Assembly of the Association of Local Governments of Nigeria, where he said effective LG administration remained crucial to translating government policies into tangible benefits for citizens.

According to a statement issued on Sunday by the media contact of the Association of Local Governments of Nigeria, Obiora Orji, Uzodimma, who attended the meeting alongside the Minister of Innovation, Science and Technology, Kingsley Udeh, said the Federal Government’s Renewed Hope Agenda was designed to extend to the third tier of government. “He pledged the President’s support for issues affecting local governments, particularly their autonomy, institutional capacity and fiscal viability,” the statement read. The assurance comes



amid continuing debates over the implementation of local government autonomy and the ability of councils to exercise their constitutional responsibilities and deliver essential services at the grassroots.

The Supreme Court, in a landmark judgment delivered on July 11, 2024, affirmed the financial autonomy of Nigeria’s 774 LGAs and ordered that allocations from the Federation Account be paid directly to democratically elected local government councils rather than being controlled by state governments.

However, the implementation of the judgment has remained a major issue in discussions about strengthening local government administration, particularly regarding direct allocations, the conduct of council elections and the capacity

of councils to manage public funds effectively.

The ALGON General Assembly, the association’s highest decision-making organ, was presided over by its National President, Bello Lawal, and attended by representatives of LGAs across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory. In his address, Lawal said the gathering demonstrated the association’s commitment to strengthening local administration and repositioning councils within Nigeria’s governance structure. The assembly reviewed reports on projects, programmes and activities undertaken since its previous general assembly in March 2021, while deliberating on challenges affecting the association’s operations and the effective functioning of local governments.

It also considered and approved the association’s

annual budgets, adopted reports presented by its principal officers and discussed proposed amendments to provisions of its constitution that members said were hindering effective administration.

According to the statement, the proposed amendments were approved through a resolution supported by an absolute majority of members of the assembly. The meeting further resolved to reconstitute the association’s Board of Trustees to fill vacancies created by the deaths of some members, in accordance with its constitutional provisions. The assembly also approved a change in the designation of the association’s administrative head from Secretary-General to Director-General, as part of efforts to strengthen the efficiency of its national secretariat.

Former Delta State Gov Emmanuel Uduaghan Dies at 71

A former Governor of Delta State, Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan is dead.

He died after a brief illness at the age of 71.

The Uduaghan family announced his death in a statement signed by Toju Andre Uduaghan, on Monday.

The statement, titled, 'ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PASSING OF HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. CHIEF EMMANUEL EWETA UDUAGHAN', read:

"It is with hearts weighed down by immeasurable grief and profound sorrow that we announce the passing to glory of our beloved Father, Brother, Uncle, and Patriarch,

His Excellency, Dr. Chief Emmanuel Eweta Uduaghan, former Governor of Delta State, who departed this world on the morning of 19th October 2026.

"His passing has left us devastated. Words can hardly express the depth of our sorrow at the loss of a man who meant so much to our family and whose life and service touched countless others across Delta State and Nigeria.

"He was a source of strength, a father figure, a beloved brother and uncle, and a respected elder. We will deeply miss his presence and forever cherish the memories and legacy he leaves behind.

"He served as



Commissioner for Health from 1999 to 2003, Secretary to the Delta State Government from 2003 to 2007, and Governor of Delta State from 2007 to 2015. Throughout his years in public service, he demonstrated a commitment to the human and infrastructural development of Delta State.

"His passing is a profound loss to our family, the people of Delta State, and Nigeria at large. We are grateful to Almighty God for his life, his service,

and the legacy he leaves behind.

"We pray that Almighty God, in His infinite mercy, will grant his soul eternal rest and comfort our family, friends, associates, former colleagues, and all who mourn this painful loss.

"Rest well, our beloved Father, Brother, and Uncle. Your memory will forever remain in our hearts, and your legacy will endure in the lives of those you touched.

"May your gentle soul rest in perfect peace. Amen."

Scavengers Stole Wires From N3bn Power Line — Zulum

Borno State Governor, Babagana Zulum, has said metal scavengers looted all the wires purchased for a N3bn electricity distribution line linking Damaturu, Yobe State, to Maiduguri.

He said the incident, alongside other security concerns, informed the state government's decision to ban the scrap metal trade in Borno State. The governor's Senior Technical Assistant on Print and Digital Communications, Abdulrahman Bundi, said in a statement on Sunday that Zulum disclosed this while addressing business operators in Maiduguri on

Saturday.

Zulum explained that the ban was initially imposed in the overall interest of the state and was not intended to deprive operators of their livelihoods.

He stressed that the government had no personal interest in stopping their businesses, adding that the measure was aimed at protecting public assets and strengthening security.

He said, "Before the ban, hundreds of your members were killed in the process of scavenging for metals in the villages that are not yet safe for civilian activities."

He added, "It is deeply concerning to me if one



person loses his livelihood for whatever reason in Borno; believe me, there is nothing I stand to gain from banning scrap metal trade rather than addressing the serious security concerns associated with your activities."

"We spent more than N3 billion to connect an electricity distribution line from Damaturu to Maiduguri, but unfortunately we lost all the wires to the metal scavenging activities,"

Zulum recounted.

The governor further said security agencies had intelligence indicating that terrorists collaborated with scavengers to sell looted metals.

"We have security intelligence that even the insurgents use your platforms to sell looted metals. So, no responsible government will ignore such intelligence just to be politically correct," he noted.



OFALA FESTIVAL

Igwe Nnaemeka Achebe Hails Globacom

By Eric Elezuo

The Obi of Onitsha, His Majesty Igwe Alfred Nnaemeka Achebe, has commended Globacom for its unwavering commitment to the preservation and promotion of Nigeria's cultural heritage, noting that the telecommunications company's sustained support has helped transform the Ofala Festival into a world-renowned cultural celebration. Speaking on the 2026 edition of the festival, held at Ime Obi, Onitsha,

Anambra State, on Friday, the monarch paid a glowing tribute to Globacom for its longstanding role as the principal sponsor of the festival, a partnership that has spanned fifteen consecutive years since 2011. According to the monarch,

"Their partnership has transformed the festival from a palace ritual to a world-renowned cultural festival owes a great deal to purposeful partnership. Since 2011, Globacom has stood with us as our principal partner – now fifteen consecutive



years of unwavering commitment.” He added that “In good times and challenging times, Globacom has helped us preserve the authenticity of Ofala while enhancing its presentation, documentation, broadcast and global reach. They have helped take a living heritage to the global stage”.

Igwe Achebe also applauded the vision of Globacom’s Chairman, Dr Mike Adenuga Jr., whose commitment to cultural preservation, he noted, reflects a profound appreciation of the role of indigenous traditions in strengthening national identity and social cohesion.

“I thank Globacom and its Chairman, Otunba (Dr) Mike Adenuga Jr., GCON, a true man of culture, for his vision and belief that culture is not a luxury but a foundation for unity,” the monarch said.

Commenting on the theme

of this year’s festival, “Igba Mbo, Iga N’Iru” — Strive and Advance — Igwe Achebe described it as a compelling call to diligence, excellence, self-improvement and collective progress. He explained that the theme embodied the enduring spirit of the forebears who built the Onitsha kingdom on the banks of the Niger, while challenging younger generations

to preserve that legacy through enterprise, purposeful endeavour and a commitment to progress. In his goodwill message to the monarch and the people of Onitsha, Dr Adenuga described Globacom’s association with the Ofala Festival “since 2011 has been much more than a corporate partnership. It has been a relationship which we cherish deeply and regard as a privilege”.

He expressed profound appreciation to Igwe Achebe for the opportunity afforded Globacom to contribute to the preservation, celebration and wider projection of the community’s priceless cultural heritage.

He noted that the annual festival provides a valuable platform for showcasing the rich cultural traditions, dignity and enduring values of the Onitsha people to audiences across Nigeria, Africa and the wider world.

Through its longstanding partnership with Ofala, Globacom continues to demonstrate that corporate citizenship extends beyond commercial enterprise to the preservation of the cultural foundations that give communities their identity, strengthen their unity and connect generations.











The Celebration Continues, and Glo is still here for it



OFALA FESTIVAL 2026





The Oracle

PROF MIKE OZEHOME

CON, OFR, LL.D.

08094777755 (SMS Only)

Declaratory Orders (Pt. 4)

INTRODUCTION

In last week's feature, we discussed the following themes: principles guiding the grant of declarations; the burden and standard of proof in declaratory actions and the power of the court to grant declarations. This week, we shall continue from where we left off last week after which we shall discuss the meaning of parties in judicial proceedings for declarations, followed by conclusion.

POWER OF COURT TO GRANT DECLARATIONS (continues)

Paragraph G is in line with Order 23 Rule 5 of the Lagos State High Court (Civil Procedure) Rules, 1994 earlier referenced.

On the exercise of the courts' jurisdiction to make declaratory reliefs, in *CHIEF ETUEDOR UTIH & ORS. VS. JACOB UMURHURHU ONOYIVWE & ORS.* (1991) 1 NWLR (PT. 168) 476 C.A., the Court of Appeal held that the jurisdiction of the courts is derived from the Constitution and that the question as to whether



the court can exercise jurisdiction in an action would depend upon the endorsement of the claim on the writ of summons and statement of claim because it is only where a cause of action is disclosed that the courts can exercise jurisdiction unless precluded by ouster provisions.

In the above case, the court supported the position of the law prior to the 1979 Constitution which was to the effect that the courts of law had no jurisdiction to entertain any question relating to the appointment, approval of

grading and deposition of a chief.

The court went on further to draw a distinction between making a declaration of customary law relating to the selection, appointment, recognition, installation, grading, deposition or abdication of chiefs under the Chief's Law or the 1963 Constitution and making a finding simpliciter of what the customary law is. It held that while it lacked jurisdiction in respect of the former, it is eminently rested with jurisdiction in respect of the latter.

See the case of *MADUMERE* Vs.

OKAFOR (1990) 3 NWLR (PT. 138) 137 C.A., where the court held as follows concerning the power of courts to make declarations:

"The power of court to make a declaration is almost unlimited, it being limited only by its discretion and once the judge has exercised his discretion to grant the declaration sought, the higher courts would not interfere in the exercise provided it has been exercised in a judicial manner."

Therefore, the courts have an unlimited power to grant declarations

which are only limited by their discretion where its exercise will not be judicial or where it is frivolous and vexatious to do so.

See also *ORJI Vs. EMOVON* (supra) where the court held as follows:

“The power to make a binding declaration is a discretionary remedy. The court cannot make a

have the opportunity of having proper arguments in court before such declarations can be made. See also *UTIH Vs. ONOYIVWE* (1991) 1 NWLR (PT. 166) 166 S.C, where the court held as follows:

“The courts may on their discretion make declarations upon any matter whatsoever within

not original jurisdiction, may by certiorari order quash the decision of the tribunal or inferior court either for breach the rule of natural justice or for following the wrong procedure. It may also by a declaratory order render the tribunal’s decision null and void, Whether both the original and supervisory jurisdictions

The following groups of persons are parties who, in law, can sue and be sued:

- **Natural**

Persons:

These are individuals whose legal rights have been infringed and ordinarily have that legal personality to sue or even be sued.

-

Corporations:

By virtue of the Companies and Allied matters, 1990 a corporation is recognized as from the date of incorporation “as a body corporate, capable forthwith of exercising all the powers and functions of an incorporated company including the power to hold land, and having perpetual succession and a common seal...”

A corporation is, therefore, recognized as an artificial legal entity which is a separate and distinct entity from the members of the company or the organs and officers of the company. A company can, therefore, bring an action against a wrong done to the company in the company’s name (as a legal personality) and not in the name of the individuals.

See also the rule in *FISS Vs. HARBOTTE* (1843) 67 E.R. 189, which states that where a corporation can be said to be accorded standing to sue for declaration in all cases in which a natural person not subject to any disability can sue. But an officer



declaration of a right on admission or default of pleadings. A declaration of a right can only be made if the court is satisfied by evidence. Thus, a declaratory judgment can be after a proper argument and cannot be made merely on admission by the parties whether in pleadings or otherwise.”

From the foregoing, it can be said that it is not enough that the parties put down their case in the pleadings for the court to look at and make declarations; rather, the parties must thereafter

the limits of the general jurisdiction and subject to private statutory provision.”

In the same case, Justice Akpata, JSC, added as follows:

“There is a distinction between the original jurisdiction of the superior courts and their supervisory jurisdiction. Where a statute purports to exclude the jurisdiction of the High Court and vest jurisdiction in a tribunal or an inferior court, the High Court, in exercising its supervisory jurisdiction,

of the court or only the one or the other are affected by an ouster provision depends upon the wording of the provision of the statute or constitution.”

MEANING OF PARTIES

In law, it is only person who possess personality can sue and be sued. In this context, the parties referred to must not only be legal persons but persons with sufficient interest to seek a relief from the court. They may be natural or juristic bodies capable of bearing rights and duties.

of the company cannot seek a personal redress for a wrong done to the company.

There are also certain bodies which are regarded as quasi-legal or quasi-corporate bodies, for example, the Nigerian Bar Association. They are identified in law as being capable of bearing certain rights and duties.

•

Representative Actions:

It has not become possible for a group of persons, or separate individuals who are not a body corporate to sue or maintain a single action.

Where the group of individuals is such that it can be easily identified or ascertained, then they can seek declarations in a representative action.

In bringing a representative action, one has to consider what is common to the class as a whole and not what differentiates the cases of the individual members. Also, one has to consider if the relief sought was in its nature beneficial to all whom the plaintiff proposed to represent.

See the case of *ORAGBADE Vs. S. M. J. ONITIJI* (1962) ALL N.L.R, where a plaintiff brought an action for himself and on behalf of others for declaration of title over farm land. The Supreme Court held that there was no common grievance and that the relief sought was not beneficial to all whom

the plaintiff poses to represent.

• **T r a d e Unions & Partnerships:**

Trade Unions have a juristic personality upon registration.

These bodies can sue and be sued in their registered names. See the case of *TAFI VALE RAILWAY COMPANY Vs. THE A M A L G A M A T E D SOCIETY OF RAILWAY SERVANTS* (1901) A.C. 426, where the court held that the action against the defendant society which was a trade union was properly constituted and that the defendant could be sued in tort in its registered name.

In Partnerships, the rights and liabilities of the partnership is also the rights and liabilities of the partners and can be enforceable by and against them individually. See part of the Companies and Allied matters Act.

An action from a partnership could be

brought in three different ways:

1 It could be brought in the name of any one of the partners acting in a representative capacity;

2 It could be brought in the name of all the partners; or

• It could be brought in the registered name of the partnership.

CONCLUSIONS

We now already know that one good advantage of declaration lies in its flexibility, in the sense that it is a liberal form of remedy. But caution must be taken by the courts in the exercise of their discretionary powers in granting declaratory orders. Such discretion ought to be exercised judicially and not frivolously.

The court is not bound to grant declaratory orders because of its discretionary powers even where it has jurisdiction to do so.

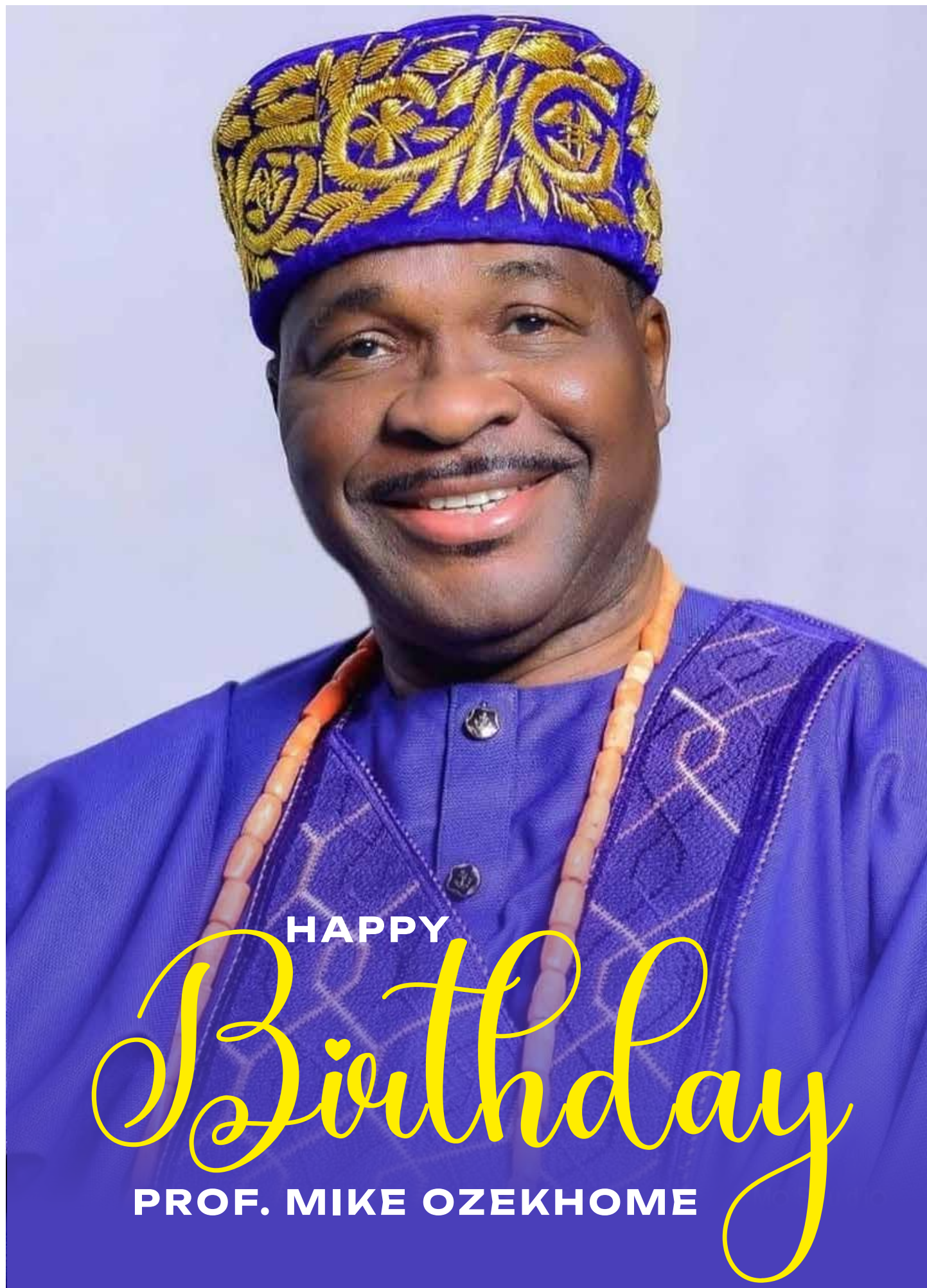
For example, where the

plaintiff has no sufficient interest or that the matter before it is inexpedient or not justiciable for one reason or the other, then the court can decline or refuse to grant such order. Declaratory orders so far have been considered a very convenient and successful form of equitable reliefs in Nigeria today. Once the parties have the requisite interest in the subject matter in dispute, it is then left for the courts to exercise their discretion judicially. (The end).

THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK

“The overreach of the judiciary can be attributed to, one, the inability of the executive to deliver; and two, the tendency to issue judicial pronouncements for national good. The second element is dangerous because that’s the function of the government”. –Kapil Sibal.







ADDING VALUE

WITH HENRY UKAZU



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The Relationship Between Process and Failure

Dear Destiny Friends,
One of life's most misunderstood concepts is the relationship between process and failure. When some people fail, they think they have done something wrong, but it could be that the person is experiencing the process, or their season has not yet come.

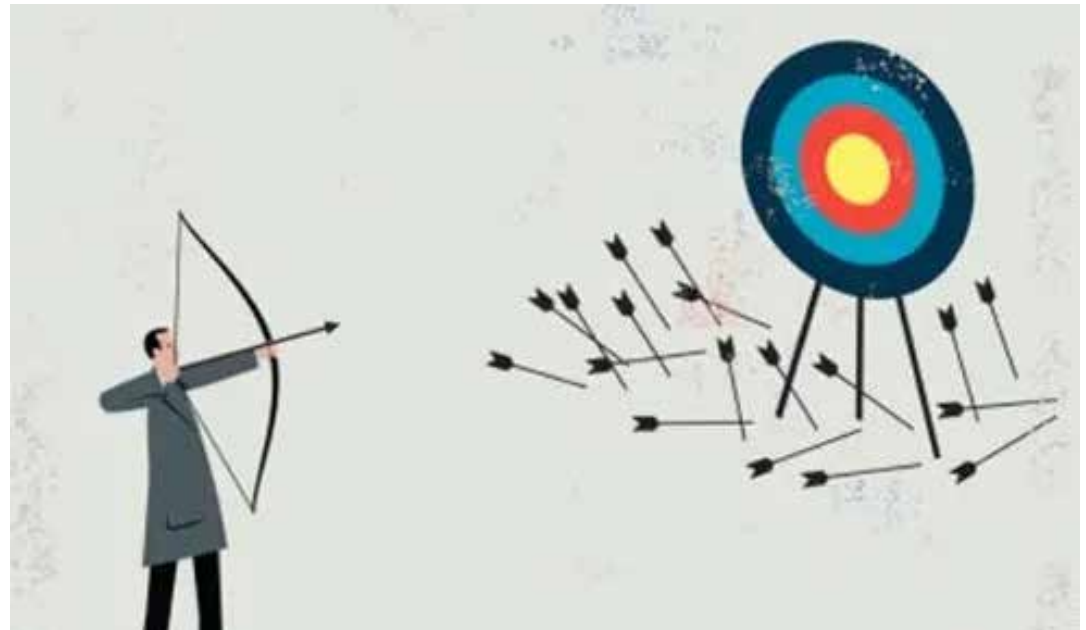
To understand this concept, let's explain the two terms. A process is a series of structured actions, steps, or decisions taken in a specific order to transform input into a desired output or goal. Here are the key elements of a process

- **Inputs:** The raw materials, data, or starting requirements (such as ingredients, customer requests, or raw code).

- **Activities/Steps:** The specific tasks or decisions performed by people, tools, or machines.

- **Trigger:** An event or demand that kicks off the process (like submitting an order or launching an app).

- **Output:** The result, product, or delivered



service.

- **Owner:** The person or role accountable for the outcome.

Failure, on the other hand, is the state or condition of not meeting a desirable, required, or intended objective. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, failure can result from any of the following:

- **Omission or Neglect:** Failing to perform an action that was promised, owed, or expected (such as a failure to pay on time or submit a report).

- **System or Organ Malfunction:** A situation where a machine, computer, engine, or

bodily organ stops working properly (such as engine failure or kidney failure).

- **Insolvency:** A financial state of bankruptcy, such as the failure of a business or bank.

Having stated the above terms, one can decipher that process is a necessary tool for success. When a process is lacking, failure is inevitable.

I recently listened to a sermon by a Nigerian Pastor. According to the pastor, there's something that looks like failure, but in a real sense, it is not failure; it is process. Sometimes in life, when we fail in business,

examinations, careers, marriage, or even when our health fails us, the reason why they all happen is that we have failed to do the needful, or we need to go through a process.

Let me explain. Let's say one has a business; if one has not taken the time to learn the trade very well, the person might fail for not learning a necessary skill required for the business, acquiring formal or informal education, or having a form of apprenticeship from a mentor, which might be all that's necessary for the entrepreneur to succeed. This is what is called a process.

Also, a student will need to read, research, and do assignments to pass an examination. An employee will have to learn a job as an entry-level employee and work his way through to become the Chief Executive Officer. All this involves a process.

Marriage is not an exception. There's no successful marriage without a form of mentoring or training. A man/woman must undergo a process of marriage counseling to learn about how to win in marriage. In this training, they will learn about communication in marriage, money in marriage, sex in marriage, money in marriage, and personalities in marriage. I strongly believe that there's time for everything. There is an appointed time for everything. When something is not in its season, don't expect to deliver. When one puts pressure, it's bound to fail. I can vividly remember what my most revered mentor, Dr. Yomi Garnett, counseled me on the importance of patience. A little background about the case: at that time, I had no job. I was working as a security officer. I tried to use my connections to secure a decent job, but it was very challenging. I reached out to Dr. Yomi, whom I call the sage because of his scintillating and rational wisdom. After ranting to him about my litany of problems, he said

to me, "Henry, if you like, meet President Obama, Trump, etc.; if God is not ready to give you a job, you won't get a job". He went further to say, you can't rush God. When the time is ready, God will align everything for you.

According to my mentors, there's something God and the universe want me to learn. I must go through some process of refining for the task ahead. These refining processes might be preparing for the greater task by learning what needs to be learned, or it could be a case of God teaching me wisdom or something of value that will be useful to me in the near future which I may not be able to see now.

When I look back in retrospect, I can authoritatively say my mentor was right.

Sometimes in life, we prepare for the opportunities, while

sometimes, we don't prepare. We just learn on the job. But I honestly think it's good to prepare before one embarks on any journey. That preparation is called a process.

To understand how the process works, do you know that if you plant corn in the season that is not the rainy season, you will believe it's a bad seed, but no, that's not the case because you planted the corn in the wrong season. Even the bible says there's a time for everything.

Also, someone might finish university and become frustrated because he doesn't have a job. What the person might not know is that their season is yet to manifest. It could also be that the student might need refinement, which comes with the process.

It's instructive to note that when your season comes, nothing can stop it; there

will be alignment, and the universe will work for you. What you did many years ago that failed to attract attention will begin to attract attention and draw you in.

Today, I pray, may you command attention in your season, not after your season..

Henry Ukazu writes from New York. He works with the New York City Department of Correction as the Legal Coordinator. He's the founder of Gloemi. He's a Transformative Human Capacity and Mindset coach. He is also a public speaker, youth advocate, creative writer, and author of *Design Your Destiny- Actualizing Your Birthright to Success, Unleash Your Destiny*, and *The Six Pillars of Success*. He can be reached via info@gloemi.com





VOICE of Emancipation

- Kayode Emola -

President Tinubu's Political Gamble

As the political calendar of Nigeria drifts towards another election cycle, many of President Tinubu's supporters are hoping to see another Tinubu victory in January 2027's election. However, if truth be told, every Nigerian can see that the President does not have the physical strength to carry on. His frequent travel abroad for medical examination, disguised as vacations, speaks volumes to the fact that this president ought not to seek another re-election.

This is not an indictment on President Bola Tinubu, it is just stating the obvious: the President is playing with the destiny of over 60 million Yoruba people who are hopeful for a sovereign Yoruba nation. Anyone, whether they know President Tinubu well or simply observe him from afar, knows that he loves the Yoruba. However, when it comes to choosing between personal ambition or the Yoruba nation, President Tinubu will not lift a finger even if his Yoruba country is in



peril. Such is the power of ambition when it comes to the President's reasoning. In 2023, President Tinubu rode on the coattails of the campaign for Yoruba independence to muscle his way into Aso Rock. Many people, such as Sowore, accused Yoruba nationalists of having been sponsored by the President, despite there being no evidence to support this. I cannot speak for others, but I myself am confident that to date President Tinubu

has not supported the Yoruba nation campaign with so much as one kobo. It appears that he doesn't care one iota whether Yoruba becomes a sovereign nation or is left to rot in Nigeria. All President Tinubu cares about is his personal ambition. Such a person cannot be confused as there being a Yoruba man in Aso Rock.

For the Yoruba who are die-hard supporters of President Tinubu, we must now ask ourselves some

critical questions. Is our Yoruba Nation struggle predicated on President Tinubu achieving a second tenure in office? If it is, then we are playing with the greatest fire to have devoured a people since the great fire of London in 1666.

We all know what happened to those head of states in Nigeria who hoped to transition from one regime to another. President Babangida tried and failed; General Sani Abacha tried and failed;



most recently, President Goodluck Jonathan tried to come back for a second term to implement his famous resolution from the National confab in 2014, and this also never came to fruition.

If President Tinubu were hoping to implement sweeping changes in the Nigerian 1999 constitution, so as to pave the way for a sovereign Yoruba nation, then a second term may not be the answer. The President could already have put machinery in motion to gift Nigerians an avenue for the enactment of a new constitution that would emancipate the 250 million plus trapped in this British plantation.

If our Yoruba people are hanging their hopes on President Tinubu getting a second term to bring about a Yoruba nation, then we need to think again. We all know that the President

is not medically fit to manage the rigours that the office requires. He spends most of his time in seclusion even when in the country, rather than engage with the people on the regular basis required by the office he occupies.

His recent announcement that he is not going to

campaign for a second term also demonstrates that he may know he doesn't have the stamina for the campaign, much less the four years in office to follow. Any observer of the political events in Nigeria should know that, even though President Tinubu has convinced

nearly all the governors to support his re-election, they don't necessarily control the decision of the millions of voters who will cast their ballot on the day.

Therefore, President Tinubu should know that his re-election is not a given, just because the elite of the country are behind him. His ambition for a second term should not put the Yoruba people in harm's way. The President should not assume that the only thing that matters is one man's political ambition that does not benefit the collective of the Nigerian people. If anything, he should work in the interest of every Nigerian and convoke a sovereign national conference where every ethnic nationality can decide what kind of relationship they want with Nigeria, if any.





TECH AND HUMANITY

with FOLU ADEBAYO

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The Job Went to a Man Who Does Not Exist

Earlier this month, federal agents in the United States walked into more than forty homes in Texas and carried out one hundred and eighty seven laptops. Each laptop belonged to an American company. Each one had been issued to a remote engineer who had passed the interview, passed the background check, and been doing the job, by most accounts quite well, for months or years. The engineers were in North Korea.

The Justice Department charged fourteen people. The scheme ran from 2019 to last summer and touched more than seventy companies, in healthcare, telecoms, retail, manufacturing and, of all things, cyber security. It worked like this. Someone steals or buys an American identity. A recruiter somewhere in the world applies for a job in that name, with a real face on the video call that is not the face of the person who will do the work. The company ships a laptop to an American address. The person living at that address, paid a



few hundred dollars a month, keeps the laptop switched on in a spare room with remote access installed, so that every login comes from the right city. The work is done in Pyongyang. The salary goes to the regime. More than three million dollars reached sanctioned entities this way, and that is only the slice the prosecutors could count. Every control those companies had answered one question: is this credential valid? Not one of them asked the question

that mattered: who is at the other end of it?

The man who does not exist

I would like to tell you this is a story about North Korea. It is not. It is a story about what happens when a job interview can be passed by someone who is not there.

Researchers at Palo Alto Networks set themselves a test this year: how long does it take to build a job candidate who does not exist, with a face, a voice, a CV and a LinkedIn history good enough to survive a

video interview? Seventy minutes. Gartner now forecasts that by 2028 one in four candidate profiles worldwide will be fake, and that by the end of this year roughly three in ten large companies will be unable to tell a real face from a generated one on a call. A survey by GetReal Security found that forty one percent of companies had already hired a fraudulent candidate without knowing it. Amazon says it has blocked more than one thousand eight hundred



suspected North Korean applicants, with attempts rising by about a quarter every three months.

Notice what those numbers have in common. They are not about hackers breaking in. They are about people being let in through the front door, by a process designed in a world where a face on a screen was proof of a person.

"Every control answered one question: is this credential valid? Not one asked who was at the other end of it."

The door is closing. Here is how companies are responding. They are retreating. A survey of recruiting leaders this year found that seventy two percent now insist on at least one interview in person. Google has brought back in person rounds for engineers. So has McKinsey. So has Cisco. Only thirteen

percent of firms have a formal process for detecting a generated face, and sixty two percent of hiring professionals told the screening company Checkr that they believe applicants are now better at faking than employers are at catching it. When you cannot tell the real

from the fake, you stop trying to tell, and you shrink the circle instead. You hire people you can touch.

The remote door that opened in 2020, when the whole world learnt in one spring that an engineer in Enugu could do the work of an engineer in Austin,

is being pushed shut. Not because remote work failed. Because remote trust failed.

Who pays for Pyongyang. Now think about who stands on the other side of that door.

Industry estimates put Nigeria's developer population above one hundred thousand, the largest in Africa, and around six hundred thousand graduates leave our universities every year into an economy that cannot absorb them. For a decade the answer for the best of them has been japa by laptop: stay in Yaba or Lekki or Kumasi or Kilimani, work for a company in London or Toronto, and earn in a currency that holds its value. Korn Ferry puts the global shortage of skilled technology workers at eighty five million by 2030. The world needs



these young people. But the channel the honest engineer in Surulere uses is the channel the fraud in Pyongyang abused. And when a company has been burnt by a remote worker whose face was not his own, its reflex is not to build better verification. Its reflex is to treat distance as guilt. The analysts who study this trend already note that honest candidates from regions treated as inherently suspicious now face extra scrutiny. We know which regions those are. A Nigerian passport has been a reason for a second look at every border on earth for forty years. It is about to become a reason for a second look on every video call.

That is the injustice at the centre of this story. The man who does not exist was never in Lagos. The person who will pay for him is.

“The man who does not exist was never in Lagos. The person who will pay for him is.”

Be the easiest person in the world to trust

Three answers, for three sets of people.

To the young African working remotely, or hoping to: the ground has moved under you and nobody told you. Being talented is no longer enough. You now have to be verifiable, and you have to make it effortless. Keep your camera on. Use your real name everywhere, the same name with the same

face on every platform. Build a public trail of real work that real people can vouch for: code that can be read, projects with named clients, colleagues who will answer a phone. Accept the identity checks without resentment; a liveness check against your passport is an insult only if you have something to hide, and a shield if you do not. The fraud’s weakness is that he cannot show up, in the same body, again and again. Yours is that you can. Make that your whole brand.

To the employer, in Lagos or London: stop asking where a person is from and start asking who is at the other end of the credential. Identity cannot be a thing you check once at hiring and assume forever; the Texas laptops passed every check on day

one. Verify the person, not the postcode, and keep verifying. A company that simply bans remote hiring has not solved its problem. It has lost its best candidates and kept its worst assumptions.

And to our governments and our tech ecosystem: this is the moment for a verifiable Nigerian digital identity that a foreign employer can trust, built on the national identity number we already have, and for our talent platforms to make verification the product rather than an afterthought. The country that makes its honest workers the easiest in the world to verify will be the country whose workers keep the jobs when the door closes on everyone else.

Showing up

A machine can now wear a human face. That is the

trend of the year, and it is a strange thing to live through. But I notice the thing it cannot yet do is persist: be the same person tomorrow, in the same body, doing the same real work, answerable to the same real people. Trust used to be something you were granted once, at an interview, and then allowed to keep. It is becoming something you prove continuously, by showing up.

For our young people that is unfair, because they did nothing to earn the suspicion. It is also the opening. In a world filling up with faces that belong to nobody, the person who is unmistakably, repeatedly, verifiably there is worth more than ever. Be that person. And employers, learn to see them.





Panorama

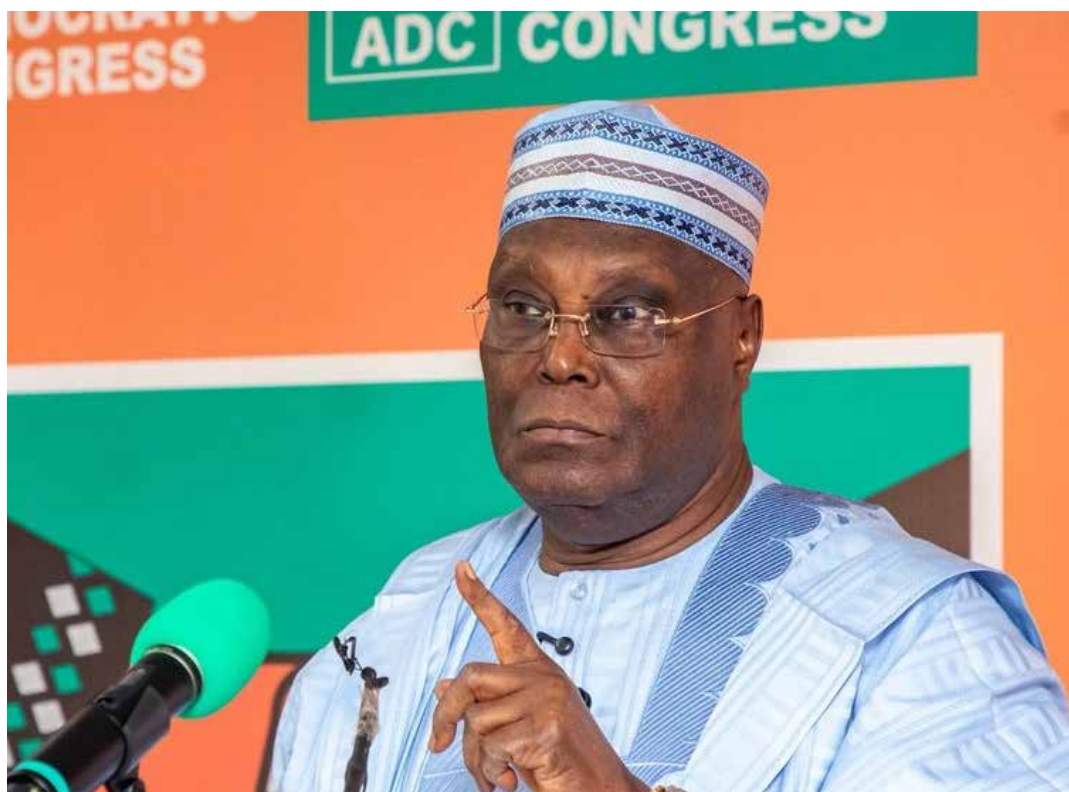
BY DR SANI SA'IDU BABA

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Fellow Nigerians, Atiku Was Right on Subsidy: Do Not Fall into Tinubu's Trap!

Fellow Nigerians, what exactly does President Tinubu think of our intelligence? Does he consider Nigerians dull, ignorant, naive, gullible, politically unconscious, or incapable of seeing through political manoeuvres? How can a government that has repeatedly defended fuel subsidy removal as necessary for economic survival now offer a 30-day petrol discount and expect Nigerians not to question what happens when the 30 days expire? Is this a genuine commitment to lasting relief or a temporary concession that risks leaving Nigerians to face the same crushing hardship all over again? Recall that when His Excellency Atiku Abubakar proposed restoring fuel subsidy to provide immediate relief for struggling Nigerians if elected president in 2027, the proposal attracted massive support of the Nigerian people, but criticism from Tinubu's camp. Today, the same Tinubu's government has announced a temporary



petrol price intervention which is to forgo its retail profit margin for an initial 30 days. Although the government insists this is not a restoration of subsidy, Nigerians have every reason to question the apparent contradiction: if intervention is necessary to cushion the impact of high fuel prices today, why was Atiku's proposal treated with such hostility? Fellow Nigerians, do not fall into the trap of mistaking 30 days of temporary relief for a

lasting economic solution. What happens on Day 31? Will transport fares, food prices and the cost of essential goods suddenly become affordable, or will the same hardship return to crush households whose purchasing power has already been devastated? A temporary discount without a credible, sustainable plan risks becoming a political instrument: offering immediate comfort while leaving Nigerians exposed to renewed suffering when

the deadline expires. The issue is not whether a temporary discount can offer some relief; it may. The real issue is whether it can solve the deeper problem. Nigerians need policies that sustainably reduce the cost of living, strengthen domestic refining, protect vulnerable households and prevent the burden of economic adjustment from falling disproportionately on ordinary citizens, which is a plan ready for immediate execution by



Atiku if elected. The issue is simple; changing the discussion from subsidy to discount is a deception and does not, by itself, guarantee lasting relief. The government must explain the intervention's expected benefits, its safeguards and what happens after the initial 30 days.

Atiku's policy plan on subsidy is a very significant move widely scrutinized and accepted as an economic policy capable of delivering immediate relief, and most importantly, Atiku is ready for transparent financing, effective implementation and safeguards against corruption and waste. He believes that: why should a country blessed with enormous oil resources fail to develop a sustainable mechanism for protecting its citizens from devastating fuel-price shocks? The temporary intervention proposed by Tinubu is clearly unjustifiable. Nigerians

deserve an explanation of why a carefully designed, accountable and sustainable support mechanism cannot be considered.

With the 2027 elections approaching, Nigerians must distinguish between temporary concessions and lasting economic commitments. No 30-day announcement should distract the public from demanding answers about the cost of living, declining

purchasing power and the future of fuel prices. The government should be judged not by the announcement it makes today, but by the economic conditions

Nigerians experience after the announcement expires.

Fellow Nigerians, do not be distracted by the discount; examine the consequences. Ask what happens on Day 31. Demand a sustainable solution, not a temporary

reprieve followed by another round of hardship. Nigerians are neither dull nor ignorant, and our intelligence should never be underestimated. We deserve economic policies that protect our livelihoods, not temporary relief that leaves us wondering when the next wave of suffering will arrive.

As we approach 2027, Nigerians must critically examine the alternatives before us and give Atiku Abubakar the maximum support and cooperation necessary to secure victory at the polls, should they believe his proposed approach offers a more sustainable path to economic recovery and the protection of ordinary Nigerians.

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Africa's Destiny and the World's Future: Agriculture, Medicine, and the Agency of a Continent

By Tolulope A. Adegoke PhD

"The cradle of humankind is also its destiny, and Africa, I dare say, is the future of the world." — William Ruto, President of Kenya

The proposition that Africa's destiny will be determined by Africans who understand that destiny is not a slogan of convenience. It is a demographic, ecological, and strategic reality that the twenty-first century is already forcing into view. With a population projected to rise from roughly 1.4 billion today to as many as 2.5 billion by mid-century, Africa will hold an unprecedented concentration of young talent: an estimated 830 million people aged 15 to 35. By 2050, Africans will constitute approximately one-third of the global labor force. These figures are frequently recited, but their implications are rarely confronted with the seriousness they demand. A world that is aging in Europe, East Asia, and North America cannot indefinitely rely on a shrinking base of workers to sustain production, innovation, and care. The future of the global economy, the future of food, and the future of medicine are being shaped, whether the world acknowledges it or not, by what happens on the

African continent. But the direction of that shaping is not predetermined. The destiny of the world may lie in Africa; whether it is a destiny of shared prosperity or of deepening fragility will be decided in Africa by Africans.

The Agricultural Imperative: Potential Unrealized, Provision Deferred

Africa's agricultural endowment is without parallel. The continent holds more than 60 percent of the world's uncultivated arable land, a reserve of productive capacity that no other region can match. Yet this abundance coexists with a paradox that should unsettle any serious observer: Africa imports nearly \$115 billion worth of food products annually. The continent irrigates only about 6 percent of its arable land, leaving the vast majority of its productive potential dependent on rainfall that climate change is making increasingly erratic. This is not a story of natural scarcity. It is a story of underinvestment, inadequate infrastructure, and policy frameworks that have too often treated agriculture as a residual sector rather than as the foundation of sovereignty. The transformation required is both technical



and institutional, and the continent's own institutions have begun to articulate it with clarity. The Kampala CAADP Declaration, adopted by the African Union in January 2025, commits member states to increasing agri-food output by 45 percent by 2035, reducing post-harvest losses by 50 percent, tripling intra-African trade in agri-food products, and raising the share of locally processed food to 35 percent of agri-food GDP. The declaration also sets a financing target of \$100 billion in public and private investment in African agri-food systems by 2035. These are not modest ambitions. They require the strengthening of seed systems, soil health management, water infrastructure, and agricultural research and

extension services—the unglamorous foundations upon which productivity rests. They require the integration of emerging technologies, including biotechnology, artificial intelligence, digital platforms, and precision agriculture, into farming systems that have too often been left behind by the global technological frontier. And they require a deliberate effort to integrate smallholder farmers, women, and youth into value chains and regional markets, not as passive beneficiaries but as participants with equitable claims on the returns.

The stakes extend beyond Africa's borders. Global food demand is projected to rise substantially as the world's population approaches 9.8 billion by 2050, and the

consequences of failing to meet that demand will not be confined to any single region. Africa's capacity to transform its potential into production is therefore a matter of global stability, not merely continental development. Yet the transformation will not occur through the passive operation of market forces. It will occur only if African governments, entrepreneurs, and communities make deliberate choices to invest in the continent's own productive capacity rather than relying on imports that drain foreign exchange and leave populations vulnerable to price shocks they did not create.

Medicine and the Wealth of Indigenous Knowledge Africa's contribution to global medicine has been systematically undervalued, in part because the continent's pharmacopoeia has been treated as folklore rather than as a scientific resource. The botanical wealth of sub-Saharan Africa is extraordinary: over 50,000 distinct plant species are known to occur in the region, and more than a quarter of these have been used for centuries in traditional medicine. This is not a curiosity of ethnographic interest. It is a repository of therapeutic knowledge that modern pharmacology has barely begun to investigate with the rigor it deserves.

The evidence of

commercial and clinical significance is already substantial. *Prunus africana*, harvested from the bark of a tree native to African highlands, is used in the treatment of prostate gland hypertrophy and has been exported in quantities valued at millions of dollars annually, with the pharmaceutical industry capturing the overwhelming share of the final product's value. *Voacanga africana*, whose seeds are rich in the alkaloid tabersonine, has



been used as a central nervous system depressant in geriatric patients. *Rauvolfia vomitoria* yields reserpine and yohimbine, compounds with established applications in the management of hypertension and related conditions. These are not isolated examples. They are indicative of a broader pattern in which African biological resources are extracted, processed elsewhere, and returned to the continent—if they return at all—as expensive finished products.

The challenge is not merely

scientific but political and ethical. Transforming traditional knowledge into validated therapeutics without exploiting the communities that preserved that knowledge requires robust intellectual property protections, equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms, and genuine collaboration among traditional healers, ethno-botanists, pharmacologists, and regulators. Africa must move from being a supplier of raw materials

for global pharmaceutical research to an innovator in its own right, with the infrastructure, funding, and political will to conduct research, develop products, and retain a fair share of the value created. The continent's biodiversity is not a resource to be exported in its raw state. It is a foundation upon which to build scientific capacity that serves African patients first.

Beyond Agriculture and Medicine: The Strategic Resources of the Future The destiny of the

world is increasingly tied to the minerals that power clean energy, digital infrastructure, and advanced manufacturing. Africa holds approximately 30 percent of global critical mineral reserves, including cobalt, lithium, manganese, and copper. The Democratic Republic of Congo alone supplies 72 percent of globally mined cobalt. These minerals are indispensable to the technologies that will define the coming

decades: electric vehicles, energy storage systems, defense technologies, medical devices, and the hardware upon which artificial intelligence depends.

Yet Africa's share of global revenues from these minerals stands at just 10 percent. The continent captures a fraction of the value that its resources create, while the processing and refining that generate the highest returns occur elsewhere. China controls 87 percent of global refined rare earth production, and

the infrastructure gaps in African power, logistics, and refining make the cost of mining on the continent approximately 250 percent higher than the global average. Revenue leakage through tax avoidance costs African nations between \$470 million and \$730 million annually. These are not inevitable features of the resource economy. They are the consequences of negotiating positions, contractual arrangements, and industrial policies that have favored extraction over transformation.

The African Union's Agenda 2063 recognizes this imbalance through its African Commodities Strategy, which aims to enable African countries to add value, extract higher rents, integrate into global value chains, and promote diversification anchored in local content development. The strategy's stated purpose is to transform Africa from a raw materials supplier for the rest of the world into a continent that actively uses its own resources for the economic development of Africans. This is the correct ambition, but its realization depends on collective action. The formation of an association of critical mineral-producing countries, referenced in the African Union's own progress assessments, represents a potential mechanism for coordinating bargaining positions and capturing

a fairer share of resource rents. The alternative—continued fragmentation, bilateral deals negotiated from positions of weakness, and the export of unprocessed materials—will perpetuate a pattern that has benefited others for more than a century.

The Destiny Decided by Africans

The recurring theme across agriculture, medicine, and mineral resources is agency. Africa's future will not be determined by the goodwill of external partners, however constructive their intentions. It will be determined by the choices that Africans make about how to use the assets they possess. The continent's young population is not merely a demographic fact; it is a responsibility. Sub-Saharan Africa needs to integrate approximately 20 million new labor market entrants annually, yet only about 25 percent of these entrants secure formal employment. The remainder find work in low-paid, insecure informal jobs

that offer little prospect of advancement. A demographic dividend is not automatic. It is earned through investment in health, education, skills, and the creation of economies dynamic enough to absorb the energies of a generation.

The African Continental Free Trade Area, with its vision of a single market of 1.3 billion people and a combined GDP of approximately \$3.4 trillion, represents one of the most significant institutional expressions of this agency. Its full implementation could boost intra-African trade by more than 50 percent and fundamentally reshape industrialization and regional value chains. But the AfCFTA is a framework, not an outcome. Its benefits will materialize only if governments remove non-tariff barriers, invest in the infrastructure that connects producers to markets, and resist the temptation to treat regional integration as a rhetorical commitment

rather than a practical one. The destiny of the world may indeed lie in Africa. The continent's land, its biodiversity, its minerals, and above all its people are indispensable to a sustainable and stable global future. But the world's hope in Africa is not a sentiment of charity. It is a recognition of interdependence. A continent that feeds itself, heals its people through both modern and indigenous knowledge, and manages its resources for the benefit of its citizens is a continent that stabilizes the world. That outcome will not arrive through the passage of time or the operation of impersonal forces. It will be decided in Africa, by Africans who understand that their destiny is not something to be received but something to be built—and who act accordingly, with urgency and with the confidence that comes from knowing that the future belongs to those who prepare for it.

Dr. Tolulope A. Adegoke, AMBP-UN, is a globally recognized scholar-practitioner and thought leader at the nexus of security, governance, and strategic leadership. His mission is dedicated to advancing ethical governance, strategic human capital development, resilient nation-building, and global peace.



AJO FEST '86 @40: RMD, Theatre Legends Reunite for Cultural Revolution

By Prince Adeyemi Shonibare

Forty years after AJOFEST '86 brought four of Papa Fred Agbeyegbe's plays to the National Theatre, members of the festival's original cast, crew and creative community will reunite in Lagos for an afternoon of memories, dramatic readings and reflections on a defining chapter in Nigerian theatre.

Richard Mofe-Damijo (RMD), Ayo Lijadu, Lara Akinsola, Professor Segun Ojewuyi and other practitioners will headline "AJOFEST '86 – 40 Years Later: Reunion and Reflections". The gathering will reconnect veterans of the 1986 productions, honour Agbeyegbe's legacy and introduce younger audiences and practitioners to the people, ideas and artistic ambition behind the festival.

The event is scheduled for Sunday 1 November 2026 at 4pm at Queen Amina Gardens, National Theatre, Iganmu, Lagos, in collaboration with the National Association of Nigerian Theatre Arts Practitioners (NANTAP). The programme will include a keynote address, a panel discussion featuring members of the original theatrical community, dramatic readings from the four plays, tributes to contributors and

conversations about the future of Nigerian theatre. Original cast and crew members, cultural leaders, scholars, patrons, students and younger performers are expected to attend.

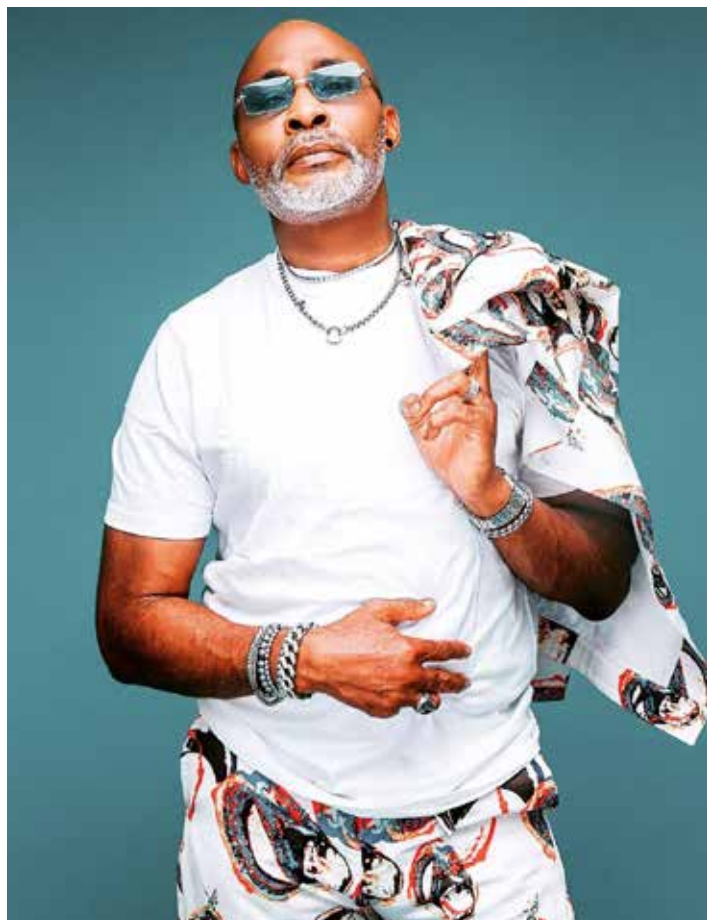
The reunion will also recognise the work of the living legend Dr Fred Omadeli Agbeyegbe, playwright, lawyer, publisher, cultural advocate and founder of Ajo Productions.

Four plays, one vision. The reunion returns to the achievement that brought the AJOFEST community together. Staged in 1986 during Nigeria's military era, AJOFEST presented four of Agbeyegbe's plays at the National Theatre: *The King Must Dance*, *Naked*, *Woe Unto Death*, *The Last Omen* and *Budiso*.

Presented over four consecutive weekends, the festival demonstrated that privately funded Nigerian theatre could attract large audiences when supported by strong writing, professional production and sustained investment.

It followed Ajo Productions' annual presentation of an Agbeyegbe play from 1983 to 1986. His works addressed tradition, justice, political authority, authoritarianism and the abuse of power.

The King Must Dance



Naked questioned child sacrifice and the unquestioning defence of tradition, while *Budiso* used political satire to examine authoritarian rule. Those themes remain relevant to contemporary Nigerian society.

AJO FEST also created opportunities for actors, directors and technical professionals, several of whom went on to establish careers in Nigeria and abroad.

At the anniversary gathering, attendees will have the opportunity to revisit the artistic and organisational choices that made the festival significant, while hearing

directly from some of the people who helped bring it to the stage.

RMD and other veterans to share memories

The programme will turn those memories into a shared public conversation, with a keynote address by veteran journalist and former arts editor of *The Guardian*, Ben Tomoloju. Richard Mofe-Damijo, Ayo Lijadu, Yomi Layinka and Lara Akinsola will participate in a panel moderated by Dr Lookman Sanusi.

Professor Segun Ojewuyi, Dr Tunji Sotimirin, Godwin Onohwosa, Jahman Anikulapo and

Adeniran Makinde, FTA, are also expected to discuss the festival's history and influence.

The Crown Troupe of Africa, affiliated with NANTAP, will coordinate dramatic readings from the four productions, giving attendees a chance to encounter the plays again in performance.

Tributes will honour members of the original theatrical community, including Jide Ogungbade, Pero Sosan, Sola Awojobi, Victoria Ajomeyimje and Akpor Otebele, as well as other contributors.

More than a commemoration, the event will reunite participants from 1986 and create a meeting point between the generation that built AJOFEST and younger practitioners shaping Nigerian theatre today.

Papa Fred Agbeyegebe: the man who funded his vision

The reunion is anchored in the life and work of its founder, Papa Fred Agbeyegebe.

Agbeyegebe combined legal training with playwriting and social activism. Through his writing and investment in theatre, he examined social injustice, political authority and traditions that undermined human dignity.

From Vanguard tribute published in July 2025, "Papa Fred Agbeyegebe @90 A Vanguard of Stage, Law and Activism", placed his contribution to

the arts within a broader legacy of law, activism and cultural engagement. His support for Ajo Productions demonstrated the importance of combining artistic vision with funding, organisation and sustained production at a time when private investment in professional theatre was limited.

Practitioners associated with Ajo Productions and AJOFEST included Richard Mofe-Damijo, Clarion Chukwurah, Antar Laniyan, Lara Akinsola

The reunion will also look beyond the stage to the task of preserving the festival's history.

Organisers are seeking photographs, original programmes, newspaper reports, recordings and personal recollections from former cast and crew members, audience members and the public.

The materials could support theatre historians, researchers, educational institutions and cultural organisations while documenting the people

expand, AJOFEST's history highlights the theatre's role as a space for imagination, social commentary and shared experience. Attendees will be invited to consider how that role can be sustained for future generations.

The curtain rises again

The organising committee and NANTAP have invited theatre practitioners, cultural institutions, journalists, students, historians, arts patrons and members of the public to join the reunion.

With free admission, the event offers audiences an opportunity to hear first-hand accounts of AJOFEST '86, watch dramatic readings from the four productions, honour the festival's contributors and take part in a wider conversation about Nigerian theatre's past and future.

The event is scheduled for 4pm on Sunday 1 November 2026 at Queen Amina Gardens, National Theatre, Iganmu, Lagos. It is being organised in collaboration with NANTAP, and admission is free. Online participation is available at <https://bit.ly/4dpVSoJ>.

Former participants and members of the public with archival materials or personal recollections are encouraged to contact the organising committee.

Dr Lillian Agbeyegebe is the convener / coordinator, while media/enquiries can be sent to ajofest86@gmail.com.



and Tunji Sotimirin.

Through the anniversary programme, organisers will honour Agbeyegebe's literary work and his belief that Nigerian stories deserved ambitious productions and serious investment.

Preserving AJOFEST's history

and work behind the productions.

Conversations at the event will also address the future of live theatre, arts funding, performance spaces and training for writers, directors, actors and technical specialists.

As digital entertainment and screen productions

Shaping the Future of Music Education in Nigeria

By Shosanya Babatunde Oluwaseyi

Despite Nigeria's rich cultural heritage and lively musical traditions, numerous challenges hinder the advancement of music education and its potential benefits.

I would like to highlight several key points that can influence the future of music education in Nigeria.

To effectively shape the future of music education in Nigeria, it is crucial to adopt a technology-driven and entrepreneurial approach that promotes cultural heritage, creativity, and economic empowerment. Essential strategies include revising curricula to integrate contemporary Nigerian genres, investing in digital tools and teacher training, and establishing partnerships for industry-relevant mentorship.

There should be a significant increase in investment in music education, focusing on both resources and curriculum development, to cultivate talent and preserve cultural identity. Additionally, there should be a dedication to fostering a comprehensive understanding of music's cultural significance and its contribution to national development.

Some Key Aspects for Future-Focused Music Education

C u r r i c u l u m



Transformation: Shifting from traditional, colonial-influenced curricula to encompass indigenous Nigerian music, traditional rhythms, and modern Afrobeat.

Technological Integration: Utilizing Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs), recording software, and online platforms (such as streaming services and social media) to enhance both learning and performance.

Music Entrepreneurship: Integrating business skills to empower graduates, allowing them to become job creators within the flourishing music industry.

Teacher Development: Ongoing training for educators in contemporary pedagogy and technology

to improve teaching effectiveness.

Infrastructure Investment: Increased financial support for instruments, facilities, and educational resources.

Industry Partnerships: Initiatives such as the new Tiwa Savage Music Foundation and collaborations with Berklee College and the Musical Society of Nigeria.

Creative Composition: Cultivating skills in songwriting and arrangement.

Mentorship: Connecting students with industry experts

When resources are scarce, it becomes challenging for music educators to provide engaging and

comprehensive instruction to their students.

The future of music education in Nigeria will rely entirely on the reform of the music education curriculum.

I n t e g r a t i n g entrepreneurial principles into music education not only increases the employability of graduates but also encourages innovation and creativity. To improve the quality and outcomes of Music Education in Nigeria, it must be established on a solid foundation beginning from the Nursery/Primary school level and extending to higher education.

This piece is contributed by a Music Expert, Shosanya Babatunde Oluwaseyi

Afe Babalola at 97: The Man and His Lessons

By Prof. Mike Ozekhome, CON

Happy 97th Birthday to a living legend, Aare Afe Babalola, SAN, CON, OFR, FCI Arb, LL.D, D.Litt, Founder and Chancellor of Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti. A great man was born today, and Nigeria is still blessed by that birth. When a man turns 97 and is still relevant, still building, still teaching and still healing, his birthday is no longer a mere episode. It becomes a national lesson and a celebration of life.

The man Afe Babalola is resilience clothed in humility, doggedness masked in simplicity. Born today in 1929, in a humble homestead in Ado-Ekiti, without any silver or golden spoon or privilege, he walked through life laboriously as farm labourer, Grade Two teacher, court registrar and became one of Africa's most celebrated lawyers and educationists. His life teaches that where you started can never define where you end.

From that humble beginning, he taught himself law by private study, passed all his examinations in flying colours and rose to become a Senior Advocate of Nigeria. Today his name is synonymous with legal brilliance and integrity at the Bar for which he had shone and still shines for over six decades, and till



date.

He is a builder in every sense of the word. At 80, an age many have retired from active service, baba founded Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, ABUAD. What he conceptualized and built is not just a citadel of learning, it is a city within a city — vast farms, fish ponds, factories, industries, potteries, piggeries, electricity grid, and a world-class

multisystem teaching hospital that rivals any in Africa.

At ABUAD, shining star shows that education must produce, not just certificate but societal relevance. The hospital has modular theatres, CT scan, MRI, ICU, dialysis and cutting-edge equipment. It is his gift to humanity, a proof that wealth is best measured by impact, not by loads of cash in the bank. .

Today at 97, the Aare still wakes up early mornings and sleeps late at nights, thinking of what to add, not what to take or rest on. That is the first lesson for today's youths — hard work has no retirement age when purpose drives you.

The second lesson is that education has equally has no age limit. If a man who could not afford secondary school would later become a SAN and founder of one



of the world's leading universities, then no youth has any excuse to give up learning.

The third lesson is vision that works. Youths must learn that dreams must be planted like farms, nurtured like fish ponds, and built like factories. Baba Afe Babalola did not just talk vision, he manufactured, and walked it. He did not just dreamt dreams, he actualized them.

The fourth lesson is humility. With all his glittering array of titles, honours and massive wealth, our nonagenarian (soon a centenarian, by God's grace) still personally phones far younger ones like me, calling me "my son". He still opens his doors, still listens, still advises, still mentors, still helps.

Greatness that intimidates is fake; true greatness lifts. The Aare has epitomized the latter.

The fifth lesson is courage to start, even if late. He started his greatest legacy at 80. To every youth who thinks time has passed,

Afe at 97 born today says you are still early if you start now.

The sixth lesson is integrity as capital. His name has remained untainted till date. In a world of shortcuts, he reminds youths that a

good name is still better than silver and gold.

Today, as we celebrate him at 97, we celebrate more than age. We celebrate relevance. We celebrate patriotism. We celebrate impact. To live long is grace; to remain relevant at 97 is uncommon resilience.

Joining all patriots at home and in diaspora, I wish Aare Afe Babalola, the irrepressible advocate, courtroom gladiator, mentor of a generation, teacher of teachers, and philanthropist extraordinaire, a happy 97th birthday. May his hands be strengthened, his soul lifted, his muscles oiled, and his life prolonged (Gen 6:3). Born today, celebrated for all times. Happy Birthday, Papa.



Nigeria's Net External Reserves Hit \$46bn, Links Stronger Buffers to FX Stability, Investor Confidence – CBN Gov Cardoso

Nigeria's net external reserves have climbed to a record \$46 billion, strengthening the country's capacity to meet foreign exchange (FX) obligations and further boost investor confidence.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Mr. Olayemi Cardoso, disclosed this while speaking at the Nigeria-Asia Connectivity Dialogue in Singapore, noting that stronger external buffers had made foreign exchange transactions more predictable for investors. Cardoso said Nigeria's gross external reserves had also risen to an all-time high of \$55.07 billion as of October 8, 2026.

"The gross foreign reserves are now at an all-time high of \$55 billion. Our net reserves at \$46 billion. In addition to that, the foreign exchange market is stable. These are the things that give investors confidence. You can plan. You can bring in money and take it out," he said.

The net reserves figure represents an increase of approximately \$11.2 billion from the \$34.80 billion recorded at the end of December 2025, underscoring the improvement in Nigeria's external liquidity position. The growth in net reserves



is significant because it provides an indication of the country's reserve position after accounting for specified foreign-currency liabilities and obligations. It also offers additional insight into the strength of Nigeria's external buffers beyond the headline gross reserves figure.

At a recent Monetary Policy Committee briefing, Cardoso attributed the accumulation of reserves to sustained policy discipline, noting that gross reserves had exceeded \$55 billion, their highest level in more than 18 years.

"We have been able to rebuild our reserves, and the whole conversation around rebuilding the reserves we know that today, and it was mentioned in my communiqué, that we are in excess of \$55 billion, the highest number in over 18 years. That's a big thing, and it has come through consistency and discipline in approach," he said.

Cardoso had also identified diaspora remittances as an important contributor to reserve accumulation, helping to strengthen Nigeria's external buffers and resilience.

The latest figures come after gross reserves rose to \$54.08 billion on September 3 and \$54.61 billion by September 14, reflecting sustained growth in the country's external assets.

The improvement in reserves could support confidence in the naira and Nigeria's ability to meet external payment obligations. However, the durability of these gains will depend on continued foreign-exchange inflows, disciplined macroeconomic management and sustained stability in the currency market.

\$2.4bn Subsidy Fraud: Why My Mum Was Kidnapped in 2012 – Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala Recalls

Director-General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Mrs. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, has said that her probe of an alleged \$2.4bn subsidy fraud led to the abduction of her mother.

It would be recalled that the former Finance Minister's mother, Kamene Okonjo, was kidnapped from her home in Ogwashi-Uku, Delta State, in December 2012.

In a recent interview with Bloomberg, Okonjo-Iweala said the abductors demanded that she resign as minister of finance and leave the country.

The WTO director-general served as Nigeria's finance minister between 2011 and 2015 under former President Goodluck

Jonathan.

She said the subsidy investigation began after her office noticed a sharp increase in claims submitted by petrol importers.

"So I went to the president and said, look, something is going on here. Could we audit the accounts? And he said, yes, go ahead. And we found about \$2.4 billion worth of fraud. So, we refused to pay," she recounted.

She said her mother was abducted shortly after the decision was announced, adding that her captors demanded her resignation as a condition for her release.

"I was told (by the kidnappers) that for her to be released, I should



resign and leave the country," she said.

The former minister described the incident as one of the most traumatic experiences of her life, saying her mother was held in a forest before escaping.

"She was held in the middle of a forest, and one night she escaped. She's still alive. She's 96 now," Okonjo-Iweala said.

"It was a terrible, terrible five-day ordeal. I think the worst in my life."

"I never dreamt my

parents could ever be touched in this way, that people would be that evil," she added.

Okonjo-Iweala said she considered resigning before her mother regained her freedom, but her father warned her against giving in to the abductors' demands.

"He said, 'We don't give in to blackmail'. And he said, 'You've got to carry on. You've got to go to work'," she recalled.

LCCI Seeks Strict AI Rules To Protect Jobs

The Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry has called for strong regulation of artificial intelligence in Nigeria to stop abuses that could cost workers their jobs.

The LCCI President, Leye Kupoluyi, made the call on Wednesday at the chamber's fourth quarterly press conference of 2026 in Lagos, where he presented the executive summary of its state of the economy report.

"We call for robust governance of artificial intelligence technology in

Nigeria to prevent abuses and unethical deployments that are detrimental to jobs," Kupoluyi said.

He referenced the World Bank's October 2026 Africa Economic Update, which identifies Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa as major AI hubs on the continent. However, the report notes that adoption is still at an early stage, with Africa's immediate prospects centred on adapting affordable AI solutions to address local challenges.

Kupoluyi also noted that the International Monetary



Fund and the World Bank have warned that AI could worsen the jobs crisis in Nigeria and other developing economies unless governments and businesses prepare workers and deploy the technology to create employment.

The LCCI commended

the Central Bank of Nigeria's Monetary Policy Committee for cutting the Monetary Policy Rate by 350 basis points, from 26.5 per cent to 23 per cent. However, Kupoluyi warned that the cut would not automatically make credit cheaper.

Domestic Debt Servicing Gulps N5.28tn In Six Months

Nigeria spent N5.28tn servicing its domestic debt between January and June 2026, as interest payments on government securities continued to absorb substantial public funds.

Data released by the Debt Management Office show that interest and rental payments accounted for N4.95tn of the expenditure, while another N333.96bn went towards repaying the principal on promissory notes.

The figures highlight the financial burden of domestic borrowing on government resources at a time when Nigeria faces competing demands for infrastructure, public services and other development priorities.

It also shows the heavy impact of debt repayment on Nigeria's finances.

Federal Government bonds accounted for the largest share of domestic debt interest payments, costing N3.35tn during the six-month period.

Nigerian Treasury Bills followed with N1.49tn in interest payments, making the two instruments the dominant contributors to the government's domestic debt-servicing bill.

Monthly payments on Federal Government bonds fluctuated considerably. They rose from N462.44bn billion in January to N707.25bn in February, peaking at



N792.34bn in March.

The amount subsequently fell to N530.84bn in April and N332.49bn in May before increasing to N525.05bn in June.

Treasury bill interest payments reached N1.49tn over the period, with March recording the highest monthly amount of approximately N481.47bn.

Other domestic debt instruments also attracted payments. The government spent N92.29bn billion on rentals for Federal Government Sukuk, while interest payments on FGN Savings Bonds amounted to N8.90bn. Green bond interest payments stood at N5.56bn.

The figures indicate that conventional government bonds and T-bills accounted for most of the cost of servicing Nigeria's domestic debt in the first half of the year.

Beyond interest expenses, the Federal Government repaid N333.96bn in principal on promissory notes between January

and June.

March recorded repayments of N154.23bn, while June followed with N136.96bn, making them the largest monthly contributors to principal repayments during the period.

Of the total, N263.27bn related to naira-denominated promissory notes, while foreign-currency-denominated notes accounted for N70.69bn.

Total monthly domestic debt service, covering interest, rentals and principal repayments, also varied significantly. March recorded the highest expenditure at N1.43tn, followed by February at N967.67bn.

June's total stood at N811.62bn, while April recorded N765.19bn and January N741.82bn. May had the lowest monthly outlay at N567.16bn.

These fluctuations reflect the timing of interest obligations and principal repayments across the government's domestic

debt instruments.

The N5.28 trillion expenditure adds to concerns about the growing share of government revenue required to meet debt obligations, potentially limiting the funds available for capital projects and essential public services.

"If you keep spending this huge amount on repaying your local debt, you will be left with less for important development issues," said an Abuja-based economist, Nonso Iheoma.

"Though we can't do without debts, we can do well by changing the sources of the debts. During this period, returns on fixed-income securities exceeded or were close to 20 per cent due to high interest rates," he added.

Nigeria's total debt-service expenditure reached approximately N16tn in 2025, reflecting the pressure from domestic interest payments and external debt obligations.

Nigeria's FX Demand Hits \$18.34bn As Services Surge

Nigeria's foreign exchange utilisation surged to \$18.34bn in the second quarter of 2026, its highest level in nearly 15 years, as financial services transactions accounted for more than half of total demand, according to the Financial Markets Dealers Association.

The sector absorbed \$9.64bn during the quarter, representing 52.58 per cent of total FX utilisation, as demand for cross-border financial transactions rose sharply despite declining expenditure on some categories of imports.

The FMDA's Q2 FX market report, based on data from the Central Bank of Nigeria, showed that total utilisation increased by 12.84 per cent from \$16.25bn in the first quarter and 52.42 per cent from \$12.03bn in the corresponding period of 2025.

The figures point to a growing concentration of FX demand in services and financial transactions, rather than merchandise imports alone.

Invisible transactions, which cover payments for services and other non-merchandise items,



accounted for \$13.24bn, or 72.19 per cent of total FX utilisation in Q2.

This represented a 93.16 per cent increase from \$6.85bn recorded in the corresponding period of 2025.

Financial services accounted for most of the increase, with demand rising 72.81 per cent from \$5.58bn a year earlier.

Business services demand climbed 191.39 per cent to

\$1.66bn from \$570.41m, while other services increased 118.66 per cent to \$1.12bn.

The report did not provide a detailed breakdown of the financial services transactions. It is therefore unclear how much of the demand represented investment-related payments, financial obligations or other cross-border transactions.

United Nigeria Airlines To Issue N20bn Commercial Paper

United Nigeria Airlines plans to raise N20bn through the first two series of a N100bn commercial paper programme, according to the airline's September 2026 investor presentation.

The proposed issuance will comprise commercial papers with tenors of 270 days and 364 days. If completed as planned, it would make the airline the first domestic operator in Nigeria to issue commercial paper.

Meristem Capital Limited is listed as the lead arranger, while Cordros Advisory Services Limited, Coronation Merchant Bank Limited, FCMB Capital Markets Limited, FSL Advisory Limited and Quantum

Zenith Capital & Investments Limited are named as dealers.

The airline has also obtained credit ratings from two agencies. Augusto & Co. assigned it short-term and long-term ratings of A3 and BBB-, respectively, with a stable outlook, while DataPro rated it A1 for the short term and BBB for the long term.

The investor presentation showed that the airline's revenue rose from N10.3bn in 2021 to N90.8bn in 2025, while profit after tax increased from N1.3bn to N23.8bn over the same period.

It reported revenue of N95.6bn in the first half of 2026. Its August turnover rose to N19.4bn from N14.1bn in July, while it



recorded a net profit of N1.2bn, according to the presentation.

United Nigeria Airlines operates a fleet of 10 aircraft, including Embraer ERJ-145s, a Boeing 737-800, Embraer E190s and CRJ900s. It plans to take delivery of six additional aircraft before the end of 2026.

The airline serves 14 destinations across Nigeria and Ghana and has secured approval to operate to six international destinations as a flag carrier, the presentation stated.

It also said the airline had secured Global Distribution System agreements with Amadeus and Sabre, enabling travel agents to access its ticket inventory. The carrier has been an International Air Transport Association Operational Safety Audit-certified operator since 2022 and is an IATA member.

In 2026, the airline signed the IATA Multilateral Interline Traffic Agreement and became a full member of the African Airlines Association.

Afreximbank To Turn State Projects Into Bankable Deals

Afreximbank will bring African state governments, investors and development finance institutions to Calabar, Cross River State, in November to explore funding opportunities for infrastructure, industrialisation and cross-border trade, as the bank seeks to turn regional investment proposals into bankable projects.

The sixth African Sub-Sovereign Governments Network Investment Conference will hold from 12-14 November, 2026, at the Calabar International Convention Centre, with a focus on mobilising capital for projects that can expand intra-African trade and support the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

The conference is being organised by the African Export-Import Bank, in partnership with the Cross River State Government, Nigeria Governors' Forum and the Forum of State Investment Promotion Agencies in Nigeria.

Under the theme, 'The Role of Sub-Sovereigns in Catalysing Development through Trade and Investment', the event will focus on improving the capacity of state and regional governments to prepare commercially viable projects and attract private and institutional financing.

Afreximbank established



AfSNET in 2021 to connect subnational authorities, including states, provinces, counties and municipalities, with investors and financiers. The initiative also seeks to extend the benefits of continental trade agreements to local economies and businesses. According to the bank, the network has attracted more than 1,400 delegates across five editions, with participation from 21 African countries, and facilitated investment opportunities and transactions worth more than \$3.2bn since its inception.

Some of the projects associated with the initiative include a proposed \$40m pharmaceutical

manufacturing plant in Kisumu, Kenya, and the \$871m Nyanza Light Metals project in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province, which is expected to produce titanium dioxide pigment. In Nigeria, Afreximbank has been appointed financial adviser to the Cross River State Government on the proposed \$1.7bn Bakassi Deep Seaport project, which is expected to improve maritime connectivity and support industrial and logistics development.

The conference will build on these initiatives by bringing governments and potential financiers together to identify investment opportunities and advance projects

towards financing and implementation.

Cross River State Governor, Bassey Out, said hosting the conference would provide the state with an opportunity to present its investment opportunities to African and international investors and establish partnerships to support economic development.

Afreximbank's Executive Vice-President for Intra-African Trade and Export Development, Kanayo Awani, said subnational governments were important to Africa's economic transformation because infrastructure, production and investment activities were largely implemented at the local and regional levels.

Nigeria's To Attain Fuel Security With Refineries — Rainoil

The Managing Director of Rainoil Limited, Emmanuel Omuojine, has said modular refineries are key to strengthening Nigeria's fuel security, warning that over-reliance on a single source of supply could expose the market to disruptions. Omuojine spoke during a panel discussion at the recent NAEC energy conference in Lagos, where industry stakeholders examined market liberalisation, performance, public value and commercial opportunities. He cautioned against depending on a single fuel supply source, describing the arrangement as fragile despite its apparent convenience.

"We don't want a single supply that is sweet, but fragile. If there is any disruption, whether it is refinery maintenance, geopolitical tension, or logistics constraints, the whole market feels the shock immediately," he said.

According to him, the future of refining in Nigeria and other West African countries lies in developing modular refineries strategically located close to demand centres to strengthen supply security and improve competition in the downstream petroleum sector.

He also called for market-driven pricing, arguing that government-controlled prices were not sustainable in the long



term and could undermine competition among industry players.

"Pricing should not be fixed by the government, but should be market-driven. As a producer you want to sell at the best price, as a buyer you want the cheapest. Everyone should have the opportunity to compete," he stated.

Omuojine explained that attempts to compel suppliers and refineries to sell petroleum products below international market parity in the

interest of domestic supply could discourage investment and create artificial scarcity.

He further argued that coastal refineries should be allowed to pay competitive, market-reflective prices to secure domestic crude supplies rather than being compelled to sell products below prevailing market rates.

"Telling suppliers to sell at below-market price is not the most effective way to guarantee supply.

IMF Endorses CBN Rate Cut, Warns Premature Easing

The International Monetary Fund has endorsed the Central Bank of Nigeria's decision to cut its benchmark interest rate to 23 per cent, saying the move is justified by progress in taming inflation, although monetary policy remains tight. Director of the IMF's African Department, Zeine Ould Zeidane, said Nigeria had made significant gains in reducing inflation after a period of elevated price pressures and high real interest rates. Speaking at a press

briefing during the ongoing IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings in Thailand, Zeidane said the CBN was right to begin normalising interest rates without abandoning its fight against inflation.

He said the September adjustment should not be mistaken for a broad shift towards an accommodative monetary policy, as the overall stance remains restrictive. "The stance itself remains a tight one," Zeidane said, adding that the CBN's decision was appropriate under the prevailing economic conditions.



He stressed that monetary policy must continue to respond to incoming economic data, with the priority remaining the reduction of inflation towards the central bank's target.

The IMF's endorsement provides international backing for the CBN's decision to lower borrowing costs after

a prolonged period of monetary tightening.

However, the Fund cautioned that central banks must remain vigilant against inflation risks. Its latest regional assessment indicated that further monetary tightening might still be necessary in many African economies, adopting a firmer position than its April assessment.

Presco Scales Up West African Agribusiness Training

Presco Plc, Nigeria's leading fully integrated agro-industrial company and member of the SIAT Group, has scaled its agribusiness talent academy in West Africa following the graduation of 33 young professionals from the inaugural SIAT Academy Graduate Trainee Programme in Benin City.

This was disclosed in a statement issued by the firm on Thursday, where it also announced an expanded second cohort of 70 trainees, representing a 40 per cent increase in intake and reinforcing its long-term commitment to developing future leaders across the region's agro-industrial sector.

Speaking on the milestone, the Group Chief Executive Officer, Adewale Arikawe, emphasised the company's commitment to human capital development.

He said, "Our growth ambitions require us to invest as deliberately in people as we do in plantations, factories, technology and markets. The graduation of our first cohort is an important milestone in building the talent pipeline needed to support our future."

"These young professionals have completed the first stage of their development, and we are committed to supporting their continued growth. Our ambition is



not simply to build a bigger SIAT, but to develop the people who will build and lead it. The expansion of our second cohort to 70 trainees demonstrates that commitment."

Highlighting the practical structure and progression model of the initiative, the Director of SIAT Academy, Reinout Impens, noted, "We began with 50 young graduates, exposing them to real operations, workplace responsibilities and clear performance expectations. Today, 33 have demonstrated their readiness to progress to the next stage. Their graduation marks an important step towards greater professional and management responsibility. With 70 new trainees joining our second cohort, we are building on this foundation to develop the capabilities needed to support the Group's strategic ambitions."

Reflecting on his journey through the initiative, Michael Omi, a graduate of the inaugural cohort, shared how the experience

broadened his industrial capabilities:

"Before joining SIAT, I knew very little about the agro-industrial sector. The programme has given me valuable technical experience and a deeper understanding of how the industry operates. Progressing to the Management Trainee Programme is an exciting opportunity to build on that experience and pursue my ambition of combining engineering expertise with business management."

Listed on the Nigerian Exchange Limited, Presco Plc said the initiative established in 2025 serves as a strategic training and development platform designed to strengthen technical, professional, and leadership capabilities across the SIAT Group and the broader palm oil industry. Its one-year Graduate Trainee Programme combines classroom learning, practical experience, and mentorship, offering training opportunities across the group's operations in Edo, Delta,

and Rivers states, as well as Ghana.

The inaugural cohort welcomed 50 graduates in July and September 2025. Following a year of structured training, practical assignments, and performance assessments, 33 participants completed the programme and will now progress to the Management Trainee Programme, taking on greater responsibilities toward future management roles.

The graduation event brought together senior leadership, academy representatives, and trainees to celebrate the graduates' achievements and recognise outstanding performance and project delivery.

The SIAT Academy initiative aligns with Nigeria's National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy 2022–2027 and supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly quality education, decent work, and sustainable industrial development.

Nigeria's External Reserves Hit \$55.1bn - Cardoso

Nigeria's foreign exchange reserves have climbed to \$55.1bn, their highest level in 18 years, strengthening the country's capacity to withstand global economic disruptions, Central Bank of Nigeria Governor, Olayemi Cardoso, has said.

Cardoso said the growing reserves buffer, alongside relative stability in the naira and easing inflation, would help limit the impact of external pressures on households and businesses.

He spoke at the ongoing IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings in Bangkok, Thailand, where he defended the benefits of the country's economic reforms and monetary policy adjustments.

According to the CBN governor, Nigeria's stronger external position has reduced the nation's vulnerability to global shocks, including uncertainties arising from geopolitical conflicts

and international trade tensions.

He argued that without the improvement in reserves, Nigeria could have faced more severe consequences from the same pressures affecting other economies.

Cardoso said the accumulation of foreign exchange reserves was not merely a financial indicator but also an important safeguard for the wider economy.

He explained that a stronger reserve position gives the country greater capacity to respond to external pressures and helps support confidence in the FX market.

The CBN governor also pointed to the naira's recent performance, saying the currency had remained relatively stable and appreciated, with consequences for economic activity.

A more stable exchange rate can reduce the naira cost of imported goods and production inputs, potentially easing



pressure on businesses and consumers. However, the extent of any relief depends on how exchange rate movements feed through to retail prices.

Cardoso maintained that Nigerians were benefiting from the policy improvements, even if those gains were not always immediately apparent.

The CBN governor identified falling inflation as another important channel through which economic reforms could benefit ordinary Nigerians, particularly low-income households.

He described inflation as a particularly severe burden on poorer households because rising prices reduce the purchasing power of their incomes.

Lower inflation, if sustained, would help slow the rate at which household budgets are eroded by increases in the cost of food, transport, housing and other essentials.

However, a decline in the inflation rate does not necessarily mean that prices are falling. It means prices are rising more slowly, unless the economy records outright price declines.

Cardoso urged Nigerians to acknowledge the improvements recorded in the economy rather than dismissing the gains from ongoing reforms.

Nigeria's external reserves continued to rise through September and into October, according to the figures cited in the report.

Mutual Benefits Assurance To Review Q3 Results

Mutual Benefits Assurance Plc will hold a board meeting on 29 October, 2026, to review and approve its unaudited financial statements for the third quarter ended 30 September, 2026.

The insurer disclosed this in a notice dated 15 October and signed by Company Secretary, Jide

Ibitayo.

The meeting will focus on the company's Q3 financial performance for 2026, after which the approved financial statements will be released to the Nigerian Exchange Limited.

The company also said its closed period, which began on 1 October, 2026, would remain in effect



until 24 hours after the publication of Q3 financial statements.

During this period, insiders of the company

and their connected persons are prohibited from trading, directly or indirectly, in its shares.

Tinubu's NNPC Order Cuts Deductions To N8.4tn – W'Bank

The deductions from Nigeria's Federation Account fell by N1.7tn in the first half of 2026, following the Federal Government's move to stop certain oil revenue retentions by the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited and redirect gas-flaring penalties to the Federation Account.

The World Bank disclosed this in its Nigeria Development Update report analysed by our correspondent on Thursday, noting that total deductions declined from N10.1tn in the first half of 2025 to N8.4tn in the corresponding period of 2026.

The reduction represented a fall of N1.7tn, or 16.8 per cent, year-on-year. As a share of the nation's Gross Domestic Product, deductions dropped from 4.6 per cent to 3.4 per cent, a decline of 1.2 percentage points.

The World Bank attributed the development partly to Executive Order 9 of 2026, signed by President Bola Tinubu on February 13, which ended the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited's 30 per cent management-fee and Frontier Exploration Fund deductions from profit oil and profit gas under specified petroleum contracts.

The order also redirected proceeds from gas-flaring penalties to the



Federation Account, rather than the Midstream and Downstream Gas Infrastructure Fund. The measures were designed to increase the revenue available for distribution among the Federal Government, states and local governments.

The World Bank said the reduction in deductions helped increase distributed Federation Account revenues from N7.6tn in the first half of 2025 to N10.5tn in the first half of 2026.

That represented an increase of N2.9tn, or 38.2 per cent, over the period.

In its assessment of Nigeria's fiscal performance, the bank stated, "Total deductions fell from 4.6 per cent of GDP (N10.1tn) in H1 2025 to 3.4 per cent (N8.4tn) in H1 2026, partly supported by the February 2026 Executive Order eliminating Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited management-fee

and Frontier Exploration Fund deductions and redirecting gas-flare penalties to the Federation Account, alongside a sharp reduction in refunds to subnational governments."

It added, "As deductions fell significantly, distributed revenues rose from 3.5 per cent of GDP (N7.6tn) to 4.2 per cent (N10.5tn)."

The development comes as state and local governments face mounting pressure to finance infrastructure, education, healthcare, security and other public services amid elevated borrowing costs and persistent expenditure demands.

Executive Order 9 was introduced due to concerns over the amount of petroleum revenue retained or channelled into funds before reaching the Federation Account.

Under the Petroleum Industry Act 2021, NNPCCL was entitled to a

30 per cent management fee on profit oil and profit gas from specified production-sharing, profit-sharing and risk-service contracts. The framework also provided for a 30 per cent allocation of profit oil and profit gas to the Frontier Exploration Fund.

In addition, gas-flaring penalties were paid into the Midstream and Downstream Gas Infrastructure Fund to support gas infrastructure development.

The Tinubu administration argued that the arrangements reduced the revenue available to the Federation and created overlapping funding mechanisms. The executive order consequently directed that the specified petroleum revenues be remitted to the Federation Account, while gas-flaring penalties would no longer flow into the gas infrastructure fund.

Oil Revenue Rebounds: FAAC Allocation Hits N2.43tn

The Federal Government, 36 states and 774 local government councils shared N2.428tn from the Federation Account in October 2026, representing an increase of N90bn, or 3.85 per cent, from the N2.338tn distributed in September. The increase followed a recovery in statutory revenue, supported by improved receipts from petroleum-related taxes, royalties and import duties, despite a decline in Value Added Tax collections. The allocation, which represents revenue generated in September,

was approved at the October meeting of the Federation Account Allocation Committee held in Abuja.

This was disclosed in a statement issued on Thursday by the Director of Press and Public Relations in the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation, Bawa Mokwa.

According to the statement, "A total sum of N2.428tn, being September 2026 Federation Account Revenue, has been shared to the Federal Government, States and the Local Government Councils."

An analysis by The



Punch showed that the latest distribution marks a modest recovery from the sharp decline recorded in September, when FAAC allocations fell by N669bn, or 22.2 per cent, from the record N3.007tn shared in August.

Despite the improvement, the October allocation remained N579bn, or 19.3 per cent, below the August peak, which was the highest monthly FAAC distribution in reviewed

records dating back to 2019.

The allocation was also N122bn, or 4.8 per cent, below the N2.550tn distributed in July, although it exceeded the N2.300tn shared in June.

According to the FAAC communiqué, gross statutory revenue increased by N246.384bn, or approximately 8.6 per cent, to N3.096tn in September from N2.850tn in August.

NGX Records Increase As Equities Rally Across Sectors

Trading on the Nigerian Exchange Limited closed on a positive note on Thursday, as the benchmark All-Share Index recorded a modest gain of 33.48 points to settle at 247,707.13 points compared to the 247,673.65 points recorded on Wednesday. The market capitalisation of listed equities similarly appreciated, closing higher at N160.83tn from N160.81tn recorded in the previous trading session. Across the broader trading landscape, activity levels reflected robust investor engagement as total equity volume crossed hundreds of millions across major sectors, anchored by

strong performances in key counters.

Sectoral performance was largely upbeat, spearheaded by significant rallies in specialised market indicators. The NGX Oil and Gas Index led the sectoral advances with a notable surge to close at 6,194.16 points, up from 6,034.68 points, driven by strong buying interest in energy and exploration equities. The NGX Lotus Islamic Index also advanced firmly to 23,164.84 points, while the NGX Growth Index scaled higher to 26,970.58 points.

Additional positive momentum was observed in the NGX Main-Board



Index, which climbed to 10,820.66 points, and the NGX Banking Index, which ticked upward to settle at 2,556.46 points. Conversely, a few indices experienced downward pressure, including the NGX Premium Index, which retreated to 30,909.21 points, and the NGX Consumer Goods Index, which closed relatively flat at 4,033.67 points.

Individual stock

performances highlighted active trading across premier and main board securities. In the banking subsector, United Bank for Africa Plc recorded positive price movement, closing at N43.15 with a 0.35 per cent gain on heavy volume of over 36.3 million shares traded, while Zenith Bank Plc traded actively with over 12.3 million shares changing hands at N127.70.



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ENTERTAINMENT

**I Defeated 17 Governors,
Won't Support APC
— Davido Declares**

FASHION

**Aso-Oke Cargo Pant:
The Stylish Yoruba Wear
With Global Touch**

**Stunning Pre-Wedding Photos of
Zlatan Ibile & Davita Omoniyi**

SPORT

Ronaldo Handed 30-Day Suspension By Portuguese FA

TOPNOTCH

...Celebrity Gist Unlimited

Begging Has Become Part of Nigerian Culture — Omotola Jalade Raises Alarm

Veteran Nigerian actress, Omotola Jalade Ekeinde has criticised the entitlement mentality of the Nigerian society, lamenting that the country now has a culture of begging.

Speaking in a recent episode of *Activating Success With Love Idoko*, the movie icon said she doesn't support or encourage begging in any form except if it is a life-and-death situation.

According to her, there is no reason anyone can't work.

She said, "A lot of Nigerians take opportunities for granted. And one thing we have to understand is that nobody owes you anything. Nigerians now have a culture of begging.

"I don't support or encourage begging. I believe that there is no reason why anybody can't work. There is something you can do. There is a kind of value you can bring to humanity.

"Everybody has needs, including me. There are some needs I have that if I was entitled I would go and beg certain people.

"So, don't feel like because you don't have money like me, you are the only one who has a reason to beg. At every level, we all have needs. But we are all struggling through it. Even if you have to beg, it should be a life-and-death situation."

Omotola added, "Try as much as you can not to beg and be a nuisance. Begging reduces your own self-worth.



How Heartbreak Led Me To Sleep With 200 Women In A Year - Nigerian Rapper, Phenom

Nigerian rapper Phenom has opened up about a dark phase of his life, revealing how heartbreak pushed him into a reckless lifestyle that saw him sleep with about 200 women annually for two consecutive years.

The rapper made the revelation while reflecting on his past struggles, the toll his promiscuous lifestyle took on his mental health, and how his eventual encounter with God changed his life.

According to Phenom, the experience began after a painful heartbreak that left him emotionally

unsettled and drove him into a period of excessive sexxwal activity.

"It was one heartbreak, actually, that made me just go crazy. It was 200 girls in a year at the time. So I did that for like two years straight," he said.

Phenom admitted that despite his encounters with numerous women, he struggled to find peace of mind. He explained that he constantly feared he might have contracted HIV, with even minor symptoms making him anxious about his health.

"It was so bad. I didn't even have peace of mind. I felt like I had HIV, man.



I Defeated 17 Governors, Won't Support APC — Davido Declares

Popular Nigerian singer David Adeleke, popularly known as Davido, has ruled out supporting the All Progressives Congress, APC, ahead of the 2027 presidential election, despite his uncle, Osun State Governor Ademola Adeleke, endorsing President Bola Tinubu. In a recent video making the rounds online, the Grammy-nominated artist made his position known during an interview with News Central TV, just days after the Osun State governorship

election and the announcement of the results.

The singer explained that although his uncle, Governor Ademola Adeleke, declared support for President Bola Tinubu after winning the election, he was not obligated to follow his uncle's political choice.

He also recalled his involvement in previous political campaigns, including his support for former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar when they were in the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).



Skitmaker, Sabinus Questions Nigerians' Silence Over Bad Governance in The Country

Popular Nigerian comedian and skitmaker, Sabinus, has expressed concern over the state of the country, questioning why Nigerians continue to remain silent despite the numerous challenges facing them.

The comedian lamented that so much is happening in Nigeria, yet many citizens appear unwilling to come together and demand accountability from those in power.

In a statement that has sparked conversations about governance and citizens' rights, Sabinus

questioned when Nigerians would unite as one and demand what they rightfully deserve from their leaders.

"A lot is going on in this country, and we're just keeping quiet. When are we going to come together as one and demand what we're being owed?" he asked.

His comments reflect the growing frustration among Nigerians over the country's challenges, with many citizens expressing concerns about economic hardship, rising living costs and the state of governance.

Sabinus' remarks have also raised an important question about collective action and the role of citizens in holding leaders accountable.



I Panicked When Davido Ghosted Me — Mayorkun

Nigerian singer, Adewale Mayowa Emmanuel, popularly known as Mayorkun, has shared how Davido "miraculously" messaged and signed him after snubbing him for two weeks. Speaking in a recent episode of the Afropolitan podcast, Mayorkun explained that he had quit his banking job after Davido promised to sign him after seeing a clip of him singing

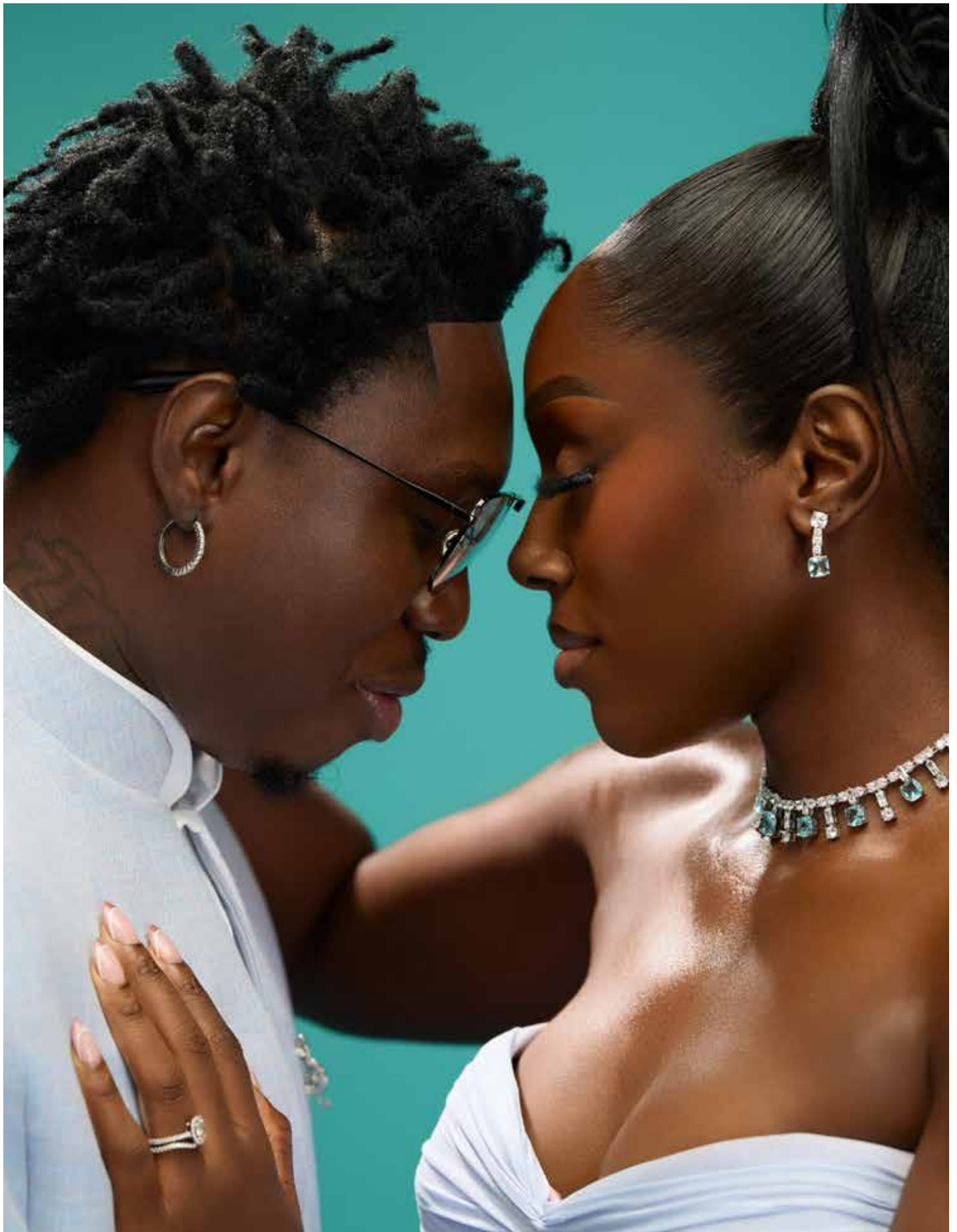
online, but the DMW ghosted him for two weeks, which left him in panic.

Mayorkun said he resorted to seeking spiritual assistance and started going to church, trusting God to intervene.

He recalled that after leading a praise and worship session in the church one day, Davido texted him immediately and asked him to move into his house.



Stunning Pre-Wedding Photos of Zlatan Ibile & Davita Omoniyi





Can Men and Women Truly Be 'Just Friends'?

We hear it all the time that “men and women can’t be just friends.” But is that really true? People often equate closeness between men and women with romance, and it’s not hard to see why. But what if a deep connection exists without any romantic or sexual undertones? That’s where platonic relationships come in.

What a Platonic Relationship Actually Is

A platonic relationship is a deep bond between two people without romantic or sexual involvement. The term originates from the Greek philosopher Plato, who described love focused on intellectual and emotional connection rather than physical desire.

In modern times, it simply means a friendship where closeness is real, but attraction isn’t part of the equation.

Benefits of Platonic Relationships

1. Emotional safety

You can share your thoughts freely without worrying about judgment or romantic consequences.

2. Reduced pressure

There’s no expectation to date, break up, or define the relationship constantly.

3. Honest companionship

Friends provide support and company simply because they care.

4. Healthier opposite-gender friendships



A platonic dynamic challenges stereotypes that men and women can’t be close without romance.

5. Non-transactional support

Your friend is there for you during tough times, not because they expect anything in return.

Misconceptions People Have

1. “Platonic friends eventually catch feelings.”

The idea that a close, emotional connection must eventually turn romantic is a plotline straight out of a rom-com.

In reality? Not always.

Sure, feelings can evolve. We’re human, and attraction is complex. But to assume it’s inevitable completely misses the point of a platonic bond. Think about it: do you assume you’ll eventually develop a crush on your sibling because you love

them? Of course not. That love exists in its own category. So, while feelings can happen, they are the exception, not the rule.

2. “Men and women can’t be close without dating.”

This might be one of the most persistent and frustrating misconceptions out there. It’s a belief that’s culturally reinforced everywhere, suggesting that friendship is just a holding pattern for romance.

But let’s call this what it is: false.

This idea not only underestimates the capacity for human connection but also reduces people to their genders alone. A strong friendship isn’t about gender. It thrives on shared values, mutual trust, inside jokes, deep respect, and a genuine

interest in each other’s well-being. To write off this entire category of friendship is to miss out on some of the most meaningful connections life has to offer.

3. “A platonic friend is just a backup plan.”

The “backup plan” or “placeholder” misconception suggests that a platonic friend is just someone you keep around in case a romantic prospect doesn’t work out. It frames friendship as a consolation prize.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Real platonic relationships are primary sources of support, not substitutes. These friends are chosen family, and their role is irreplaceable and worthy of celebration on its own terms.

Aso-Oke Cargo Pant:

The Stylish Yoruba Wear With Global Touch

By Ajibade Morakinyo

The world of fashion is witnessing a bold renaissance where ancient tradition meets urban utility, and nowhere is this more evident than in the rise of Aso-Oke cargo pants.

For centuries, Aso-Oke—the prestigious hand-woven cloth of the Yoruba people of Southwest Nigeria—was reserved exclusively for grand ceremonies, weddings, and royalty. However, a new wave of Afro-centric designers has reimagined this ceremonial fabric, stripping away its rigidity to birth a streetwear staple. The Aso-Oke cargo pant represents a seamless fusion of the fabric's regal history with the rugged, functional silhouette of modern street fashion, offering a look that is deeply rooted in culture yet undeniably contemporary.

As these pieces make their way from the streets of Lagos to runways in London and New York, they tell a story of resilience and adaptation. Wearing Aso-Oke cargos is a declaration of identity—a way to wear history lightly, stylishly, and unapologetically on the global stage. Here are some styles to inspire you when rocking this pant...









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Monuments of Waste 2: Excessive Consumption and Submission to Capricious Pleasures

“Verily spendthrifts are brothers of the Evil Ones; and the Evil One is to his Lord (Himself) ungrateful.” (Quran 17: 27)

A nation will enjoy glory and exaltation if it is characterized by a number of qualities, the most important of which is moderation in consumption. By contrast, extravagance, wasting of wealth and excessive consumption indicate submission to capricious pleasures and instinctive desires.

There is no gainsaying the fact that we are a very wasteful nation and its associated malaise; extravagance. As a nation, we leave the needful and pursue projects that are of little or no benefit to the socio-economic welfare of our people.

According to Adebamiwa Michael: “Nigeria may be sitting on a poorly understood form of public wealth, government-owned land, buildings, housing schemes, industrial facilities, offices, warehouses, institutional assets, infrastructure projects



and other properties whose current condition, utilization, ownership and economic potential are not always readily visible to the public.”

Abandoned projects such as the housing project along Ilubirin Marina in Lagos; other exercises in stupidity, such as the craze for establishing airports in every town; construction of new state houses and governor’s offices by each successive state administration and worst of all; abandonment of projects initiated by predecessors, even when they are of the same party; such as the Monorail project in Rivers State.

The culture of waste has extended to huge wastage

of our youths who have been reduced to a ‘wasted generation’, more on this later. It is normal for the present to look forward to a glorious future. But in our case, we are forced to look to the past with nostalgia; craving for a return to the former and the unwinding of the hands of the clock.

In education, social life and the provision of the dividends of a better life, our past is better than the present and the coming generation have no hope of a better future because their fathers, uncles and elders have squandered and wasted their patrimony. Our excesses are legendary. We are known all over the world

for our extravagance and immodest living.

From a biblical standpoint, excessive consumption can be a sin when it stems from uncontrolled desire, harms the body, distracts from God, or leads to poor decisions. The call is to moderation, self-control, and using food and drink in ways that honor God and serve others.

Proverbs 23:20–21 cautions against joining “winebibbers” or “gluttonous eaters,” linking such habits to poverty and laziness. Philippians 3:19 describes a person whose “god is their stomach,” equating gluttony with idolatry. Ephesians 5:18 contrasts being “filled with wine”

(excess) with being “filled with the Spirit,” urging self-control.

The story of Esau selling his birthright for a meal (Genesis 25:29–34) illustrates prioritizing immediate gratification over long-term blessing. In Christian tradition, gluttony is one of the seven deadly sins and is defined as overindulgence in food, drink, or other pleasures to the point of waste. It is not the food itself that is sinful, but the disordered desire and lack of restraint

Excessive consumption is the enemy of economizing on riches and resources and a short-cut to impoverishment and bankruptcy. Addressing his relatives, a wise man said: “Spending the night starved but endowed with entitlements is much better than spending the night satiated with nutrients but penniless.”

In the same vein, Omar Al-Faraq says: “In my view, irrational spending is more risky for you than poverty; for scarcity hardly inflicts someone endowed with common sense, and wealth will generally dissipate if managed by corrupt minds; indeed, optimal management of existing resources is better than half of one’s earnings.” There is no doubt, our wealth is being managed by corrupt and inept minds.

Controlling the economy of the community and preserving its resources

could only be achieved after restraining the irresponsible behavior of dissipaters of wealth and corrupters, be they organizations, institutions, households, or individuals. Extravagance manifests itself in exceeding limits, going beyond recognized bounds in terms of action and behavior. Extravagance equally implies either unnecessary expenditure or pertinent and necessary expenditure that exceeds the limits of necessity.



What is indeed most striking about contemporary generations is their relentless extravagance. Wealthy people are maintaining their extravagant spending behavior while those suffering from tight budgets are borrowing money in order to indulge in extravagance and lavish spending on what they do not actually need.

Extravagance leads to poverty and neediness. There are many instances of households which were

ably managed by fathers who adopted a moderate strategy of consumption but were succeeded by extravagant children who are overcome by opulence. Thus, they gave free rein to their capricious desires until their households collapsed and they were ruined.

O Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: Eat and drink: But waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasters. (Quran

stinginess and miserliness. This principle is clearly stated in the Quran: “And do not extend your provision to [the extent of] excess, indeed, He does not like the extravagant.” [Al-Isra, Quran 17:29] From this verse, it is evident that moderation is the cornerstone of a balanced and just life. Exceeding what is required leads to extremism while falling short results in negligence.

Allah, exalted is His praise, specifically addresses the

7:31). Surah Al-A'raf (7:31–41) addresses modest dress, moderation in eating and drinking, and the permissibility of lawful adornments and provisions for believers. Extravagance in the Holy Quran is a significant theme that underscores the importance of moderation in all aspects of life. Allah the Almighty has prohibited all forms of extravagance, whether it manifests as excessive giving and spending or as negligence through

extravagant in the Holy Quran while directing the command towards faith, obedience, and moderation in behavior for everyone. The extravagant are depicted as leaders of disbelief, immorality, misguidance and polytheism. Their actions lead others astray, causing societal corruption and injustice.

In societies led by the extravagant, moral virtues and spiritual values become rare, leading to widespread corruption

and the eventual downfall of the community. The Quran narrates the consequences of such behavior: And We rained down on them a shower (of brimstone): And evil was the shower on those who were admonished (but heeded not)! (Quran 27:58)

These verse highlight how extravagant societies face divine retribution, leading to their destruction.

The Quran establishes a clear and critical relationship between extravagance and social justice. Key points include:

Disappearance of Justice: When wealth accumulates in the hands of a few, societal balance is disrupted, leading to extreme wealth and extravagance.

Negative Behaviors: Extreme wealth fosters excessive consumption, wastefulness, moral decay, and the oppression of the poor by the rich.

Advocacy for Balance: The Quran promotes a just, moderate, and balanced society as a countermeasure to extravagance, which otherwise leads to societal collapse.

This emphasis on social justice ensures that wealth and resources are distributed fairly, preventing the rise of extravagant lifestyles that harm the community.

Extravagance poses significant threats to the well-being of nations. Its

consequences include: **Stagnation in Ancestral Thinking:** Societies become resistant to change and cling to outdated beliefs.

Denial of the Afterlife: Moral decay leads to the rejection of spiritual beliefs.

Numbness of the Senses: Excessive indulgence in sins dulls moral sensitivity.

Rejection of Reform: Fear of losing power and wealth causes societies to resist calls for change from reformers, messengers, and prophets.

Moreover, extravagant civilizations distort reality and pervert truths, justifying and encouraging corruption as normal aspects of life.

The Quran's teachings on extravagance emphasize the importance of moderation and social justice in maintaining a balanced and prosperous society. By avoiding both excess and

negligence, individuals and communities can prevent societal decay and ensure the well-being of nations. Embracing these Quranic principles fosters a just, harmonious, and spiritually enriched life.

Borrowing money for leisure traveling and for throwing lavish parties is prompted by nothing else but vanity and unbecoming habits. This has for so many years, if not for a lifetime, burdened heads of families with heavy debts and embittered their lives. Such negative outcomes are only caused by extravagance, wastefulness and the absence of rationalistic disposition.

The most common waste is done in weddings and burials. No doubt it is an important part of our life, but one should not go beyond the limits in spending excessively for things that are unnecessary. Booking the most lavish and expensive

hall for a wedding party, to show off and giving the excuse that there are so many guests. Buying and making expensive bridal dresses that many people cannot buy and take it on rent.

Thus a wise person should not follow such obscene practices, which are disliked by Allah, only to please people and get noticed by society. The Quran described many nations that were destroyed for being extravagant and as a result of their committing excesses.

Any society seeking to rise from its stumble must put an end to extravagance and wasteful spending and invest along the line of righteousness and reform. There is however a more serious monument of waste; that which pertains to the waste of human and material resources of a nation. This aspect of waste is the bane of our underdevelopment and impoverishment. It ranks pari-passu with corruption as our greatest headache. This is what we shall turn to in our next huthba. In Sha Allah

Allazee at'amahum min joo'in wa aamanahum min khawf: "Who provides them with food against hunger, and with security against fear (of danger)." (Surah Quraish, Quran 106:4)

Barka Juma'at and a happy weekend



Egypt To Host 2026 CAF Women's Champions League

Egypt has been confirmed as the host nation for the 2026 CAF Women's Champions League, Completesports.com reports.

The North African country will host the continent's premier women's club football competition for the second consecutive edition, having also staged the inaugural tournament in 2021.

Eight clubs from across Africa will compete for the title, with teams qualifying through their respective CAF zonal competitions.

Among the confirmed participants are South Africa's Mamelodi Sundowns, two-time champions representing COSAFA;

Uganda's Kawempe Muslim Ladies, representing CECAFA; Cameroon's Lekie FF, representing UNIFFAC; and Mali's USFAS, representing WAFU Zone A.

Morocco will have two representatives at the tournament. Fath Union Sport (FUS) Rabat secured qualification through the UNAF qualifiers, while AS FAR Rabat will compete as the defending champions.

The remaining two places are yet to be confirmed. One will go to the representative from WAFU Zone B, while the other will be awarded to Egypt's representative.



Ronaldo Handed 30-Day Suspension By Portuguese FA

The Portuguese Football Federation (FPF) has handed Cristiano Ronaldo a 30-day suspension following his premature departure from the national team camp after a reported rift with coach Jorge Jesus over his role in the squad. The federation's disciplinary council upheld the charge against the 41-year-old forward in full and imposed a fine of €255. The panel found that Ronaldo intentionally committed an offense under Article 160(1) of the federation's disciplinary

regulations, which typically carries a suspension of one to six months for players who leave national team duties without authorization.

However, the disciplinary council considered mitigating factors presented by the player's legal team, including his historic career honors and a public apology issued on October 6, 2026, in which he expressed remorse for leaving his teammates and failing to acknowledge supporters.

The official ruling reads: "On these grounds... the Disciplinary Council decides... to uphold the charges in full and, consequently, convict the Defendant Cristiano Ronaldo dos Santos Aveiro..."



Fulham's First EPL Victory: A Long Time Coming – Iwobi

Alex Iwobi believes Fulham can get their season back on track following their hard-fought 1-0 victory over Hull City at Craven Cottage on Saturday. The Nigeria international scored the decisive goal in the first half to end Fulham's winless run in the Premier League this season and secure a much-needed victory for the London club.

Iwobi stressed the importance of maintaining their momentum

and building on the positive result in their upcoming fixtures.

The midfielder admitted that the victory had been a long time coming, insisting that the team's performances had often been better than their results suggested.

"The win was a long time coming. We have performed well even though the results spoke otherwise," Iwobi told Fulham TV.

"The manager has asked us to keep going, and hopefully the luck will go our way. It has now started, so we just have to kick on and use this momentum for the rest of the season."



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 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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