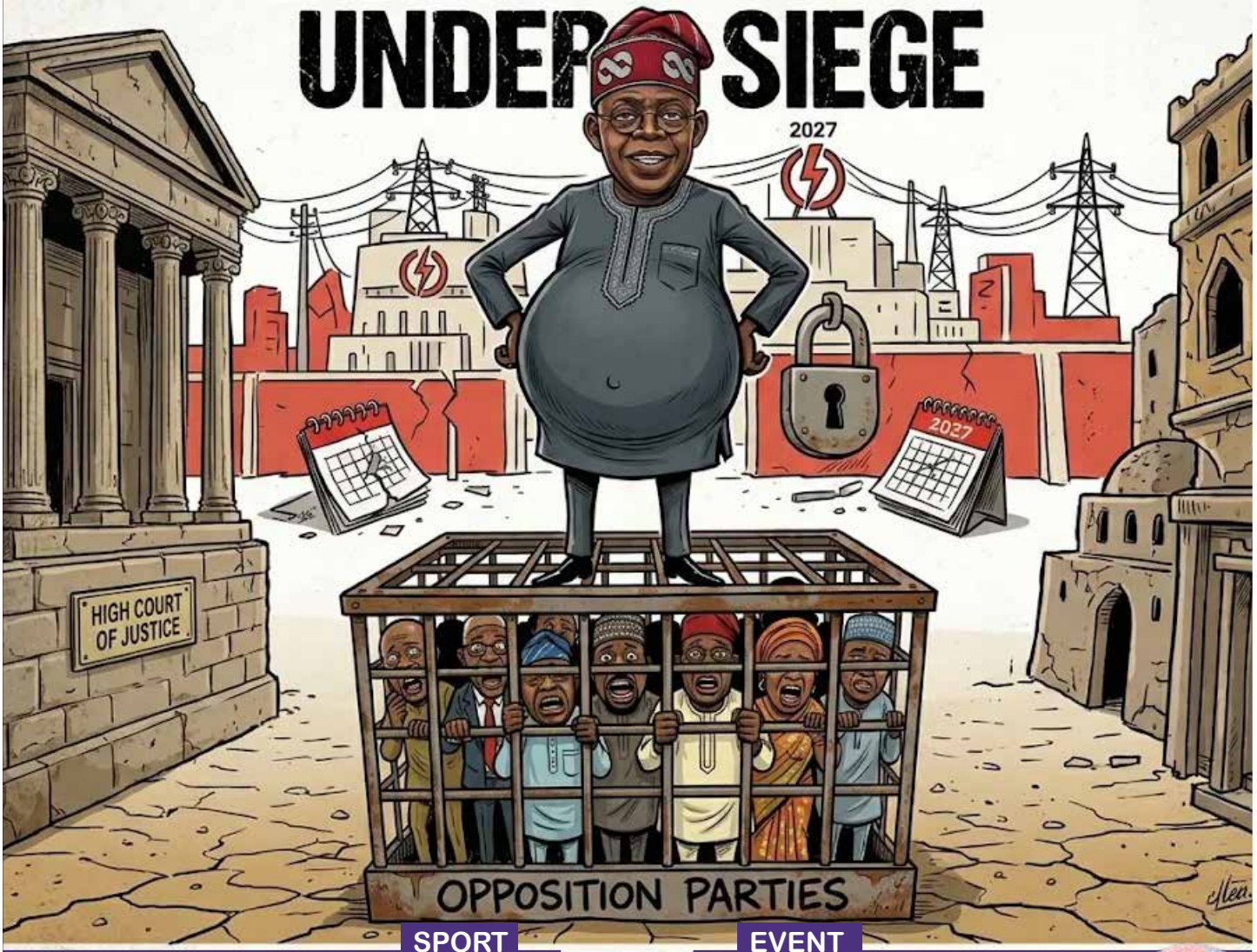
Dapo Akande: Nigerian Trained Lawyer Elected ICJ Judge

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2027: OPPOSITION UNDER SIEGE



SPORT



Nigeria Wins Historic U-17 Women's World Cup

EVENT

Rock of Salvation Dedicates Cathedral, Celebrates 30 Years



Obi Tasks Tinubu to Give Account of N15.8trn Subsidy Savings, $100bn Borrowing

Rock of Salvation Apostolic Church Celebrates 30th Anniversary, Dedicates New Cathedral in Ibadan

By Funmi Ilelabayo



It was a remarkable celebration of faith, gratitude and divine blessings as Rock of Salvation Apostolic Church marked its 30th anniversary with the dedication of its church cathedral at Havilah Mountain of Fire, Amuloko, Ibadan, Oyo State.

The colourful ceremony, which attracted prominent personalities, religious leaders, traditional rulers and other distinguished guests, also celebrated the ministry and spiritual journey of Prophetess Mary Olubori.

The event commenced with an uplifting praise and worship session, followed by an opening prayer led by Apostle Israel Ayanfe Olubori.

A major highlight of the celebration was a soul-stirring sermon delivered by the Senior Pastor of Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC), London, Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo.

In his sermon, Ashimolowo described Prophetess Mary Olubori as a woman of virtue who had found favour in the sight of God. He praised her commitment to the work of God, describing her as a responsible mother and a woman of great faith.

He further offered prayers for the celebrant and her family, invoking God's continued blessings, protection and favour upon them.

The programme continued with a thanksgiving session, during which guests joined the celebrant in expressing gratitude to God for three decades of God's faithfulness and the successful completion of the church cathedral.

Popular gospel musician, Yinka Ayefele, added glamour to the occasion with a captivating musical performance, entertaining guests with his melodious voice and energetic band.

Guests were also treated to a grand reception featuring an array of delicious delicacies and refreshments.

One of the major highlights of the ceremony was the official dedication of the church cathedral. His Imperial Majesty, Oba Dr Adeyeye Enitan Babatunde Ogunwusi, Ojaja II, the Ooni of Ife, led other distinguished dignitaries in the ceremonial ribbon-cutting, formally unveiling the new cathedral to the admiration and excitement of worshippers and guests.

In a heartwarming moment, Prophetess Mary Olubori received a surprise gift from her

husband, who presented her with a luxurious Mercedes-Benz G-Wagon as part of the anniversary celebration.

Another memorable moment was the cutting of a beautifully crafted anniversary cake, supervised by the Timi of Ede, His Royal Majesty, Oba Munirudeen Adesola Lawal, Laminisa II.

The celebration subsequently transformed into a lively atmosphere of music, dancing and entertainment as guests joined the celebrant to mark the milestone occasion.

Among the dignitaries who graced the event was the Executive Governor of Osun State, who was represented by the Commissioner for Commerce and Industry, Rev. Bunmi Jenyo.

Other notable personalities in attendance included Olori Ronke Ademiluyi Ogunwusi, Olori Ashley Ogunwusi and the Iyaloja-General of the Federation, Folashade Tinubu Ojo, among several other prominent guests.

The 30th anniversary celebration and cathedral dedication marked a significant milestone in the history of Rock of Salvation Apostolic Church, reflecting three decades of spiritual commitment, service, growth and dedication to the work of God.


































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2027: INEC To Meet Over Atiku's Ticket

The Independent National Electoral Commission has said it will not take a position on the leadership crisis rocking the African Democratic Congress until it obtains and studies the certified true copy of the Federal High Court judgment which invalidated the leadership the David Mark-led leadership of the African Democratic Congress.

INEC's position followed Thursday's judgment of the Federal High Court in Abuja, which nullified the Mark-led caretaker committee and invalidated decisions taken under its leadership, including the emergence of former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar as the party's presidential candidate for the 2027 general elections.

Speaking to Sunday Punch, the INEC National Commissioner and Chairman of the Information and Voter Education Committee, Mohammed Haruna, said the commission's next line of action following the judgment would be to first obtain the certified true copy before making any decision.

"We can't take a position until we see tthe judgement ourselves. We have to get the certified true copy because we don't take decisions or reports of what the court said based on reports because the reports could be wrong," he said.



Haruna added that the matter would be considered at the commission's meeting next week.

"Well, this one is very straightforward even then, we are all here till next week when the commission meets. We will have to meet over it," he said.

Haruna also indicated that the commission would comply with any further court order arising from an appeal by the Mark-led faction.

"Obviously, if the David Mark faction should appeal, which I am sure they will, and they get an injunction for stay of execution, obviously, we'll have to obey that judgement," he added.

Justice Peter Lifu of the Federal High Court, Abuja, on Thursday, nullified the leadership of the Mark-led caretaker committee, declaring its emergence contrary to the ADC constitution, relevant provisions of the Electoral Act and the 1999 Constitution.

The judgment followed a suit marked FHC/ABJ/CS/1819/2025, instituted by a former ADC Deputy National Chairman (North-East), Nafiu Bala Gombe, who challenged the process through which Mark and other members of the caretaker committee assumed control of the party.

Gombe had argued that following the resignation of the party's former National Chairman, Ralph Nwosu, he was constitutionally entitled to take over its leadership.

He consequently asked the court to invalidate the actions of the Mark-led leadership and restrain Mark and former Minister of Interior, Rauf Aregbesola, from parading themselves as National Chairman and National Secretary of the party, respectively.

Upholding the suit, Justice Lifu nullified the process through which the caretaker committee emerged and the party conducted its presidential primary that produced Atiku as its flag bearer for the 2027 elections.

The court also invalidated Aregbesola's emergence as National Secretary, the appointments of other national officers and the nominations of candidates presented by the party for the 2027 general elections.

It further ordered INEC not to recognise or act on decisions taken at the ADC's 99th National Executive Committee meeting held on July 27, 2025.

The ADC, INEC, Mark, Aregbesola and Nwosu were listed as defendants in the suit.

Meet Dapo Akande, Nigerian-trained Lawyer Elected ICJ Judge

Professor Dapo Akande, a Nigerian-trained lawyer who has been elected as a judge of the International Court of Justice, has built an international career spanning nearly three decades in public international law, legal scholarship and international dispute settlement.

Akande, who was elected to the ICJ on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, will serve a nine-year term at the United Nations' principal judicial organ.

This, he becomes the first UK judge to occupy a seat on the court in nine years.

According to his profile on the University of Oxford website, as obtained by our correspondent on Wednesday, Akande is the Chichele Professor of Public International Law at the university's Faculty of Law.

He is also a Fellow of All Souls College and Co-Director of the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict.

The don is also a member of the United Nations International Law Commission and a barrister at Essex Court Chambers.

Akande's academic career has included visiting professorships in the United States, Europe and Australia, including at Yale Law School.

He was also the 2015 Sir Ninian Stephen Visiting Scholar at the University of Melbourne Law School's Asia-Pacific Centre for Military Law.

The Oxford professor specialises in several areas of international law, including the law of international organisations, armed conflict, international criminal law, cyber operations and international dispute settlement.

His academic publications include Oppenheim's International Law: The United Nations, published by Oxford University Press in 2017, which received the 2019 Certificate of Merit from the American Society of International Law.

In addition to his feathers, he is also co-editor of The Oxford Guide to International Humanitarian Law (2020), Human Rights and 21st Century Challenges: Poverty, Conflict and the Environment (2020), and Practitioners Guide to the Application of Human Rights Law in Armed Conflict (2016).

Akande was also a member of the International Group of Experts that prepared the Tallinn Manual 2.0 on the International Law Applicable to Cyber Operations, published in 2017.

His research leadership includes convening



the Oxford Process on International Law Protections in Cyberspace. Between 2012 and 2017, he was Co-Director of the Oxford Martin Programme on Human Rights for Future Generations.

From 2014 to 2019, he also helped lead a European Research Council-funded project titled "The Individualisation of War: Reconfiguring the Ethics, Law and Politics of Armed Conflict".

Beyond academia, Akande has been involved in international legal proceedings, acting as an advocate, counsel, adviser or expert before several international tribunals.

These include the International Court of Justice, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the European Court of Human Rights, the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights, the International Criminal Court and World Trade Organization panels.

Before moving abroad, Nigeria-trained lawyer bagged his law degree from the Obafemi Awolowo University in Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

And he has also provided legal advice in proceedings in England, including before the UK Supreme Court, as well as in Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

In 2024, he was designated to the panel of arbitrators of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes by the President of the World Bank, acting as chair of the organisation's Administrative Council.

Obi Tasks Tinubu To Give Account Of N15.8trn Subsidy Savings, $100bn Borrowing



The Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC) presidential candidate, Peter Obi, has called on President Bola Tinubu to account for the N15.8 trillion saved from the removal of the fuel subsidy and the over $100 billion borrowed by his administration.

Obi's challenge comes 24 hours after Tinubu took a swipe at the former Governor of Anambra State during an All Progressives Congress (APC) campaign rally in Akwa Ibom State, saying that while the NDC candidate ran from erosion in Anambra, he (Tinubu) confronted the Atlantic Ocean in Lagos.

In a post on his X handle on Saturday, Obi congratulated Tinubu on spending a night in a Nigerian State outside Lagos and Abuja, while urging him to visit other states and account for the resources available to his administration.

"I congratulate you on spending a night in one of Nigeria's states outside Lagos and Abuja. I hope you enjoyed the warmth, hospitality, and delicious cuisine of Akwa Ibom, which I am sure is even better than those of the destinations where you have spent over 260 days outside Nigeria since coming into office.

"I sincerely hope this visit will inspire you to travel to the remaining 33 states of the federation, spend time with the people and, more importantly, explain what your administration has done with the ₦15.8 trillion saved from the removal of fuel subsidy, the over $100 billion you have borrowed, the increased revenues accruing to the government from taxing Nigerians, and the additional government revenues which your administration celebrated last year as having surpassed its target," Obi wrote.

He insisted that Nigerians deserve to know what the government has achieved with the resources, including the number of people lifted out of poverty, children returned to school and functional primary healthcare centres built.

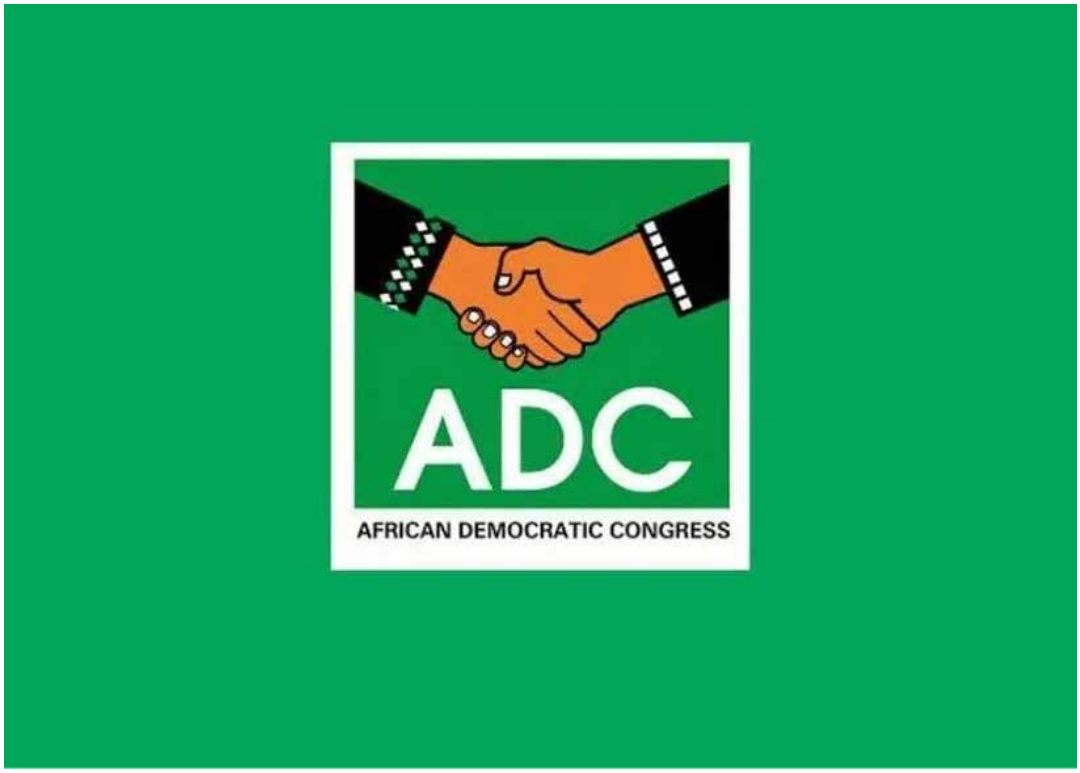
"Nigerians deserve to know how many that were pulled out of poverty within this period, how many out-of-school children were returned to school, and how many functional primary healthcare centres you have built.

"They also deserve to know how much electricity supply has improved, especially given your promise that if you do not fix power, Nigerians should not vote for you. They deserve an explanation of how you have secured the country, which still ranks among the most terrorised countries in the world.

"Mr. President, Nigerians deserve answers. They deserve to know what has been done with the resources entrusted to your government," he added.

Obi said the new Nigeria he hopes to build would be founded on accountability, transparency and the physical, measurable impact of public resources on the lives of citizens.

Lifu Judgment Academic, Overtaken By Events – ADC PCC



The African Democratic Congress Presidential Campaign Council (ADC PCC) has dismissed the judgment delivered today by Justice Peter Lifu of the Federal High Court, Abuja, purporting to nullify the leadership of Senator David Mark and Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola and voiding the nomination of our presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar.

Describing the ruling as an academic exercise that has been overtaken by events, the ADCPCC said its legal team are prepared to appeal the verdict.

The Council maintains that the judgment is of no practical effect and cannot override or displace an existing judgment of a court of coordinate jurisdiction on the same subject matter.

It is important to recall that the same Federal High Court, Abuja, in a judgment delivered by Justice Musa Liman, had already examined the circumstances surrounding the emergence of Senator Mark and Ogbeni Aregbesola and held that the transfer of leadership from Chief Ralph Nwosu to Senator Mark did not violate the provisions of the party's constitution.

Justice Liman acknowledged that the disputed July 2, 2025 meeting was a stakeholders' meeting which preceded the National Executive Council (NEC) meeting of July 29, 2025, at which Senator Mark and Ogbeni Aregbesola emerged as National Chairman and National Secretary respectively. The NEC meeting was also monitored by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

The legal implications of that judgment cannot be wished away. The leadership question has already been subjected to judicial scrutiny by a court of coordinate jurisdiction. It is therefore untenable to suggest that a subsequent pronouncement can simply erase or displace an existing judicial decision without due regard to the principles governing judicial authority and the administration of justice.

The ADC PCC consequently regards today's ruling as an exercise in futility, particularly as the party's legal team is taking immediate steps to challenge the decision through the appropriate judicial channels.

Beyond its legal implications, however, the timing of this judgment raises serious concerns. It comes against the backdrop of the failed APC presidential campaign flag-off in Kaduna and the hugely successful and unprecedented ADC presidential campaign flag-off in Sokoto. The contrast is unmistakable: while the ADC is gaining momentum and attracting growing national acceptance, the ruling party appears increasingly unsettled by the prospect of a formidable opposition. Rather than confront the ADC politically and through the ballot box, the APC appears increasingly desperate to deploy every available instrument to frustrate the opposition and undermine its growing electoral momentum.

It is particularly unfortunate that Justice Lifu has once again become associated with a controversial judicial pronouncement involving the ADC. He is the same judge whose earlier judgment declaring the party deregistered was subsequently set aside by the Court of Appeal.

The Council is also aware of developments surrounding the proceedings, including allegations of pressure and political interference. We consider it imperative that the independence, impartiality and integrity

of the judiciary must never be compromised or sacrificed on the altar of partisan political interests.

Let it, however, be clearly understood that no amount of pressure, intimidation or judicial manoeuvring can extinguish the democratic aspirations of millions of Nigerians who have found renewed hope in the ADC.

For the avoidance of doubt, Senator David Mark remains the National Chairman recognised by the party, while Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola remains its National Secretary. The ADC remains focused, united and resolute in its determination to provide Nigerians with a credible political alternative.

We urge our candidates, members and supporters across the country to remain calm, vigilant and committed to their campaigns. There is absolutely no cause for panic. The party's leadership remains firmly engaged in addressing the legal and political issues arising from this development.

We call on Nigerians not to be distracted by this judgment but, rather, to draw greater inspiration from the collective struggle to defend multiparty democracy, political pluralism and the constitutional right of citizens to freely choose their leaders.

The ADC legal team is already taking steps to seek appropriate interim relief, including a stay of execution where legally applicable, and will subsequently pursue an appeal against the judgment.

The ADC is not distracted. The campaign continues. The struggle for a better Nigeria remains unstoppable.

Withheld LG Funds: Osun Workers Begin Strike

The Nigeria Labour Congress has directed workers in Osun State to embark on a three-day sympathy strike beginning at midnight on Sunday to press for the release of statutory allocations due to local government areas in the state.

In a statement signed by the Osun NLC Chairman and Secretary, Christopher Arapasopo and Victor Amusan, respectively, and obtained in Osogbo on Sunday, the congress said the industrial action was in solidarity with the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees in the state.

The NLC leaders said the congress had earlier issued a seven-day ultimatum to the Federal Government and the Osun State Government over the continued withholding of local government statutory allocations.

They, however, said the issues raised in the ultimatum remained unresolved.

The statement read, "Consequently, having exhausted all reasonable avenues and in accordance with the resolutions reached at the emergency meeting of the State Executive Council (SEC) held on Wednesday, 28th October, 2026, all affiliate unions of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Osun State Council, are hereby directed to proceed on the three-day sympathy strike in solidarity with the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE), Osun State Council.

"The strike shall commence at midnight on Sunday, 8th November, 2026, last for three (3) days, and conclude at midnight on Wednesday, 11th November, 2026.

"Accordingly, all affiliate unions are directed to immediately communicate this directive in writing to



their members and ensure total and full compliance across all workplaces."

The congress warned that any union found deliberately working against or undermining the directive would face disciplinary measures in accordance with its provisions.

It added, "All unions are enjoined to demonstrate maximum solidarity, unity and commitment to the collective struggle for the protection of workers' rights and welfare. We must emphasise that an injury to one is an injury to all.

"The continued hardship confronting our comrades in NULGE is a collective concern of the entire labour movement, and our response must reflect our shared commitment to workers' rights, dignity, welfare and economic security."

It was reported that the Osun State Government and the All Progressives Congress had been locked in a bitter feud over control of local government areas in the state since February 2025.

During the violence that engulfed several council secretariats in the struggle for control of local government administration, the police confirmed six deaths, including that of the then APC-elected chairman of Irewole Local Government Area, Remi Abbas.

ADC: Timi Frank Accuses Tinubu of Using Judiciary Against Opposition, Seeks US Intervention

Former Deputy National Publicity Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Comrade Timi Frank, on Thursday, accused President Bola Tinubu's administration of allegedly deploying the judiciary to undermine opposition parties, warning that such actions could plunge Nigeria into political crisis ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Frank called on the United States Government and other members of the international community to intervene and prevail on the Nigerian government to respect democratic principles, judicial independence and the constitutional rights of opposition parties.

He was reacting to a recent court judgment which, according to him, raised serious concerns about alleged attempts to frustrate the political ambition of former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar and weaken the African Democratic Congress (ADC).

In a statement, Frank described the judgment as a desperate attempt by those in power to use the judiciary to contain the growing political influence of the opposition.

He alleged that the decision was part of a broader plot to prevent Atiku from participating effectively in the 2027 presidential election.



"The recent court judgment has raised serious concerns about what appears to be a desperate act by the Presidency—an act reminiscent of a dying man clutching at straws.

"It is a desperate act from the Presidency. I must warn that the judiciary must stay clear of the 2027 elections. Its independence and impartiality are fundamental to the survival of our democracy," he said.

Frank further alleged that FCT Minister Nyesom Wike was being used as an intermediary to influence judicial actors against opposition politicians.

He claimed that political meetings and consultations were held after Atiku's recent political outing in Sokoto, which he said had generated considerable attention.

According to him, the alleged moves were intended to frustrate Atiku's political ambition after attempts to prevent the Sokoto engagement from holding failed.

He said: "We were aware that immediately after the Sokoto outing, there were meetings aimed at thwarting Atiku's ambition. Despite all efforts to prevent the Sokoto event from holding, it went ahead and has remained the talk of the town. Now, they appear to have resorted to this approach."

Frank, who is also the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) Ambassador to East Africa and the Middle East, urged the Chief Justice of Nigeria to rise to the responsibility of protecting judicial independence and ensuring that the courts were not perceived as instruments of the ruling party.

"The Chief Justice of Nigeria must wake up to her constitutional responsibilities as the guardian of judicial independence. The judiciary must not be perceived as an extension of the APC-led government.

"Such a perception will erode public confidence in our democratic institutions and could drive Nigeria towards anarchy," he warned.

He expressed hope that the Court of Appeal would approach the matter differently, cautioning that the controversy surrounding the judgment could heighten political tension if not properly addressed.

Frank particularly appealed to the United States Government to call the Tinubu administration



to order, while urging other international partners to closely monitor developments in Nigeria ahead of the 2027 elections.

"The international community, particularly the United States, must pay close attention to developments in Nigeria. The alleged weaponisation of the judiciary against the opposition ahead of the 2027 elections poses a grave threat to our democracy and could plunge Africa's largest country into a serious political crisis," he said.

The former APC spokesman also accused the Tinubu administration of attempting to undermine political participation in the North by allegedly using judicial processes to weaken Atiku's presidential ambition.

He insisted that the controversy should not be viewed as a personal battle involving Atiku alone, but as a broader question concerning the survival of Nigeria's multiparty democracy.

"If President Tinubu is genuinely popular, let him demonstrate it through free, fair and credible elections, conducted through the established mechanisms of INEC and not the judiciary.

"It is obvious that President Tinubu is afraid and does not want any contest. The only option left is to get Atiku out of his way through the courts," Frank alleged.

He warned that any government official found culpable in actions aimed at undermining opposition participation would be held accountable.

"Let me make this clear: should anything go wrong, all government officials found responsible will be held accountable," he declared.

Frank, however, urged opposition parties and their supporters not to be discouraged by the development, insisting that unity, perseverance and democratic participation remained essential to protecting the country's political future.

He called on youths, civil society organisations, elder statesmen and former political leaders to unite in defence of judicial independence and democratic institutions.

He also cautioned political actors against celebrating the misfortunes of their opponents, arguing that a precedent established against one political leader could eventually affect others.

"No political camp should celebrate, because what happens to Atiku today could happen to another political leader tomorrow," he said.

Frank maintained that Nigeria must not be allowed to descend into political instability because of disagreements over electoral competition.

"This must not be seen as an Atiku issue alone; it concerns the future of every Nigerian and the survival of our democracy.

"Let us unite as a country—our youths, civil society organisations, elder statesmen and former leaders—to defend democracy and prevent anarchy through the protection of judicial independence.

"Nigeria must not be pushed into chaos," he added.



FG Proposes Fresh $500m World Bank Loan



The Federal Government is seeking a fresh $500m loan from the World Bank to establish an infrastructure financing platform, with the proposed approval scheduled for 25 May, 2027, just four days before the inauguration of Nigeria's next president.

The proposed borrowing comes as political activities intensify ahead of the 2027 general elections, raising questions about the timing of fresh financial commitments and their implications for the incoming administration.

According to the World Bank's Initial Project Information Document, obtained on Sunday, the facility forms part of a broader $3.85bn infrastructure financing initiative designed to attract private investment into critical sectors of the Nigerian economy.

The document, prepared and updated on 4 November, 2026, identifies the initiative as the Nigeria Infrastructure Financing and De-Risking Platform for Growth and Jobs, otherwise known as INFRAGROW.

The Federal Ministry of Finance is listed as the borrower, while the Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority will serve as the implementing agency.

The bank has scheduled the project's technical design review for 21 January, 2027, while its estimated approval date is 25 May, 2027.

Nigeria's presidential inauguration is constitutionally scheduled for 29 May, 2027, following the expiration of the current four-year presidential term.

The timing means the proposed facility could receive World Bank approval in the final days of President Bola Tinubu's current term, although approval would not necessarily mean immediate disbursement or implementation.

The proposed financing has not yet been approved, and the World Bank's published timetable remains subject to change.

The document puts the country's annual infrastructure financing shortfall at approximately $100bn, identifying inadequate investment and weak project preparation as major obstacles to economic growth.

It stated, "Nigeria's infrastructure financing gap, estimated at approx. $100bn annually, remains a binding constraint on growth, fiscal sustainability, competitiveness, and job creation."

The bank explained that the challenge extended beyond insufficient funding to the difficulty of converting available capital into commercially viable infrastructure investments.

It added, "Closing the financing gap therefore requires an integrated approach that combines rigorous project preparation, appropriately calibrated de-risking instruments tailored to each project's residual risk profile, and targeted sectoral reforms to strengthen the operating environment."

The proposed $500m World Bank financing comprises $400m from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and $100m from the International Development Association.

The wider $3.85bn financing structure also includes contributions from government, private investors, commercial lenders and guarantees intended to encourage additional investment.

Under the arrangement, the NSIA is expected to contribute $200m in equity as a founding shareholder, while private sector investors would provide another $200m.

Commercial debt financing is projected at $600m, alongside other financing and guarantee arrangements.

The World Bank document also identifies $100m in IDA payment guarantees and $2.25bn in guarantees from other international financial institutions, bringing the guarantee-related financing arrangements to $2.35bn.

The financing arrangement is expected

to operate through four independently governed subsidiaries, each designed to address a particular obstacle to infrastructure investment.

The first, the Project Preparation Facility, will finance feasibility studies, transaction structuring, risk assessments and procurement support to help transform infrastructure proposals into projects capable of attracting investment.

The second, the Viability Gap Fund, will provide financial support for economically important projects that cannot generate sufficient commercial returns while maintaining affordable tariffs or sustainable government payments.

The document explained, "Under the proposed endowment model, the VGF would preserve its capital base and finance viability-gap support primarily from investment returns."

The third subsidiary, the Risk Capital Facility, will provide equity and other forms of patient capital to infrastructure projects that are commercially viable but struggle to attract investors willing to bear higher risks.

The fourth, the Credit Guarantee Vehicle, will provide guarantees against specified credit defaults, public-sector payment failures and political risks affecting eligible foreign investments.

According to the bank, these interventions are intended to encourage participation by commercial banks, pension funds, insurance companies and other institutional investors.

The project will also support reforms to strengthen public institutions responsible for identifying, preparing, procuring and supervising public-private partnership projects.

Its implementation will be divided into four components covering institutional development, project preparation, financing mobilisation and improvements to the regulatory environment.

The first component will finance staffing, professional advisory services, statutory fees and operational infrastructure, with disbursements linked to measurable institutional milestones.

Court Ruling: APC Afraid of Strong Opposition Against Tinubu, Says Osunbor

A former Governor of Edo State and National Legal Adviser of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Oserheimen Osunbor, has accused the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) of being jittery ahead of the January 2027 presidential election.

Speaking on Channels Television's Politics Today on Thursday, Osunbor said the APC did not want a strong candidate to challenge President Bola Tinubu at the polls.

"I have said that repeatedly, they (APC) are afraid of any strong candidate running against President Bola Tinubu in the January presidential election," Osunbor said.

The ADC legal adviser said the party and its presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar, were continuing with their campaigns because they believed the court judgment nullifying Atiku's candidacy would not stand.

"Our presidential candidate (Atiku Abubakar) and the presidential campaign is going on, unperturbed because we believe that this judgment will not stand and cannot stand," he said.

Osunbor said the party would appeal the judgment to ensure that a higher court sets it aside.

He expressed optimism that Atiku would survive the current challenge, insisting that the former Vice President has the



peoples' support.

"Atiku will survive because the people are behind him. The force of the people will be greater than the force of those who want to enslave Nigerians," he said.

Osunbor's comments followed Thursday's judgment by the Federal High Court in Abuja, which sacked the David Mark-led ADC leadership and invalidated actions taken by the party under the leadership, including the process that produced Atiku as its presidential candidate for the 2027 election.

Justice Peter Lifu delivered the judgment in a suit filed by Nafiu Bala Gombe, a former National Deputy Chairman of the party, who challenged the process through which the Mark-led leadership assumed control of the ADC.

Meanwhile, the party has rejected the ruling and vowed to challenge it at the appellate court.

Rising Shop Rents: Abuja Traders Turn To Online Sales

Rising costs of renting shops are forcing many small business owners in the Federal Capital Territory to turn to online trading to reduce operating costs.

A survey by the News Agency of Nigeria in Abuja on Sunday indicates that increasing rental charges are putting pressure on small businesses, particularly those operating in rented commercial spaces.

Some affected entrepreneurs said frequent rent increases, coupled with electricity bills, transportation expenses and declining customer patronage, were negatively affecting their businesses.

A comparison of rental charges provided by some traders showed that shops previously rented for between N500,000 and N700,000 annually were currently going for between N900,000 and N1.2 million in some locations.

The traders said the increases had forced some business owners to relocate, downsize their operations or consider selling their products through social media platforms.

A fashion accessories dealer, Mr Ikechukwu Chidi, said he was considering closing his shop following a proposed increase in his annual rent.



"Running this business is becoming increasingly difficult because a large part of my capital now goes into paying rent instead of purchasing goods.

"If I eventually close the shop, I will continue selling through social media platforms because I cannot afford to spend most of my earnings on rent," he said.

Similarly, a cosmetics dealer, Mrs Abike Suleiman, said she had relocated her business from a rented shop to her residence to reduce expenses.

She said her annual rent had increased from N450,000 to N800,000, making it difficult to sustain the business alongside other operating expenses.

"I had to move my business home because I needed money to restock and meet other expenses.

"Paying such a huge amount for rent leaves little money to invest in the business," she said.

Sultan Directs Muslims To Look Out For New Moon Monday

The Sultan of Sokoto and President-General of the Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar, has called on Muslims across the country to look out for the new moon of Jumada Assaniya 1448 AH on Monday, November 9, 2026.

Jumada Assaniya, also written as Jumada al-Thani or Jumada al-Akhirah, is the sixth month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

The Sultanate Council of Sokoto, in a statement issued on Sunday, urged Muslims to commence the search for the crescent on Monday, corresponding to the 29th day of Jumada al-Ula 1448 AH.

The statement was signed by the Wazirin Sokoto, Prof. Sambo Wali Junaidu, who is also the Chairman of the Sultanate Council Advisory Committee on Religious Affairs.

It urged Muslims who sight the new moon to report their observations to the nearest district or village head for onward communication to the Sultan.

"Muslims are therefore requested to start looking for the new moon of Jumada Assaniya 1448 AH on Monday and report its sighting to the nearest District or Village Head for onward communication to His Eminence, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar CFR, the Sultan of Sokoto and President General, Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA)," the statement said.



It added that reports of confirmed sightings should be channelled through the traditional institutions to enable the Sultan to take the necessary action.

The council also called on Muslims to seek Allah's guidance and assistance in discharging the religious responsibility.

"May Allah (SWT) help us in the discharge of this religious duty, amen," the statement added.

Power Outage: Customs Clears Power Equipment Containers Trapped For 20 Years



The Nigeria Customs Service has announced the release and evacuation of 98 out of 300 containers of power equipment trapped at the port for over 20 years.

The Comptroller-General of Customs, Adewale Adeniyi, announced this in Apapa on Friday during the flag-off of the evacuation exercise.

Adeniyi stressed that the consignments include high-capacity transformers, cables, switchgear and other transmission equipment imported through the Federal Ministry of Power and other government agencies like the Transmission Company of Nigeria, Niger Delta Power Holding Company, and so on and so forth.

He stressed that over the years, equipment imported for critical power projects remained uncleared in the ports and, in some cases, for between 14 and 20 years.

Adeniyi emphasised that following a presentation by the Honourable Minister of Power at the Federal Electricity Council, President Bola Tinubu directed the immediate clearance of the equipment.

He pointed out that the President also directed that relevant agencies resolve all outstanding charges and administrative bottlenecks without delay.

"In line with that presidential directive, this service has commenced the immediate clearance of more than 200 containers of power equipment. Today, I am here with the Honourable Minister of Power to flag off the release of the first 48 containers from ENL Terminal. Another 50 containers at other terminals in Tincan and other ports will also be released," Adeniyi said.

The CGC said that the service is working closely with the Federal Ministry of Power, the Transmission Company of Nigeria, the Niger Delta Power Holding Company, Nigerian Ports Authority, and other stakeholders in the business to complete this exercise as soon as possible.

He said that the service has deployed every facilitation measure within its mandate, including "priority processing of consignments, dedicated officers for joint examination, the application of approved waivers or charges that are approved during the period when the goods remain out there."

While highlighting that technical experts will inspect the equipment and serviceable items will be deployed to ongoing and upcoming projects, including transmission corridors and substations across the country, Adeniyi said that obsolete items will be disposed of in accordance with extant regulations.

He acknowledged the commitment of the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Mr Taiwo Oyedele, for approving the waivers on the collected charges of this consignment.

Adeniyi maintained that some contractors awarded government projects imported equipment and abandoned them at the ports, failing to execute projects for which public resources were committed.

He warned that such onduct denies Nigerians the electricity, jobs and services these projects were meant to deliver.

Adeniyi said that contractors who accept government projects, are paid for them and fail to deliver should therefore be regarded as engaging in economic sabotage.

He also stated that the service would work with the supervisory ministry and the relevant oversight agencies to identify government consignments that remain uncleared under such circumstances.

"We are not talking about only power sector equipment. We are talking about so many other imports that are brought into our country. We hear of donations, we hear of items that are brought in by international organisations, by global agencies," Adeniyi stated.

Why I Participated In Lagos Governorship Debate – Hamzat



Lagos State Deputy Governor and All Progressives Congress governorship candidate, Obafemi Hamzat, has explained that he participated in the Lagos Governorship Debate to present his vision for the state and explain how he intends to improve residents' lives.

Hamzat said the debate provided an opportunity to communicate his development agenda and outline practical steps to address the needs of Lagosians.

In a post shared on his X handle on late Sunday night, the APC candidate said leadership required understanding the needs of the people and developing policies to address them.

"I took part in the Lagos State Governorship Debate and used the opportunity to share my vision for Lagos and speak about the practical steps we intend to take to improve the lives of our people," he said.

He added, "Leadership is about understanding what matters to people and making sure our plans respond to those needs."

He identified healthcare as a major priority, promising to expand the state's health insurance scheme, Ilera Eko, from its current 1.4 million enrollees to cover one in every three Lagos residents.

Hamzat also pledged to complete the Massey Children's Hospital, Ojo and Somolu General Hospitals, while expanding capacity across the state's nine general hospitals.

According to him, more primary healthcare centres would operate round the clock, alongside improved training and welfare for health workers.

On housing, Hamzat said his administration would introduce a more accessible mortgage system to enable more families to own homes by spreading payments over several years.

"Beyond completing our ongoing housing estates, we will introduce a more accessible mortgage system that allows people to spread their payments over several years," he said.

On transportation, he promised to sustain the state's rail development projects, including extending the Blue Line to Okokomaiko and connecting the Red Line to the Wole Soyinka Centre for Culture and Creative Arts at the National Theatre.

Hamzat said the proposals were aimed at improving access to essential services, expanding homeownership opportunities and easing transportation challenges for residents.

He also outlined seven pillars of his proposed development agenda, tagged The Lagos PROMISE, with each letter representing a key governance priority.

"They are People First, Renewal, Opportunity, Machinery of Government, Inclusion, Security and Resilience, and Everyday Dignity," he said.

According to him, the pillars would guide his administration's approach to governance, infrastructure development and the creation of opportunities for residents.

"I remain committed to listening to Lagosians, building on the progress we have made and delivering a future that works for all," he added.

The APC candidate participated in the Lagos Governorship Debate on Sunday, organised by the Nigeria Debate Consortium, a coalition comprising The PUNCH, Channels Television, TVC News, TheCable and Vanguard.

Lagos Government Lacks Political Will To Tackle Agberos — Funsho Doherty

The Nigeria Democratic Congress governorship candidate in Lagos State, Funso Doherty, has accused successive governments of lacking the political will to address the activities of transport operators popularly known as agberos in the state.

Agberos is a colloquial term for touts, particularly individuals who collect money from commercial bus drivers and transport operators at motor parks, bus stops and along roads, often claiming to act on behalf of transport unions or park authorities.

Doherty said vested interests in the existing public transportation system had made it difficult for the government to reform the sector, despite the challenges posed by the chaotic operation of commercial buses.

He spoke on Sunday during the Lagos Governorship Debate organsided by the Nigeria Debate Consortium, a coalition of five media organisations such as The PUNCH, Channels Television, TVC News, TheCable and Vanguard Newspaper

He also questioned why the state had yet to modernise its public transportation system despite having thousands of rickety buses operating on its roads.

"Our public transportation system is not modernised. Thousands of rickety buses are moving around. We must ask ourselves: Are these what our people deserve? Why has it taken so long to modernise public transportation?" he asked.

The NDC candidate argued that the situation was not accidental, alleging that some interests benefited from the existing arrangement.

"In my opinion, the lack of a modern transportation system is not by accident. There are vested interests in operating the bus system the way it is," he said.

Referring to the agbero system, Doherty said the interests surrounding the informal transport network had discouraged efforts to address the problem.

"Many of us understand this notion of the agbero system that people talk about. There is no political will to deal with that problem," he added.

He maintained that meaningful reform of the transportation sector would require a government willing to prioritise the interests of residents over those benefiting from the existing arrangement.

"We will modernise the transportation system because we will be elected by the people, not by an agbero network," Doherty said.



NDC questions Tinubu's fresh Ibom seaport approval

The Nigeria Democratic Congress on Sunday accused President Bola Tinubu of turning the proposed Ibom Deep Sea Port into a campaign tool, questioning why the Federal Government was announcing a fresh approval for a project it said had been approved by the administration of former President Muhammadu Buhari in 2020.

The opposition party alleged that the multi-billion-dollar project had repeatedly been used to win political support in Akwa Ibom State.

Tinubu announced the approval of the long-awaited port project on Friday during a reception and rally organised in his honour at the Godswill Akpabio International Stadium, Uyo.

The President was in the state to inaugurate projects executed by Governor Umo Eno's administration when the governor appealed for the Federal Government's intervention in the seaport project.

However, in a statement made available to journalists, the NDC National Publicity Secretary, Osa Director, questioned the rationale behind the fresh approval, insisting that the project had already received Federal Executive Council approval in December 2020.

The party recalled that the Buhari administration had, at its December 16, 2020, meeting, approved the implementation of the first phase of the $4.6bn Ibom Deep Sea Port project, with Bollore/Power China named as the preferred bidder.

Obasanjo Faults Leadership For Nigerians Deadly Migration

Former President Olusegun Obasanjo has called for urgent action to address worsening insecurity, unemployment and poverty in Nigeria, warning that leadership failures are forcing citizens to seek better opportunities abroad, often through dangerous migration routes.

Obasanjo spoke on Saturday during a panel session themed "Lest We Forget" at the Creative Africa Nexus Weekend 2026, organised by the African Export-Import Bank in Lagos State.

The former president, who reflected on Nigeria's security situation since independence, said the country must confront the governance failures responsible for declining safety and economic opportunities.

"We just have to do what we should do to provide job opportunities, to stem the tide of impunity, to stem the tide of poverty, to stem the tide of kidnapping and insecurity," he said.

Obasanjo recalled returning to Nigeria in 1959 after completing his military training in Britain, noting that he could travel freely across the country without fear



of attacks or kidnapping.

"I came back to this country after my commission as an officer in Britain in 1959. And I could go anywhere; I was posted to the North; I could go anywhere in the North, by myself alone, by day, by night," he said.

Contrasting that experience with the current security situation, he questioned how Nigeria had deteriorated to the point where citizens could no longer travel safely across several parts of the country.

"Now, if you can't do that, what has gone wrong? We have to correct what has gone wrong," he stated.

He argued that unemployment, particularly among university graduates, had become a major source of economic desperation.

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The party said the approval was expected to pave the way for the commencement of construction.

The NDC also recalled that Tinubu, while campaigning as the APC presidential candidate at the party's campaign rally in Uyo on January 30, 2023, had promised to build the seaport.

Director said, "What a hocus-pocus, what hogwash, and what barefaced lies and shenanigans of a rudderless party!

Six Months: 31 States Spend N45bn Fuelling Vehicles, Generators

Thirty-one state governments spent N45.04bn fuelling motor vehicles, plants and generators in the first six months of 2026, representing a 14.35 per cent increase over the N39.38bn recorded in the corresponding period of 2025.

Following an analysis by Punch Newspaper of the states' second-quarter budget implementation reports showed that the combined fuel bill increased by N5.65bn, with Lagos, Yobe, Nasarawa, Kano and Ekiti recording the highest expenditure.

The spending translates to an average of N7.51bn monthly, or approximately N248.82m daily, between January and June.

The increase in states' fuel bills came amid higher global oil prices following the Middle East conflict and disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, with Brent crude rising from $61 per barrel at the beginning of 2026 to over $100.

The International Monetary Fund said petrol and diesel prices in Nigeria rose by 22.5 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively, in March compared with pre-war levels, adding to operating costs.

The analysis examined cumulative first-half actual expenditure under "Motor Vehicle Fuel Cost" and "Plant / Generator Fuel Cost", rather than annual budget provisions or spending during April to June alone.

It covered the same 31 states in both years to ensure a consistent comparison. Separately classified expenditure on aircraft fuel, cooking gas, other transport equipment, maintenance and power-plant gas was excluded.

Of the N45.04bn spent during the period, N28.52bn went into fuelling plants and generators, while motor vehicles accounted for N16.52bn.

Plant and generator fuel expenditure increased by N3.64bn, or 14.63 per cent, from N24.88bn in the first half of 2025. Vehicle fuel costs rose by N2.01bn, or 13.88 per cent, from N14.50bn.

Generators and plants consequently accounted for 63.33 per cent of the combined bill and 64.38 per cent of the year-on-year increase.

The findings showed that 24 of the 31 states increased their combined fuel spending, while seven recorded reductions. Thirteen states spent more than N1bn each.

Lagos recorded the highest expenditure at N8.93bn, up from N7.65bn in the corresponding period of 2025, representing an increase of N1.28bn, or 16.79 per cent.



The state alone accounted for 19.83 per cent of the combined spending and 22.71 per cent of the aggregate increase.

Its expenditure was dominated by plant and generator fuel, which reached N8.26bn, while motor vehicle fuel accounted for N670.20m.

Yobe followed with N3.42bn, compared with N2.83bn a year earlier, an increase of 20.72 per cent. Almost all its spending went into plants and generators, which consumed N3.39bn, against N35.76m for motor vehicles.

Nasarawa ranked third with N3.29bn, up from N2.02bn in the first half of 2025. Its N1.26bn increase represented growth of 62.59 per cent and accounted for 22.38 per cent of the total increase across the states.

The state spent N1.77bn on plant and generator fuel and N1.51bn on motor vehicle fuel.

Together, Lagos and Nasarawa accounted for 45.09 per cent of the aggregate increase, indicating that a substantial part of the additional spending was concentrated in the two states.

Kano's combined expenditure rose by 14.70 per cent to N2.99bn from N2.61bn. Of the 2026 amount, N2.62bn went into plant and generator fuel, while N368.27m was recorded for motor vehicles.

Ekiti spent N2.81bn, compared with N2.33bn a year earlier, an increase of 20.46 per cent. Plant and generator fuel accounted for N2.38bn, while vehicles consumed N430.95m.

Edo followed with N2.74bn, up by 20.54 per cent from N2.28bn. Unlike several other leading spenders, its bill was driven mainly by motor vehicles, which accounted for N2.36bn.

State Police: Ogun Ready With 6,000 Personnel – Gov

Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun, has said the state is adequately prepared for the establishment of its own police force, disclosing that more than 6,000 personnel drawn from the Ogun State Security Network, also known as Amotekun, and the So-Safe Corps are available to provide the manpower for the proposed outfit.

Amotekun and the So-Safe Corps are state-established security agencies created to complement the operations of federal security agencies, including the police, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps and the military.

In a statement on Sunday, Abiodun said the existing security structures had provided the state with a solid foundation for the transition to state policing, expressing confidence that the initiative, when fully implemented, would significantly strengthen the protection of lives and property.

The governor reportedly made the declaration on Saturday during the 50th anniversary celebration of Ereke Day in Ikenne Local Government Area of the state.

He described the approval of state police by the Ogun State House of Assembly as a breakthrough in



the state's efforts to strengthen its security architecture, adding that his administration was ready to translate the initiative into a functional and effective policing system.

Abiodun, who chairs the Nigeria Governors' Forum Committee on State Police Creation and represents President Bola Tinubu on the committee, said Ogun had taken important steps towards making state policing a reality.

He said, "I am the Chairman of the Governors' Forum on State Police Creation and the representative of the President in the Governors' Forum on State Police Creation. I am particularly proud to announce that the Ogun State House of Assembly has approved the creation of State Police.

Refer Patients Beyond Your Expertise, LASG Tells Doctors

The Lagos State Government has warned private medical practitioners against treating conditions outside their professional competence, urging them to refer patients to specialists rather than risk avoidable deaths and complications through inappropriate medical care.

The Executive Secretary of the Health Facilities Monitoring and Accreditation Agency, Dr Victoria Egunjobi, gave the warning during a meeting with the Association of Nigerian Private Medical Practitioners in Lagos, according to a statement obtained on Sunday.

Egunjobi also urged private practitioners to help the state identify unqualified operators and facilities, asking members of the association to provide information on individuals and centres involved in quackery.

She said cooperation between practitioners and the agency was necessary to sanitise the health sector and ensure that healthcare providers complied with established standards.

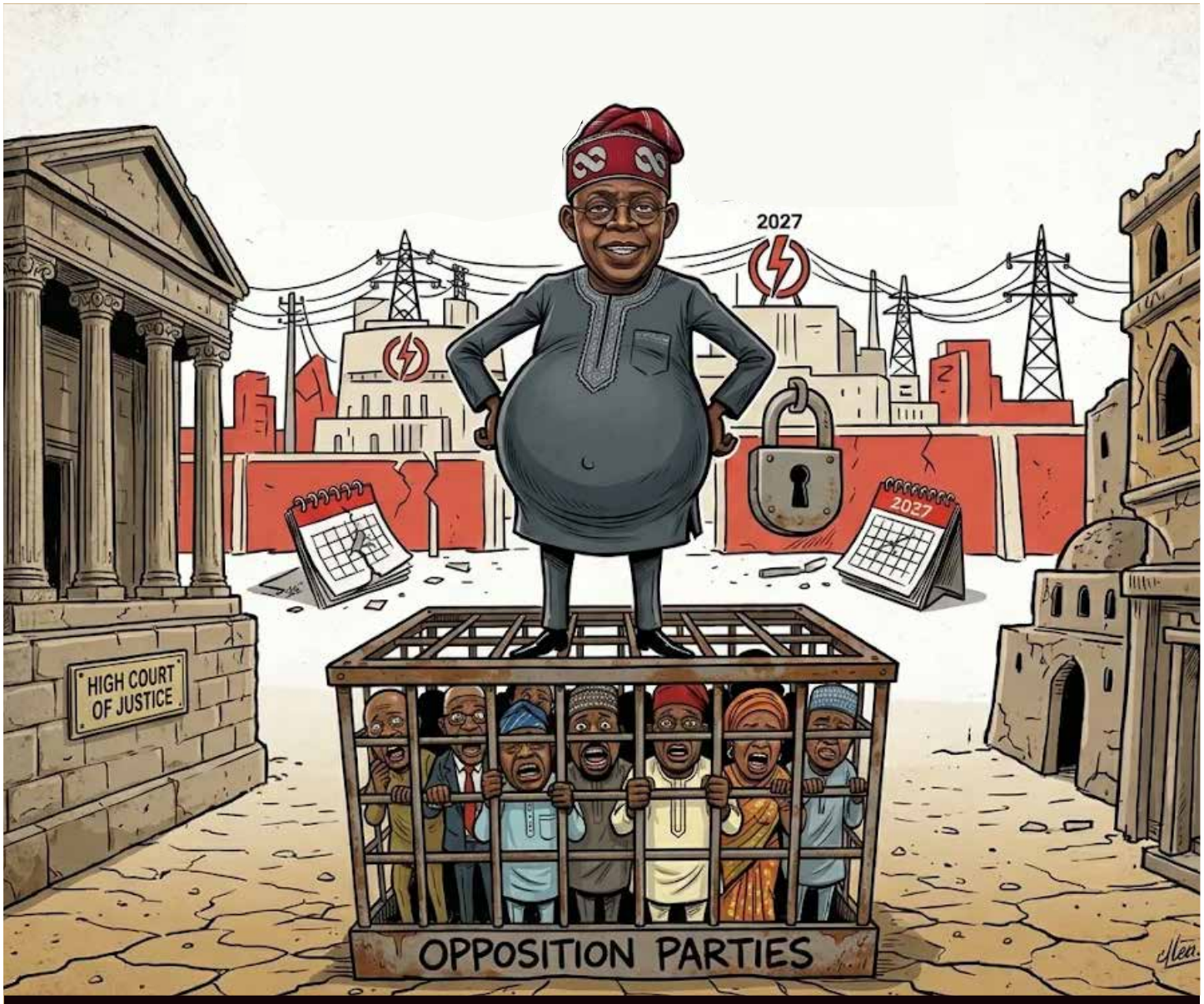
The warning comes as the agency seeks greater self-regulation within the private health sector, where practitioners are expected to recognise the



limits of their training and seek specialist intervention when a patient's condition requires expertise beyond their own.

At the meeting, the chairman of the association's Lagos State chapter, Dr Olusola Ogunleye, said its newly inaugurated executive officers had visited the agency to establish areas of collaboration and seek solutions to challenges confronting private medical practitioners.

She raised concerns over multiple taxation, access to professional training and capacity-building opportunities, and the possibility of making membership of the association a condition for registering private health facilities with HEFAMAA.



2027
Opposition Under Siege

By Eric Elezuo

As the 2027 General Elections approach with speed, contending parties are leaving no stones unturned to either snatch a historic victory, or retain power, across the electoral spaces, ranging from the presidential to the states' assembly elections.

With the kick-off of campaigns across all levels, can of worms, intimidation and outright accusations have been unearthed against parties and their candidates from opposing camps.

However, while everyone sets their eyes on electotal victory at the polls come 2027, major opposition parties among whom are the African Democratic Congress (ADC), and the National Democratic Congress (NDC), are consistently crying foul of activities of meddlesome intelopers in party affairs, judicial rascality and sponsorship of thuggery to disrupt rallies and official gatherings. The parties have pointed accusing fingers at the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) as the brain behind the woes most parties and

their key contenders are passing through.

Only last Thursday, a Federal High Court in Abuja nullified the leadership of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) led by former Senate President David Mark, declaring the caretaker committee illegal in what many observers believe is a typical example of the 'hand of Esau, but the voice Jacob', blaming the President Bola Tinubu-led government of orchestrating the haunting of major opposition parties and figures.



Not only did the court sacked the leadership, it also invalidated all actions taken by the committee, including the nomination of former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar as the party's presidential candidate for the 2027 general election. This invariably means that no candidate under the ADC canopy is qualified to stand for the 2027 election; a situation the party and its presidential candidate had rejected, saying it cannot happen. The situation has heightened tensions as election bells chime silently in the background enroute the January 16, 2027 commencement date.

Delivering judgment on Thursday, November 5, however, the presiding judge, Peter Lifu, upheld a suit filed by Nafiu Bala Gombe, a former National Deputy Chairman (North-East) of the party, who challenged the process through which Mark and other members of the caretaker committee assumed control of the party.

The court granted the reliefs sought by Gombe, effectively invalidating the actions taken by the Mark-led leadership.

Gombe had argued that following the resignation of the party's former National Chairman, Ralph Nwosu, he was entitled to assume the party's leadership in his capacity as the former deputy national chairman.

He consequently asked the court to restrain Mark and former Osun State Governor Rauf Aregbesola from parading themselves as the party's National Chairman and National Secretary, respectively.

The plaintiff also sought the nullification of decisions taken by the Mark-led leadership, arguing that its emergence violated the ADC constitution and provisions of the Electoral Act.

In the suit, marked FHC/ABJ/CS/1819/2025, the ADC, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Mark, Aregbesola and Nwosu were listed as defendants.

The ruling invalidates the process through which the ADC conducted its presidential primary that produced Atiku as its flag bearer for the 2027 election.

Lifu's judgment is the latest development in the prolonged leadership crisis within the ADC, which began after the party's former National Chairman, Nwosu, handed over its leadership to Mark and Aregbesola in July 2025.

The handover, which the party has consistently said followed due process according laid down rules, party constitution as well as the electoral act, and monitored by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), took place during a stakeholders' meeting at the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre in Abuja on July 2, 2025. It was followed by a National Executive

Committee(NEC)meeting on July 29, 2025, where Mark and Aregbesola formally emerged as the party's National Chairman and National Secretary, respectively.

However, the transition triggered opposition from members of the party, resulting in multiple legal challenges over who should control its leadership ahead of the 2027 general election.

One of the challengers was Nafiu Bala Gombe, a former National Deputy Chairman (North-East) of the party, who approached the Federal High Court in Abuja in a suit marked FHC/ABJ/CS/1819/2025. He argued that following Nwosu's resignation, he was entitled to assume the party's leadership and challenged the process through which Mark and Aregbesola emerged.

The dispute subsequently went through the Court of Appeal, which issued an order directing the parties to maintain the status quo ante bellum pending the determination of the substantive case.

Relying on the appellate court's directive, INEC removed Mark and Aregbesola's names from its official portal, effectively withdrawing recognition of the Mark-led leadership.

The matter eventually reached the Supreme Court, which, on April 30, 2026, set aside the Court of Appeal's order. The apex court described the directive as "unnecessary, improper and unwarranted" and returned the substantive leadership dispute to the Federal High Court for determination.

Following the Supreme Court's decision, INEC restored Mark and Aregbesola's names to its official portal as the ADC's National Chairman and National Secretary, respectively, pending the determination of the substantive suit.



Meanwhile, a separate challenge to the Mark-led leadership was brought by Leke Abejide, a member of the House of Representatives, in a suit marked FHC/ABJ/CS/1637/2025.

On July 2, 2026, the Federal High Court in Abuja dismissed Abejide's suit and upheld the Mark-led leadership.

Delivering judgment, the judge, Musa Liman, held that the dispute concerned the internal affairs of a political party and was non-justiciable.

The ADC, which has vowed to legally pursue the matter to logical conclusion, has appealed the judgment while warning INEC not to preempt the decision of the Appeal Court.

Beyond the temporary and technical disqualification of the ADC, and its key contender, Atiku Abubakar, accusing fingers have been pointed at the ruling party for many more campaigns and rally disruptions across the country, and affecting various opposition political parties.

Prior to the court pronouncement of November 5, the ADC was hounded over its intention to kick off its presidential campaign in Sokoto, the home state of one of its chieftain, Aminu Tambuwal. The rally, which was originally scheduled for October 31, could not hold over alleged refusal of state government to approve the campaign location as well as intelligence reports that claim that thugs have been mobilised to destabilize the campaign activities in the state. The party, against all odds, held the campaign on Wednesday, November 4 just before the Lifu judgment of November 5.

The ADC alleged that the ruling APC became intimidated of the massive turnout of both party faithful and residents of the state to the rally, thereby rushing to deliver a judgment of disqualification of party

and candidate the next day.

Earlier before the rally, the ADC had alleged of harassment and intimidation of its members across the state.

"I have it on good authority that a local security outfit in Sokoto State has been harassing ADC supporters, manhandling citizens simply for wearing ADC merchandise," Atiku said.

He called on the Federal Government to refrain from attempts to silence opposition voices and guarantee a free, fair and competitive electoral process in 2027.

"We shall resist every ongoing attempt to cancel political opposition in Nigeria. The ruling APC has failed in its mandate. Nigerians must be allowed to freely participate in an electoral contest that will determine the fate of this administration," he added.

Also, the ADC governorship candidate in the state, Manir Dan'iya, condemned an alleged attack on members of the party's women's wing during a rally. He said it has become a recurring decimal for activities of the party to disrupted wherever and whenever it's being held.

Again, the opposition frowned at the attack on the presidential candidate of the African Action Congress (AAC), Omoyele Sowore, in Ekiti State with former Vice President Atiku describing the incident among others as 'deeply troubling', calling for immediate and transparent investigations into the incidents, alleging that political enforcers and thugs loyal to the ruling party were targeting opposition leaders and supporters.

"The continued attacks on opposition figures and the unexplained disappearance of critical social media influencers are clear red flags of a dangerous slide toward a censored state where the opposition is crushed by the brute force of the current government," Atiku said.



The AAC presidential candidate alleged that he and his associates were attacked by government-sponsored thugs, while the police said their operatives rescued him after an altercation with some individuals at the restaurant.

The police spokesperson, Sunday Abutu, said Sowore sustained a minor injury and was taken to the Police Hospital in Ado-Ekiti for treatment.

The state Commissioner of Police, Michael Falade, subsequently ordered an investigation to establish the circumstances surrounding the incident and identify those involved. The outcome is yet awaited.

Also sharing in the chronicle of attacks allegedly said to be sponsored by the ruling party, is the presidential candidate of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Mr Peter Obi.

On more than one occasion, Obi's convoy has come under attack, sometimes u.der heavy gunfire. Recently, the NDC candidate and his convoy were attacked by suspected hooligans in Calabar, Cross Rivers State. The thugs, in broad daylight, attacked the convoy, smashing cars and shooting sporadically. The Police however, confirm the arrest of one thug popularly known as yellow Duke, while others escaped.

Also, in Benin City, Edo State, the convoy of Peter Obi was also harassed and pelted with stones and other hard objects.

On Saturday, one person was reportedly killed and many others injured, when an attack occurred during an NDC rally in Delta State.

In a statement, Peter Obi, who is also a former governor of Anambra State condemned the attacks, saying, "Political violence has no place in a democracy and can never be justified. No political aspiration is worth the life

of a Nigerian."

He called on the government and security agencies to conduct an immediate and thorough investigation, identify those responsible and ensure they faced justice, irrespective of their political affiliations.

The Delta State Police command said its investigation would establish the circumstances of the clash and identify those involved.

It would be recalled that earlier, the government of Hycinth Alia of Benue, reportedly denied Peter Obi entry into the state, using thugs to barricade the Airport Road. Though the government denied involvement, no one has either been brought to book, or at the least arrested.

It is also on record that some proteges of governors of some APC states have issued threats to political opponents, saying that no one will be allowed to campaign in the states, other than President Bola Tinubu.

While a section of public opinion agreed that such people were not sent by governments of the day, till date, no one, who has made spurious statements against opposition campaign has either been arrested or cautioned.

Observers have said that the current situation, if not checked, could eventually lead to voter apathy, crisis and uncontrolled thuggery during the election. This is without prejudice to the warning of the Inspector-General of Police, Tunji Disu, of arrest and persecution of anyone caught destroying campaign posters and the likes.

But going by the fears of the opposition, the security agencies, with special mention to the Department of State Services (DSS) and the Police, may have been in collusion with the government, thereby rendering null and void a year warning, or in the worse case scenario, a selective arrest and persecution.

On more than one occasion, the ADC and the NDC, which the frontline opposition parties, have suffered disqualification as the road to 2027 stretches. While they survived previous judicial pronouncements, the recent move involving Atiku Abubakar is a litmus test to what is in store in 2027.

Though the Minister of Aviation, Festus Keyamo, has said that heavens will not fall if Atiku is disqualified from the 2027 election, the Atiku camp has said that it's only Nigerians that will determine if and to the extent the proverbial heaven will fall if things are corrected in due time.

All in all, Nigerians await the verdict of the Court of Appeal, which at one time, described Justice Peter Lifu, and by extension, his pronouncements, as 'Judicial Rascal', to determine the next line of action.

In everything, the warning of former President Goodluck Jonathan, still rings deep in the heart of well meaning Nigerians that 'my ambition is not worth the blood of any Nigerian'.





The Oracle

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Freedom of Expression in a Democracy: Where Should the Law Draw the Line? (Pt. 1)

INTRODUCTION

It was Justice Anthony M. Kennedy who once said, "The right to think is the beginning of freedom and speech must be protected from the government because speech is the beginning of thought." Though the right to freedom of expression is not limited to speech, the truth of that quote applies. Citizens must be free to praise and to condemn, to question those who govern and to be questioned in turn and to hold opinions that the majority may find foolish, offensive or even dangerous. A society that silences its critics has not secured peace but it has merely postponed the reckoning. Yet no serious legal system has ever treated speech as an absolute. Words can defame the innocent, incite the violent, expose the vulnerable and corrupt the administration of justice itself (see E Barendt, Freedom of Speech (2nd edn., OUP 2005) ch 1; F Schauer, Free Speech: A Philosophical Enquiry (CUP 1982) generally.).



The enduring question is therefore not whether the law may restrain expression, but where, on what principle, and by what means.

The question presses with particular force in Nigeria. The country inherited from colonial rule a body of speech offences, notably sedition and criminal defamation, which were designed to protect the governor from the governed (Criminal Code Act, Cap C38, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004, sections 50-51 (sedition) and sections 373 et seq (defamation).). It endured long periods of military rule in which newspapers were proscribed and journalists detained without trial. In the democratic era, the contest has moved online, where legislation on cybercrime, proposals for social media regulation and the suspension of an entire platform in 2021 have all tested the limits of state power over speech (Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc) Act 2015, s 24; Registered Trustees of the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) v Federal Republic of Nigeria ECW/CCJ/JUD/40/22 (ECOWAS Community Court of Justice, 14 July 2022).

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Four arguments dominate the justification of free speech and each carries implications for where its limits should lie. The first is the argument from truth. Milton pleaded in 1644 that truth would prevail in a free and open encounter with falsehood; and Mill later gave the idea its classic form contending that silencing an opinion robs humanity of the chance to exchange error for truth or to hold truth with a living conviction (J Milton, Areopagitica (1644); JS Mill, On Liberty (1859) ch 2.). Holmes transposed the argument into the language of the market, observing that the best test of truth is the power of a thought to get itself accepted in the

competition of the market (Abrams v United States 250 US 616, 630 (1919) (Holmes J, dissenting).). The argument is powerful but not unassailable. Markets can fail and in the age of algorithmic amplification falsehood often travels faster than correction. The argument supports a strong presumption against suppression, but it does not by itself explain why every falsehood must be tolerated.

The second argument is the argument from democratic self-government. Meiklejohn maintained that a people who govern themselves must be free to hear every opinion bearing upon public questions because the voter is the ultimate sovereign and cannot judge what she is forbidden to hear (Meiklejohn, Free Speech and Its Relation to Self-Government (Harper & Brothers 1948); A Meiklejohn, 'The First Amendment is an Absolute' [1961] Sup Ct Rev 245.). Blasi added what he called the checking value of speech: expression is the principal means by which citizens scrutinize and restrain the abuse of official power (V Blasi, 'The Checking Value in First Amendment Theory' [1977] Am B Found Res J 521.). This argument explains why political speech and criticism of public officials deserve the highest protection and it is the argument most relevant to a young democracy still consolidating its institutions, such as Nigeria.

The third is the argument from autonomy and dignity which treats expression as an incident of personhood. T.I. Emerson synthesized these strands in a classic essay, identifying individual self-fulfillment, the advancement of knowledge, participation in decision-making and the maintenance of a balance between stability and change as the functions served by the freedom (TI Emerson, 'Toward a General Theory of the First Amendment' (1963) 72 Yale LJ 877.). The fourth, by contrast, is a counter-argument from the harms of speech. Mill himself, the great champion of liberty, accepted that power may rightfully be exercised over a member of a civilized community against his will only to prevent harm to others (Mill (n 4) ch 1.). This was why Holmes in Schenck v. US (1919) once wrote that the First Amendment does not protect a man who falsely shouts fire in a theatre and causing panic. This was a clear and present danger. This legal standard was later diluted by the US Supreme Court in Brandenburg v. Ohio (1969) which ruled that speed can only be restricted if it is directed to inciting "imminent lawless action" and is likely to produce such action.

These theories converge on a useful starting point and diverge on a hard question. They converge on the proposition that restriction is the exception and that the state must justify it. They diverge on whether the speech of the hateful and the deceitful deserves shelter.

THE NIGERIAN CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Section 39(1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) (CFRN) declares that every person is entitled to freedom of expression including the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference. Section 39(2) extends the entitlement to the ownership and operation of any medium for the dissemination of information, subject to a licensing requirement for television and wireless broadcasting. Section 39(3) preserves laws that are reasonably justifiable in a democratic society for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of the courts or regulating telephony, broadcasting and cinematograph exhibitions, and for restricting the expression of certain public officers and members of the security services. Section 22 adds a distinctive structural note by charging the press and other mass media with the duty to uphold the fundamental



objectives of the Constitution and to hold government accountable to the people.

The general limitation clause is section 45(1) as it validates any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society in the interest of defense, public safety, public order, public morality or public health or for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedom of other persons.

It is important to emphasize three points which the clause communicates. First, the phrase 'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society' imports a standard of proportionality which places the burden of justification on the State and not on the citizen. Second, the listed heads in the limitation clause of section 45(1) are exhaustive so that embarrassment of government, or the protection of regime stability are excluded from such recognized constitutional purposes. Third, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, which has the force of law in Nigeria (though it ranks below the Constitution) supplies a persuasive interpretive standard that reinforces the above narrow reading in Section 45 of the 1999 Constitution. See Abacha v Fawehinmi (2000) 6 NWLR (Pt 660) 228 (SC). The jurisprudence on these provisions has been uneven where, in Director of Public Prosecutions v Chike Obi (1961) 1 All NLR 186., the Supreme Court upheld the colonial law of sedition as a restriction reasonably justifiable in a democratic society even though the accused had published a pamphlet of fierce political criticism. The Court of Appeal took a bolder view in Arthur Nwankwo v The State (1985) 6 NCLR 228 (CA), where the court held the law of sedition to be inconsistent with the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression. The two decisions mark the poles of the Nigerian debate: one treats the dignity of government as a legitimate object of protection, and the other recognises that in a democracy the rulers are answerable to the ruled. Because Nwankwo is a decision of the intermediate court, the point has never been settled with finality by the Supreme Court under the present Constitution, and the sedition provisions remain on the statute book. This position requires further dilation by the Supreme Court.

COMPARATIVE APPROACHES TO THE LIMITS OF EXPRESSION

THE UNITED STATES

After an early and troubling period in which the US Supreme Court upheld convictions of dissenters under the test of 'clear and present danger', the Court settled in Brandenburg v Ohio (Schenck v United States 249 US 47, 52 (1919); Brandenburg v Ohio 395 US 444, 447 (1969)), on a demanding standard: advocacy may be punished only where it is directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to produce such action. Justice Brandeis in Whitney v California 274 US 357, 377 (1927) (Brandeis J, concurring) had earlier supplied the animating philosophy, that where time permits the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence. In defamation, New York Times Co v Sullivan held that a public official may not recover for a false statement relating to official conduct unless it was made with actual malice because debate on public issues should be uninhibited and wide-open. The US Supreme Court has since protected the burning of a national flag and the picketing of a soldier's funeral with hateful placards, reasoning that the government may not prohibit expression simply because society finds it offensive (Texas v Johnson 491 US 397 (1989); Snyder v Phelps 562 US 443 (2011).). Even so, the American tradition recognizes narrow categories outside protection, including incitement, true threats and so-called "fighting words" (that inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of public peace). See Chaplinsky v New Hampshire 315 US 568, 571-572 (1942); R.A.V. v City of St Paul 505 US 377 (1992). (To be continued).



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

"Freedom of expression is the matrix, the indispensable condition, of nearly every other form of freedom". – Benjamin N. Cardozo.



ADDING VALUE

WITH HENRY UKAZU
henrous@gmail.com

You Are Endowed with Success DNA

Dear Destiny Friends,

Every living creature has DNA. Your DNA is what makes you distinct and unique from other creatures. For the sake of emphasis and clarity, DNA means Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA). It is the hereditary molecule that carries the genetic instructions for the development, functioning, growth, and reproduction of nearly all living organisms and many viruses. It serves as a biological blueprint, encoding the information necessary to construct proteins and RNA molecules that drive cellular life.



Nobody can function outside their DNA. Also, nobody evolved from nothing; we all came from something. When a child is born, the child will look like the father, mother, or a relative from either the father or mother.

As human beings, we all have the DNA of success in us. The mistake most people make is that most of the time, we think somebody will come and save us, but life does not work that way. Nobody, and I repeat, nobody will come and save you. We have the responsibility of saving ourselves, just like we have the responsibility of succeeding in life.

According to Azuh Arinze, success is not served on a silver platter (or "a la carte"); it is earned through hard work, perseverance, and daily effort rather than handed out easily. If you want to know how this works, imagine a 4.5 or 5.0 GPA student who earned A's in all his classes; nobody did it for him, nor did he earn them by accident. No, he was intentional in succeeding in his academic endeavors, and he put in the hard and smart work.

The same principle is applicable for an employee who would like to rise the corporate ladder. The employee will be intentional in putting in the desired work.

It's sad to see people who are always looking for a handout for cheap success. It's instructive to note that nothing good comes easy. Whatever anyone desires, one must put in the work, especially if it is something of value. Waiting for someone to assist you or give you an opportunity might not be the best route to take sometimes.

Do you know when you put yourself out there, the universe has a way

of conspiring with you to get what you desire and deserve? Experience has taught me to know that the more risk I take, the more opportunity I create. So, instead of waiting for anyone to reach out to you, take advantage of the internet and show your work. Fate might open the door to blessings and opportunities for you.

As a matter of fact, do you know that sometimes, when you put yourself out there, what you are looking for will begin to look for you when they see your work.

To understand how the DNA of success works, one must do what I call self-examination to know what's unique about them and what they are naturally good at.

So, if you desire to make any impact, it's advisable to use the magnetic power of the internet to broadcast your work as opposed to waiting for the traditional method of using television, radio, or newspaper to announce one's work. The internet is indeed a currency if properly utilized.

I have seen cases where some ingenious minds who went viral on TikTok or social media were called upon to speak about their work. Do you see that we all have the DNA of success? All we need is activation.

I strongly believe we all have the potential to succeed because, given every equal opportunity, everyone is a potential achiever. After all, we don't have dull brains, only brains that are undeveloped. When we activate our brains, only then will we discover we have DNA for success.

Most of the great people the world has celebrated are simply because of the ingenuity they used in producing products that have solved problems, in addition to being a blessing to humanity. These great minds tapped into the subconscious power of their DNA. They didn't have any other DNA that's separate from what we have. They didn't wait for anyone to literally show them what to do. They took their life and business into their hands and ran with it.

The same way they did it, we can do the same. All we need is to look into ourselves to know what's unique inside of us. Nobody is more special or blessed than another. What makes some people appear more successful is simply their doggedness in being consistent with their life.

If you are asked, what's your DNA for success? What will be your response? Trust me, a lot of people will have a different answer, but the true response is what made you stand out, what you are passionate about, or what one can do.

For me, my DNA for success is counseling, speaking, writing, and helping human beings reach their greatest human potential regardless of whatever they may have in mind

It's unfortunate to see some people copying other people's work instead of developing themselves to stand out

So, today, I will charge you to figure out what's unique about you.

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 -

The Yoruba Nation of Our Dream (Part 2)

In the previous article on building the Yoruba nation of our dreams, I talked about the travails of leadership and how we have been dealt a bad hand in Nigeria as Yoruba people. In this episode, I will focus on the first things we must do when we reclaim our Yoruba nation from the claws of Nigeria.



For any new nation or people's group to thrive, there must be accountability. Without it, anything they do will be based on guesswork, which leaves room for corruption. We all know how corruption damaged every fabric of Nigerian society, and any attempt to start our Yoruba nation on a corrupt footing will have severe consequences down the line.

The greatest of all accountabilities would be to conduct a national census of our new nation within the first 12 months of its emergence. This would give us credible, reliable data on how many people we really are. Presently, our population is always inferred from World Bank data and other major institutions around the world rather than a credible census.

This is the reason why we get our Yoruba population as 50, or 60, or 70 million people depending on whom you're asking. This, I believe, is not a good way to determine the true population of a people. Take for instance, the UK population has been hovering around 50 to 60 million people in the last century. This figure is important to them because it helps the decision makers to plan adequately for everyone on an individual basis rather than just lumping everyone into a group.

The other thing a good population census figure will provide for is the grouping of people within their age brackets for developmental purposes. Then we can bring targeted help to people groups depending on their need. It would be unwise to think of providing education facilities for retirees who are between the ages of 65 to 80 when they wouldn't be needing a degree for a job.

Likewise, a middle-aged population would want industries that provide them with good quality jobs rather than a playground. This is why a good population census will facilitate rapid development for a people who take accountability very seriously. It will mean that development



gets down to the very people that need it the most rather than being lost in the statistics of guesswork.

Once the true population of a people is determined, the next will be proper documentation. One of the many problems Nigeria as a country is having is that people can change their identity at a moment's notice without any consequence. Someone can change their name, birthdate, place of birth, and so many other personal details without a proper documentation trail.

Whilst this is not a crime, the way it is done really matters. For instance, many sports people change their birthdate just to fit into an age bracket to qualify for that group activity. I know I use the football analogy here because many of us are familiar with this phenomenon among footballers. However, this is a story of what is happening across every facet of our society.

Many civil servants change their birthdate just so that they don't go on early retirement to continue with their paid employment, as many of them are terrified of what happens after retirement. I know we would say we wouldn't blame them, but if everyone does what is right, then there would be a decent society for all of us where black will mean black and white will mean white.

That is the only way we can build a strong, coherent society ready to compete on the global stage. As things stand in Nigeria, we're not even competing in the African space, let alone among serious nations of the world. We need not carry the problems of Nigeria into our new Yoruba nation.

We need to strive to make our new nation a pride among many nations of the world. After all, we had a television station before France dreamt of one. We have done it before, and we can do it again. Let's work together in honesty to bring about a great nation that is ready to be accountable not just to its people but to the entire world. This is the only way we can be taken seriously when it comes to global affairs.



Weaponized Poverty: The Bane of Some Third World Countries

By Tolulope A. Adegoke

"Poverty becomes a weapon the moment a government discovers that hunger is more obedient than argument, and that a people preoccupied with survival have neither the time to question nor the strength to resist. The antidote is not charity but citizenship—the deliberate construction of institutions that make deprivation a failure of policy rather than a technique of power." – Tolulope A. Adegoke, PhD

ABSTRACT

Poverty in many third world countries is not merely a consequence of resource scarcity or economic mismanagement; it is, in a growing number of cases, a deliberate instrument of political control. This write-up examines the phenomenon of weaponized poverty—the strategic deprivation of populations to secure compliance, suppress dissent, and perpetuate elite dominance. Drawing on documented cases and institutional evidence, it analyzes the mechanisms through which poverty is weaponized, the consequences for governance and human development, and the comprehensive solutions available to dismantle this cycle. The argument advanced here is solution-oriented: weaponized poverty is a policy choice, and like all policy choices, it can be reversed through deliberate institutional reform, inclusive social protection, and accountable leadership.

DEFINING WEAPONIZED POVERTY

Weaponized poverty refers to the calculated use of economic deprivation—restricted access to food, employment, healthcare, education, and other socioeconomic rights—as a means of subjugating a population or a targeted segment of it. Unlike incidental poverty arising from structural constraints or natural misfortune, weaponized poverty is defined by its instrumentality: deprivation is imposed, sustained, or selectively alleviated to produce political outcomes.

The distinction matters. When poverty is weaponized, the objective is not the elimination of hardship but its calibration. The population must be kept sufficiently destitute to depend on the ruling authority, yet not so desperate as to revolt. This calibration is visible in the cyclical distribution of palliatives—temporary relief measures that pacify immediate discontent without addressing underlying structures of



deprivation.

Scholarship on forced migration has illuminated this dynamic with particular clarity. Research demonstrates that states can and do engage in economic persecution to subdue political opponents, limiting access to food, employment, healthcare, education, and other socioeconomic rights in order to impose a state of destitution on targeted populations . In such contexts, poverty becomes an element of persecution rather than an incidental hardship—a distinction with profound implications for how the international community understands both displacement and governance failure.

MECHANISMS OF WEAPONIZATION

Weaponized poverty operates through several identifiable mechanisms, each of which degrades the social contract while consolidating power.

Selective deprivation and patronage. In this model, access to basic necessities is contingent on political loyalty or acquiescence. A state may withhold services from regions or communities perceived as oppositional while directing resources to loyal constituencies. The result is not uniform poverty but a stratified deprivation that rewards compliance and punishes dissent. Research on North Korea demonstrates how socioeconomic wellbeing and mobility can become functions of perceived loyalty to the state, with the result that poverty serves as an instrument of political discipline.

Palliative dependency. Where outright repression is costly or visible, governments may

substitute systematic deprivation with periodic handouts. Palliatives—food distributions, small cash transfers, or subsidized essentials—are deployed not as rights but as favors, cultivating a psychology of dependency. Analysis of the Nigerian palliative system reveals how such measures, ostensibly designed as temporary relief, have evolved into instruments of governance: the population is kept in a state of manageable precarity, grateful for relief that never addresses the structures producing their poverty. The term "palliative" has acquired a cynical resonance, becoming emblematic of a carrot-and-stick approach to managing the masses.

Exclusion from productive participation. Weaponized poverty frequently involves the systematic exclusion of populations from economic opportunity—through discriminatory land policies, restricted access to credit, or the destruction of local livelihoods. When communities cannot participate in the formal economy, they become dependent on state or elite-controlled channels of survival. The World Bank has documented how networks, neighborhoods, and norms can function as "forces of preservation" that maintain existing power structures and limit social mobility, trapping generations in poverty regardless of individual effort.

Institutional capture. The weaponization of poverty is enabled by the capture of institutions—judicial, legislative, and administrative—that might otherwise provide recourse. When the legal system offers no protection against arbitrary deprivation, and when electoral processes are managed to produce predetermined outcomes, the poor have no institutional channel through which to contest their condition. The result is a closed system in which poverty is both the product and the perpetuator of powerlessness.



CONSEQUENCES FOR THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENT

The consequences of weaponized poverty extend far beyond the immediate suffering of affected populations. They undermine the foundations of sustainable development in ways that compound over generations.

Human capital erosion. When populations are denied adequate nutrition, healthcare, and education, the resulting deficits in human capital persist across generations. A child raised in conditions of weaponized poverty—where schools are inaccessible and health services unavailable—enters adulthood with diminished capacities that no subsequent policy can fully remedy. The World Bank's 2024 report on poverty and prosperity notes that in the poorest economies, the focus must be on economic growth and investing in human, financial, and physical capital. When these investments are deliberately withheld, the damage is cumulative and often irreversible.

Political instability and displacement. Populations subjected to economic persecution eventually move—internally or across borders. Research demonstrates that people flee not merely poverty but poverty as a result of economic coercion. This creates cascading consequences: strain on receiving regions, vulnerability to exploitation during transit, and the permanent loss of productive citizens from countries that can least afford their departure.

Erosion of state legitimacy. When the state is experienced primarily as an instrument of deprivation rather than protection, citizens withdraw trust and participation. The social contract—the implicit agreement by which citizens accept governance in exchange for security and opportunity—dissolves. What remains is a hollowed-out state that maintains order through coercion and patronage rather than consent, vulnerable to sudden collapse when economic shocks or political crises disrupt its mechanisms of control.

Obstruction of economic growth. Weaponized poverty is, in narrowly economic terms, self-defeating. Economies cannot grow sustainably when large segments

of the population are excluded from productive participation. The World Bank has emphasized that for lower-middle-income countries, the focus should shift to growth and shared prosperity—measures that increase incomes, improve resilience to shocks, and lower emissions. Countries that have achieved rapid poverty reduction have done so through inclusive growth strategies that recognized the poor as economic actors rather than objects of control.

PATHWAYS TO SOLUTIONS

The solution to weaponized poverty is not technical but political. It requires the construction of institutions, policies, and incentives that make weaponization costly and inclusion beneficial. The following pathways, drawn from documented successes across diverse contexts, offer a comprehensive framework for action.

1. Institutionalize universal social protection as a right, not a favor.

Social protection systems that provide universal or near-universal coverage—rather than targeted, discretionary benefits—remove the discretionary power that enables weaponization. When citizens are entitled to support by law rather than dependent on the goodwill of officials, the capacity to withhold support as punishment is eliminated. The scale of the challenge is substantial. According to the International Labour Organization's World Social Protection Report 2024–26, only 52.4 percent of the world's population is covered by at least one social protection benefit, leaving 3.8 billion people unprotected. The design principle is critical: benefits must be adequate, predictable, and legally guaranteed. Benefits that are too low to meaningfully affect poverty leave recipients focused on survival with no capacity to plan or invest, perpetuating the very dependency that weaponization exploits. Adequacy, combined with legal entitlement, transforms social protection from a tool of pacification into an instrument of empowerment.

2. Build shock-responsive delivery systems.

Poverty weaponization thrives on crisis. When droughts, floods, or economic downturns strike, populations without reliable support become desperate and dependent. Shock-responsive social protection systems—those that can rapidly expand during crises—prevent this dynamic by ensuring that emergencies do not become opportunities for exploitation. The infrastructure required includes dynamic registries, digital payment systems, and case management capacities that can scale quickly. The World Bank has documented how countries that invested in such systems before the COVID-19 pandemic responded more effectively during it, demonstrating that proactive investment pays dividends.



3. Link social protection to economic inclusion.

Handouts alone, no matter how well designed, are insufficient. The goal must be graduation from poverty, not permanent maintenance at a subsistence level. Economic inclusion programs—which combine cash or asset transfers with training, market access, and mentorship—have demonstrated the capacity to increase household incomes and business revenues substantially. The World Bank's State of Economic Inclusion Report 2024 found that in Zambia, an economic inclusion program for women led to a 19 percent increase in consumption and a 45 percent rise in business profits, with cost recovery within twelve months. Such programs transform the poor from objects of policy into agents of their own development, a shift with profound implications for both economic growth and political dignity.

4. Reform fiscal policy and combat corruption.

Weaponized poverty is sustained by fiscal systems that extract from the many to benefit the few***...continue reading on https://thebossnewspapers.com/opinion/weaponized-poverty-the-bane-of-some-third-world-countries/***

Dr. Mahmood Ahmadu: A Distinguished Son of Mubi and Global Trailblazer

By Charles Khiran



On Saturday, 31st October 2026, Dr Mahmood Ahmadu, OON, was among eight illustrious sons and daughters of the Mubi Emirate who were honoured with traditional titles and turbaned by the Emir of Mubi, Alhaji Abubakar Isa Ahmadu, CFR, FFMP, Chancellor of the Federal University of Lafia, Nasarawa State.

Dr Ahmadu received the prestigious title of Turakin Mubi Emirate.

Dr Ahmadu is undoubtedly one of Africa's remarkable entrepreneurial success stories.

A man of considerable achievement, yet distinguished by his humility and modest disposition, he has built an impressive legacy as a visionary entrepreneur, industrialist and pioneer of Africa's digital transformation.

As Chairman of MAG Group, his entrepreneurial interests span technology, real estate, energy, infrastructure and other strategic sectors. Through its diverse portfolio of businesses, MAG Group has established a presence across multiple industries and international markets.

He is also the founder of Online Integrated Solutions (OIS), a global provider of diaspora, identity enrolment and diplomatic support services, including Nigerian visa application services, passport tracking and National Identification Number (NIN) enrolment.

OIS earned recognition for its pioneering role in government outsourcing, demonstrating how technology and private-sector innovation could transform the delivery of public services.

Through OIS and other multinational enterprises, Dr Ahmadu has made significant contributions to reshaping the relationship between technology, public institutions and private enterprise.

Widely regarded as a futurist, he possesses a remarkable instinct for identifying opportunities ahead of their time. His entrepreneurial foresight and strategic vision played a pivotal role in laying important foundations for Africa's digital infrastructure.

Nearly three decades into his remarkable entrepreneurial journey, Dr Ahmadu returned to Nasarawa State University, where he was conferred with an Honorary Doctorate in Technology in recognition of his contributions and achievements.

Africa Needs Investment, Not Aid — Elumelu



Founder of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, Tony Elumelu, has said Africa needs investment and trade, not aid, to drive its development and unlock the continent's economic potential.

He explained that Africa's biggest challenge is not a shortage of entrepreneurial talent but inadequate capital to support businesses and unlock the continent's economic potential.

Elumelu stated this on Friday while speaking at the second day of the 25th annual conference of Women in Management, Business and Public Service, held at Eko Hotels and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos.

He said the foundation received 265,529 applications from young Africans with business ideas in 2026 but could only fund 3,200, leaving more than 262,000 applicants without support.

"This, therefore, is not a shortage of entrepreneurial talent in Africa. It is a shortage of capital," he said.

Elumelu, who spoke on the theme, "The Geography of Opportunity: Why the World Needs What Africa Has," said the continent needed to mobilise more local investment to support entrepreneurs and drive development.

He said, "The future is investment and trade, not aid," adding that African countries must build the capacity to finance their own development rather than depend heavily on external assistance.

According to him, Africa's pension funds, banks, insurance companies and family offices should play a greater role in financing businesses instead of concentrating investments in government securities or keeping funds abroad.

"The most important thing Africa needs to build in the next decade is African capital that invests in Africa," he said.

The businessman also identified electricity, value creation and access to capital as major barriers to the continent's economic growth, adding intra-African trade as a fourth challenge.

On electricity, he said industrialisation and the development of artificial intelligence would remain difficult without reliable power and connectivity.

"We cannot talk about industrialisation without fixing electricity. Factories cannot run without it. Hospitals and schools cannot function without it," he said.

He also urged African countries to move beyond exporting raw materials and focus on processing and adding value to their resources locally.

"If the power is reliable, if the environment is right and enabling, why ship raw lithium, raw cocoa, raw crude out of this continent, refine it, process it, brand it, then sell it to the world?" he asked.

On trade, Elumelu said less than a fifth of Africa's trade was conducted among African countries, despite the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

"It is easier today to ship goods from Lagos to Liverpool than from Lagos to Luanda. Less than a fifth of our trade is with each other," he said.

He called for improved roads, railways, ports, payment systems and customs procedures to make cross-border trade easier, urging African businesses to see the continent as a common market.

Speaking on women's participation in business, Elumelu said women had continued to demonstrate their capacity to lead and build successful enterprises but were often denied the capital and recognition they deserved.

"Women's economic leadership is not a concession to fairness; it is a requirement for competitiveness," he said.

He cited the experience of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, through which he and his wife, Awele, have provided more than $100m in seed capital to 24,633 young entrepreneurs across all 54 African countries over 15 years.

According to him, businesses supported by the foundation have created more than 1.5 million jobs and generated over $4.2bn in revenue.

Lagos CANEX: Afreximbank Targets Over $540m Deals



The African Export-Import Bank has set its sights on securing creative industry deals exceeding $540m at the Creative Africa Nexus Weekend 2026 in Lagos, as it seeks to expand financing for African music, film, fashion and other cultural businesses.

The President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Afreximbank, Dr George Elombi, disclosed this on Thursday during the opening ceremony of the four-day event, expressing confidence that transactions concluded in Lagos would surpass those recorded at the previous gathering.

Referring to the 540m, he added, "Lagos has to be several multiples of 540. So let Lagos set the mark, and I'm sure that mark will be hard to catch up elsewhere."

The event, hosted by the Federal Government and organised by Afreximbank, runs from November 5 to 8 under the theme, "One People, United in Culture, Creating for the World."

According to a statement issued by the bank during the event, the CANEX Deal Room and Creative Pitch Sessions will connect entrepreneurs directly with financiers and investors seeking opportunities across film, television, music, fashion, sport, publishing, gastronomy, visual arts and creative infrastructure.

The statement explained that the Creative Economy Finance Summit, organised in partnership with the Creative Economy Practice at Co-Creation Hub, would examine how creative industry transactions could be structured, financed and de-risked.

Elombi said the initiative was intended to address a longstanding imbalance in which African creators achieved international recognition but received a disproportionately small share of the financial returns.

Citing estimates attributed to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, he valued Africa's creative economy at approximately $`60bn, representing only two per cent of the global creative industry.

"So too often, the African creators make the hits, and someone else makes the money," he lamented.

He identified foreign control of distribution networks, branding, marketing platforms, intellectual property rights and content catalogues.

FG targets 500 More CNG Stations



The Federal Government has disclosed that Nigeria currently has about 160 operational Compressed Natural Gas refuelling stations, while another 170 facilities are at different stages of development and licensing as part of efforts to expand the adoption of alternative fuels and reduce transportation costs.

The Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Presidential Initiative on Compressed Natural Gas and Electric Vehicles, Barrister Ismaeel Ahmed, disclosed this on Friday at the official commissioning of a CNG Integrated Refuelling Unit station established through a partnership between the State House, Pi-CNG and Electric Vehicles, and Rolling Energy in Karu, Abuja.

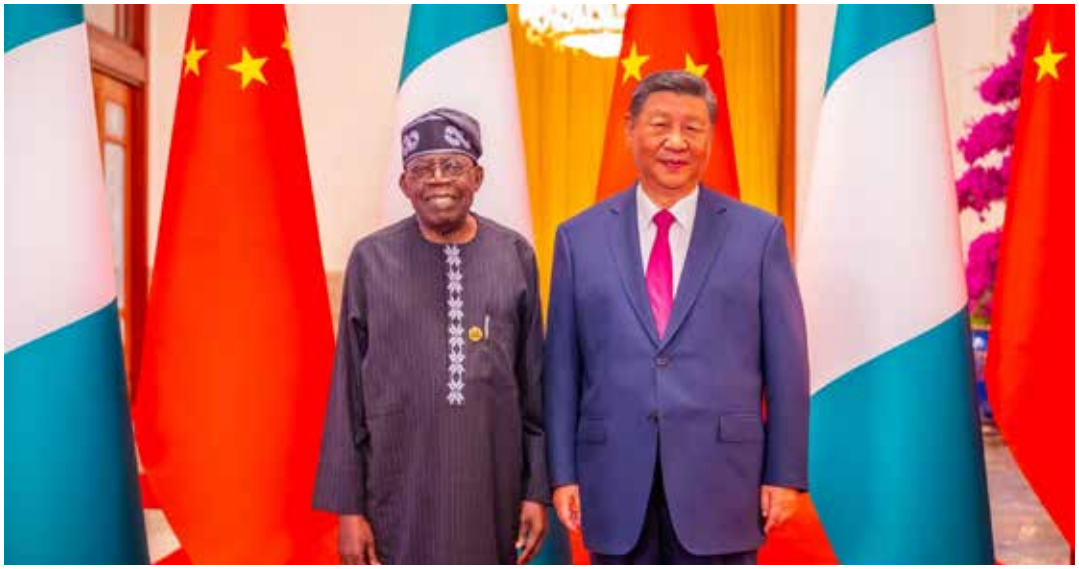
He said the country had moved beyond the experimental stage of CNG adoption, with private investors committing about $2.6bn to the development of infrastructure across the country.

Ismaeel said the Federal Government was pushing to accelerate the expansion of refuelling facilities, adding that President Bola Tinubu had ordered another round of infrastructure development to increase access to CNG across the country.

He said, "This is almost our 106th station across the country in less than two years. This is not beginning any longer. The market has been proven.

"The investors are putting in $2.6bn worth of private investment. Our President has ordered for another round of about 500 infrastructure units to come in through the MDGIF.

World Bank: Nigeria Owes China $5.7bn In Bilateral Loans



Africa's most populous nation Nigeria owed China $5.67bn in bilateral external debt as of the end of 2025, accounting for about 85 per cent of its total $6.68bn obligations to foreign governments, according to the World Bank.

The figure places Asian economic powerhouse China as Nigeria's largest bilateral creditor, ahead of France, to which the country owed $774m, while other bilateral creditors accounted for $237m.

The World Bank disclosed this in its International Debt Report 2026 uploaded on its website on Friday, which showed that Nigeria's total external debt stock rose by 6.6 per cent to $145.02bn in 2025 from $136.05bn in 2024.

Bilateral loans are borrowings provided by one government to another, either directly or through government-backed agencies. They are not the same as multilateral loans, which are usually obtained from institutions such as the World Bank and other international development lenders.

Nigeria's bilateral debt of $6.68bn formed part of its $62.4bn public and publicly guaranteed external debt, which includes direct government borrowing and loans obtained by other entities with government guarantees.

Multilateral creditors accounted for the largest share of the public and publicly guaranteed external debt at $31.37bn, while private creditors held $24.35bn, the 280-page report stated.

Within the multilateral category, the World Bank's International Development Association accounted for $18.53bn,International Monetary Fund Special Drawing Rights allocations represented $5.52bn, while other multilateral institutions accounted for $7.32bn.

According to the international lender, Nigeria's total external debt increased from $83.21bn in 2015 to $145.02bn in 2025, representing a rise of approximately 74.3 per cent over the decade.

The country's external debt comprised $62.4bn in public and publicly guaranteed obligations, $54.48bn in private nonguaranteed debt and $28.14bn in short-term external debt.

Private nonguaranteed debt represents foreign borrowing by private-sector entities without government guarantees, while short-term external debt generally comprises obligations with an original maturity of one year or less.

The rising external debt stock comes as President Bola Tinubu seeks National Assembly approval to raise an additional $7.7bn through international financing sources to partly finance the 2026 budget deficit.

In a letter read by Senate President Godswill Akpabio during plenary on Wednesday, Tinubu requested approval to raise $7.707bn, equivalent to approximately N10.79tn at the budget exchange rate of N1,400 to the dollar.

The proposed borrowing represents the external financing component of the N29.2tn new borrowing provision in the 2026 Appropriation Act, comprising N18.4tn in domestic borrowing and N10.79tn in external financing.

On debt sustainability, the World Bank reported that Nigeria's external debt-to-exports ratio stood at 212 per cent in 2025, while external debt-to-Gross National Income was 51 per cent.

The debt service-to-exports ratio rose to 19 per cent, while debt service-to-GNI stood at five per cent, indicating the proportion of export earnings and national income equivalent to external debt repayment obligations.

The report also showed that Nigeria's average interest rate on new external loan commitments from official creditors was 1.9 per cent, compared with 9.6 per cent for private creditors.

CBN Withdraws N3.46tn Through OMO, T-Bills

Nigeria's Central Bank absorbed N3.46tn from the financial system through its latest Open Market Operations and Treasury bills auctions, as investors submitted more than twice the amount offered despite unchanged T-bill stop rates.

The auctions, conducted on 3 and 4 November, attracted combined subscriptions of N5.57tn against offers of N2.3tn, according to results released by the apex bank.

The CBN allotted N2.95tn through OMO and N509.41bn through T-bills, bringing total allotments to approximately N3.46tn.

The OMO auction accounted for about 85 per cent of the combined allotment, reflecting the central bank's stronger absorption of liquidity through the instrument

At the 3 November OMO auction, the CBN offered N1.5tn across 119-day, 126-day and 133-day instruments but received subscriptions of N3.52tn, representing 2.35 times the offer.

The apex bank allotted N2.95tn, with demand concentrated in the 133-



day instrument, which attracted N2.36tn, accounting for about 67 per cent of total subscriptions.

Stop rates for the 119-day, 126-day and 133-day OMO bills stood at 17.77 per cent, 17.71 per cent and 17.67 per cent, respectively.

The sizeable allotment represented a sharp increase from the 29 October auction, when the CBN sold only N244.93bn despite receiving N2.28tn in bids.

The 4 November T-bill auction also recorded strong investor demand, with subscriptions reaching N2.045tn against an offer of N800bn.

However, the CBN allotted only N509.41bn, leaving approximately N1.54tn in bids unaccepted.

FG Records N33tn Revenue In 10 Months – Oyedele

The Federal Government generated a record N33tn in revenue between January and October 2026, with improvements in digital tax administration and electronic invoicing boosting collections, the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Taiwo Oyedele, has disclosed.

Oyedele made the disclosure while delivering the convocation lecture at the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, where he called for greater investment in Nigeria's digital infrastructure to strengthen economic competitiveness and government revenue mobilisation.

This was contained in a statement issued on Thursday by his Senior Special Assistant on Communications and Press Secretary, Maryann Duke.

The statement said Oyedele pointed to "improved digital systems, including electronic invoicing, as a key driver behind a record N33tn in government revenue collected between January and October 2026."

The minister said the performance demonstrated the potential of technology to improve revenue administration, strengthen compliance and increase efficiency across government institutions.

Speaking on the theme, 'Digital Sovereignty and Ethics: Guarding the Economy for the Next Generation,' Oyedele



warned that Nigeria risked losing substantial economic opportunities if it continued to depend heavily on foreign digital infrastructure.

Citing Nigerian Communications Commission figures, he disclosed that the country recorded more than 157 million active internet subscriptions as of May 2026.

He explained that these connections generated significant volumes of information through financial transactions, healthcare, education and taxation.

However, citing estimates from the Nigeria Data Protection Commission, Oyedele said as much as 90 per cent of the country's data was hosted abroad.

According to him, the situation has implications for foreign exchange expenditure, employment opportunities, technological skills and Nigeria's control over information generated by its citizens.

Dollar Stablecoins: CBN Sets N15bn Capital Requirement



The Central Bank of Nigeria has introduced a minimum paid-up capital requirement of N15bn for companies issuing foreign currency-backed stablecoins, including those pegged to the United States dollar, as part of new regulations governing virtual assets and digital payment services in Nigeria.

The requirement is contained in the Regulations for the Operations of Non-Security Virtual Assets in Nigeria, released by the apex bank on Friday, following a circular dated 5 November, 2026, and signed by the Director of the Payments System Policy Department, Musa Jimoh.

Under Section 15.2 of the regulations, the CBN stated, "A Class 2 Licensed Issuer shall maintain minimum paid-up capital of fifteen billion Naira (N15,000,000,000), or such higher amount as the Bank may prescribe, on entry and at all times thereafter."

The provision applies to Class 2 stablecoins, which are digital tokens designed to maintain a stable value against foreign currencies, including the US dollar.

The regulations also prescribe a lower capital threshold of N10bn for issuers of naira-referenced stablecoins, classified as Class 1, while companies providing other non-security virtual asset services must maintain at least N1bn in paid-up capital.

The CBN stated, "A Class 1 Licensed Issuer shall maintain paid-up capital of ten billion Naira (N10,000,000,000), or such higher amount as the Bank may prescribe, on entry and at all times thereafter."

For other virtual asset service providers, the regulations specify that the N1bn requirement must be maintained separately from capital committed to licences issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission or other regulatory authorities.

The new framework establishes different capital requirements for stablecoin issuers and other service providers, reflecting the varying financial and operational risks associated with their activities.

It also empowers the CBN to demand higher capital from operators based on their transaction volumes, market significance, redemption obligations, technology risks and exposure to the broader financial system.

According to the document, "Capital shall be separate from and additional to issuer reserves, the CBN reserve deposit, customer funds and assets and operational liquidity."

This means operators cannot use the same funds to satisfy multiple regulatory obligations, including capital adequacy and reserves backing stablecoins already in circulation.

The regulations further require eligible capital to be held as cash in designated accounts with the CBN or in approved Federal Government securities subject to the bank's control.

Operators whose capital falls below the prescribed minimum must notify the CBN immediately and submit a restoration plan within 10 business days. The regulator may restrict new token issuance or customer onboarding until compliance is restored.

Beyond capital requirements, the CBN introduced strict rules on the assets backing stablecoins, requiring issuers to maintain reserves equivalent to at least 100 per cent of outstanding obligations, alongside an additional two per cent buffer against potential losses.

It stated, "No Licensed Issuer shall issue new stablecoin tokens (mint) unless, at the time of minting, equivalent Eligible Reserve Assets have been received and held in the Reserve Pool."

Stablecoin holders must also be allowed to redeem their tokens at face value, generally no later than the next business day after a valid request, without charges for standard redemptions.

Nigeria Lost 3.3m Barrels To Theft In 2025 – NUPRC

Nigeria lost 3.33 million barrels of crude oil to theft in 2025, with nearly two-thirds of the reported losses occurring in the final three months, as the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission's revenue collection declined by N2.14tn.

The commission's 2025 annual report, released on Thursday, showed that crude oil and gas revenue collections fell from N12.56tn in 2024 to N10.42tn in 2025, representing a 17.03 per cent decline, despite increases in receipts from gas flare penalties, signature bonuses and concession rentals.

Data from the commission's 2025 report showed that crude theft rose sharply in the fourth quarter, when 2.19 million barrels were recorded. This represented 65.8 per cent of the total volume reported for the year and was almost five times the 440,434 barrels recorded in the third quarter.

The commission recorded 896,471 barrels of crude theft in the first quarter, while its second-quarter report showed a negative figure of 200,400 barrels, which it attributed to excess volumes identified during reconciliation.

The combined quarterly figures brought reported losses for the year to approximately 3.33 million barrels.

The report read, "Nigeria recorded 896,471 barrels of crude oil theft in the first quarter.



The second quarter recorded a negative 200,400 barrels, which the commission described as an excess volume in its reconciliation. Reported theft stood at 440,434 barrels in the third quarter. The fourth quarter recorded 2.19 million barrels, the highest quarterly volume of the year."

The losses came despite the huge financial burden of securing the country's petroleum assets. The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited reported energy security costs of N8.67tn in 2025, compared with about N3.1tn in 2024.

The expenditure reflects the cost of interventions to protect oil and gas infrastructure and support national energy security, although the entire amount cannot be attributed solely to combating crude theft.

Rising Demand: Crude Palm Oil Imports Hit 487%

Nigeria's crude palm oil imports rose 486.94 per cent year-on-year to N91.62bn in the first half of 2026, highlighting the widening gap between domestic production and industrial demand.

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics' Foreign Trade in Goods report showed that the country spent N91.62bn on crude palm oil imports between January and June 2026, compared with N15.61bn recorded in the corresponding period of 2025.

A breakdown of the figures showed that imports increased from N7.87bn in the first quarter of 2025 to N23.16bn in the first quarter of 2026. In the second quarter, the import bill surged from N7.74bn in 2025 to N68.46bn in 2026, representing a sharp increase in the country's reliance on foreign supplies.

The rising import bill comes amid concerns over Nigeria's inability to meet domestic and industrial demand for crude palm oil, with industry operators estimating a supply deficit of about 1.5 million tonnes.



In a phone interview with The PUNCH, the Chairman of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Agricultural and Allied Group, Tunde Banjoko, said the country continued to face a significant production shortfall, warning that increased imports would not address the underlying problem.

"We still have a major deficit of almost 1.5 million tonnes thereabouts. We still have a deficit. I think I'd rather confirm, but I think it's about 1.5 million tonnes. We are unable to meet our domestic and industrial demand. Importation is not the solution," Banjoko said.

NNPC's Federation Account Remittance Hits N11.41tn



The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited generated N33.15 trillion in revenue between January and September 2026, representing a 28.3 per cent or N13.11tn decline compared with the N46.26tn recorded in the corresponding period of 2025.

The national company also paid a total of N11.14tn to the Federation Account as statutory payments between January and September 2026.

An analysis of the company's monthly financial reports showed that the state-owned oil company earned N13.11tn less in the first nine months of 2026 than it generated in the same period last year, highlighting the pressure on its revenue performance despite improvements in some of its production indicators.

The decline came despite a strong September performance, when NNPC's revenue increased to N4.608tn from approximately N3.74tn in August, representing a month-on-month growth of about 23.3 per cent.

The company also recorded a profit after tax of N509bn in September, an 18.1 per cent increase from the N431bn reported in August.

The figures were contained in NNPC's September 2026 Monthly Operations and Financial Report released on Tuesday.

A breakdown of the revenue figures showed that NNPC generated N2.571tn in January, N2.680tn in February and N2.774tn in March.

Its earnings subsequently rose sharply to N4.971tn in April before moderating to N4.335tn in May and N4.389tn in June.

Revenue dropped to N3.087tn in July before recovering to N3.737tn in August and N4.608tn in September.

The September performance represented the company's strongest monthly revenue since April, when it generated almost N5tn.

However, the improvement was insufficient to reverse the revenue shortfall accumulated during the year, leaving its nine-month earnings significantly below the previous year's performance.

A comparison with the 2025 monthly reports showed that NNPC generated N3.824tn in January, N6.624tn in February, N5.475tn in March, N5.891tn in April and N6.008tn in May.

The company subsequently recorded N5.105tn in June, N4.406tn in July, N4.655tn in August and N4.269tn in September.

The combined figure of N46.257tn represented a considerably stronger revenue performance than the N33.152tn recorded in the first nine months of 2026.

The latest performance is coming against the backdrop of NNPC's full-year 2025 financial results, which showed that its revenue declined by 24 per cent to N34.5tn from N45.1tn in 2024.

Despite the revenue decline, its profit after tax increased by 33 per cent to N7.2tn from N5.4tn, while earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation rose by 22 per cent to N18tn.

Meanwhile, the company's statutory payments to the Federation Account reached N11.14tn between January and September 2026, representing an increase of 17.4 per cent over the N9.49tn recorded in the first eight months of the year.

The September figure added approximately N1.65tn to the cumulative statutory payments reported at the end of August.

A comparison with the monthly statutory payment figures contained in NNPC's 2025 report showed that the company remitted approximately N11.56tn between January and September last year.

This indicates that the company's cumulative statutory payments in the first nine months of 2026 were about N417bn, or 3.6 per cent, lower than the corresponding 2025 figure.

The statutory payments comprise a different financial measure from revenue and profit, reflecting the company's payments to the federation rather than its total business earnings.

Access Holdings Posts N474bn Q3 Profit

Access Holdings Plc has posted a strong nine-month result for 2026, recording N474bn profit after tax.

This was disclosed in a statement by the lender on Thursday.

According to the statement, profit before tax increased by 8.3 per cent to N667.4bn, from N616.2bn in 2025, while profit after tax rose by 5.9 per cent to N474.2bn.

Beyond headline figures, interest income rose 6.9 per cent to N3.1tn, net interest income increased 2.7 per cent to N1.3tn and a sharp 73.5 per cent reduction in impairment charges to N92.9bn propelled net interest income after impairment up by 32.1 per cent to N1.2tn.

Fee and commission income grew 8.4 per cent to N650.9bn, driving net fee and commission income up 12.4 per cent to N534.9bn and pushing core operating income to M1.83tn.

However, performance faced pressure as operating expenses rose 11.8 per cent to N1.3 trillion and other operating income fell 40.8 per cent to N234.5bn, resulting in a 3.2 per cent decline in total operating income to N2.06tn.

These pressure points explain why operating efficiency forms the core of the Group's Scale-to-Value agenda.

Highlighting this strategic pivot, management stated, "The scale-to-value roadmap represents a transition from rapid expansion to improving the quality, cost discipline, and productivity of our established infrastructure to maximise shareholder returns."



The balance sheet further underscores the group's scale, with total assets reaching N52.6tb as at 30 September 2026, up 1.7 per cent from year-end 2025.

Customer deposits grew 6.6 per cent to N36.9 trillion, loans and advances rose 7.4 per cent to N14.3 trillion, and shareholders' funds remained stable at M4.5 trillion.

Access Holdings describes Scale-to-Value as a progression from building scale to improving its quality and productivity.

Strategic focus has shifted from expansion alone to extracting maximum yield from established infrastructure, targeting sustainable shareholder returns as the ultimate objective.

Geographic diversification remains a key earnings driver, with the banking group generating 96.0 per cent of group unaudited profit before tax.

Operations outside Nigeria accounted for 82.2 per cent of banking PBT, driven by international banking subsidiaries at 43.7 per cent and Rest of Africa at 38.5 per cent, while Nigeria contributed 17.8 per cent.

74% of Nigerian Tech Startups Maintain US Ties

A new report has revealed that 74 per cent of Nigerian companies maintain ties to the United States, predominantly for corporate incorporation and fundraising.

The newly released report by TLP Advisory, titled 'Home & Away: Tracking African Tech's Global Footprints,' which was presented to the public in Lagos on Saturday, shows that while Nigerian tech startups pulled in $572m in 2025 – accounting for roughly 14 per cent of the continent's total venture funding-currency depreciation, limited domestic exit options, and investor mandates are forcing many founders to look outward for survival and scale.

"Although the US is the most common destination for Nigerian companies' foreign affiliations, with 74 per cent maintaining ties there, their UK ties more often involve operations and licensing," it noted.



The report examined 100 technology companies across six African markets: Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Egypt, Ghana and Morocco, exploring why they chose affiliations with the UK, US and UAE and what these relationships could enable them to do.

It found that the US is primarily associated with financing-linked incorporation, while the UAE serves as a base for on-the-ground operations and access to the wider Middle East.

Fintech Firms Lose $420bn As Investors Pull Out



Global fintech companies recorded a combined market capitalisation decline of approximately $420bn over five years, as investors reassessed valuations amid intensifying competition and concerns about growth prospects, a new industry analysis has shown.

The decline placed fintech among the four sectors with the largest combined losses in market value among the world's 1,000 biggest publicly listed companies between August 13, 2021, and September 25, 2026, according to a report by BestBrokers, a financial research firm.

The analysis found that 172 of the 1,000 companies lost market value during the period, with payments companies PayPal, Block and Adyen among the biggest casualties. PayPal accounted for the largest individual decline, losing $275.57bn in market capitalisation.

The American payments company's market value fell by 85.41 per cent, from $322.65bn in August 2021 to $47.08bn in September 2026, reflecting a sharp reversal from the valuation it commanded during the pandemic-era boom in digital payments.

Block, the financial technology company formerly known as Square, lost $77.6bn, representing a 62.81 per cent decline, as its market capitalisation dropped to $45.9bn.

Dutch payments company Adyen recorded a 61.94 per cent decline, shedding $51.15bn to reach $31.43bn.

The findings highlight the pressure on fintech valuations following a period of rapid expansion in digital financial services, when increased adoption of online payments and financial technology attracted substantial investor interest.

Beyond fintech, the report identified technology as the sector with the largest combined market capitalisation loss at $637.3bn. Food and beverage companies followed with $545.6bn, while fashion and apparel firms lost $472.7bn.

Traditional financial institutions also faced significant valuation declines. The analysis found that 15 banks and financial services companies collectively shed $203.5bn in market value.

China Merchants Bank recorded the largest absolute decline among traditional financial institutions, losing $34.8bn, or 17.48 per cent, and closing the period with a market capitalisation of $164.31bn.

Ping An Bank suffered a steeper percentage decline, with its market value falling by 45.17 per cent, or $26.92bn, to $32.67bn.

Australia's Macquarie Group lost $22.95bn, representing a 25.93 per cent decline, while Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing shed $21.28bn, or 25.37 per cent, to reach $62.63bn.

Other companies in the financial sector that recorded substantial declines included Bank Rakyat Indonesia, which lost $12.16bn, and British data analytics company Experian, whose market value fell by $10.44bn.

Commenting on the findings, Data Researcher and Author at BestBrokers, Stanislava Savisheva, said the declines reflected changing investor expectations about the ability of financial technology companies to sustain their valuations.

She said the performance of PayPal demonstrated how quickly market expectations could shift when established payments platforms faced stronger competition and questions about their growth prospects.

Airfares Hits 200% Ahead Of Festive Season

Nigerians planning to travel home for Christmas may, as usual, have to pay significantly more for flight tickets, with airfares on some domestic routes rising by nearly 200 per cent ahead of the festive season.

Findings from airline booking platforms showed that economy tickets on routes connecting Lagos and Abuja to parts of the South-East and South-South have climbed to between N196,000 and N337,500 for 20 and 21 December, 2026.

The fares, which were previously between N106,000 and N143,000 on some of the routes, reflect sharp increases by several domestic carriers as demand builds ahead of Christmas and New Year.

Aero Contractors recorded one of the steepest increases, raising its Lagos-Asaba economy fare from N106,286 on 9 November to N327,940 for 20 December, an increase of about 208 per cent.

Air Peace also increased its Lagos-Asaba fare from N118,400 on 9 November to N337,500 for 21 December.

The airline's business-class ticket on the route stood at N432,700.

On the Abuja-Enugu route,



Air Peace's economy fare rose from N116,400 to N335,500, representing an increase of about 188 per cent.

United Nigeria Airlines' Lagos-Benin fare also climbed from N120,000 to N310,500, while Aero Contractors' Abuja-Benin ticket increased from N117,627 to N196,522.

The increases were less pronounced on some routes. Ibom Air's Lagos-Uyo economy fare, for instance, rose from N143,200 to N200,300, while its Abuja-Uyo service was listed at N200,100 for 21 December.

Other affected destinations include Port Harcourt, Owerri and Ebonyi, as travellers face higher costs during the peak holiday period.

The latest increases have brought back concerns about the affordability of domestic air travel.

US-Iran Conflict To Cut Global Fuel Demand By 2.4mbpd

The US-Iran conflict is expected to reduce global refined petroleum products demand by 2.4 million barrels per day before the end of 2026, as supply disruptions, rising fuel prices and restrictions on shipping and aviation weigh on consumption across major markets.

The decline was expected to be concentrated in the second and third quarters of the year, when disruptions to supplies, elevated pump prices and restrictions on regional shipping and aviation had their greatest impact, according to projections by Kpler.

The outlook shows that gasoil and diesel will suffer the largest decline among refined products, with demand projected to fall by 500,000 barrels per day this year. Liquefied petroleum gas (cooking gas) demand is expected to drop by 460,000 barrels per day, while naphtha consumption will decline by 350,000 barrels per day.

Global gasoline demand is forecast to fall by 330,000 barrels per day, while jet fuel and kerosene demand will decline by 200,000 barrels per day. Fuel oil demand is projected to drop by 120,000 barrels per day.

The report attributed the demand losses to different



effects of the conflict, including reduced feedstock availability for petrochemical plants, higher retail fuel prices, government-led conservation measures, airspace closures and the displacement of bunkering activity from key Gulf hubs.

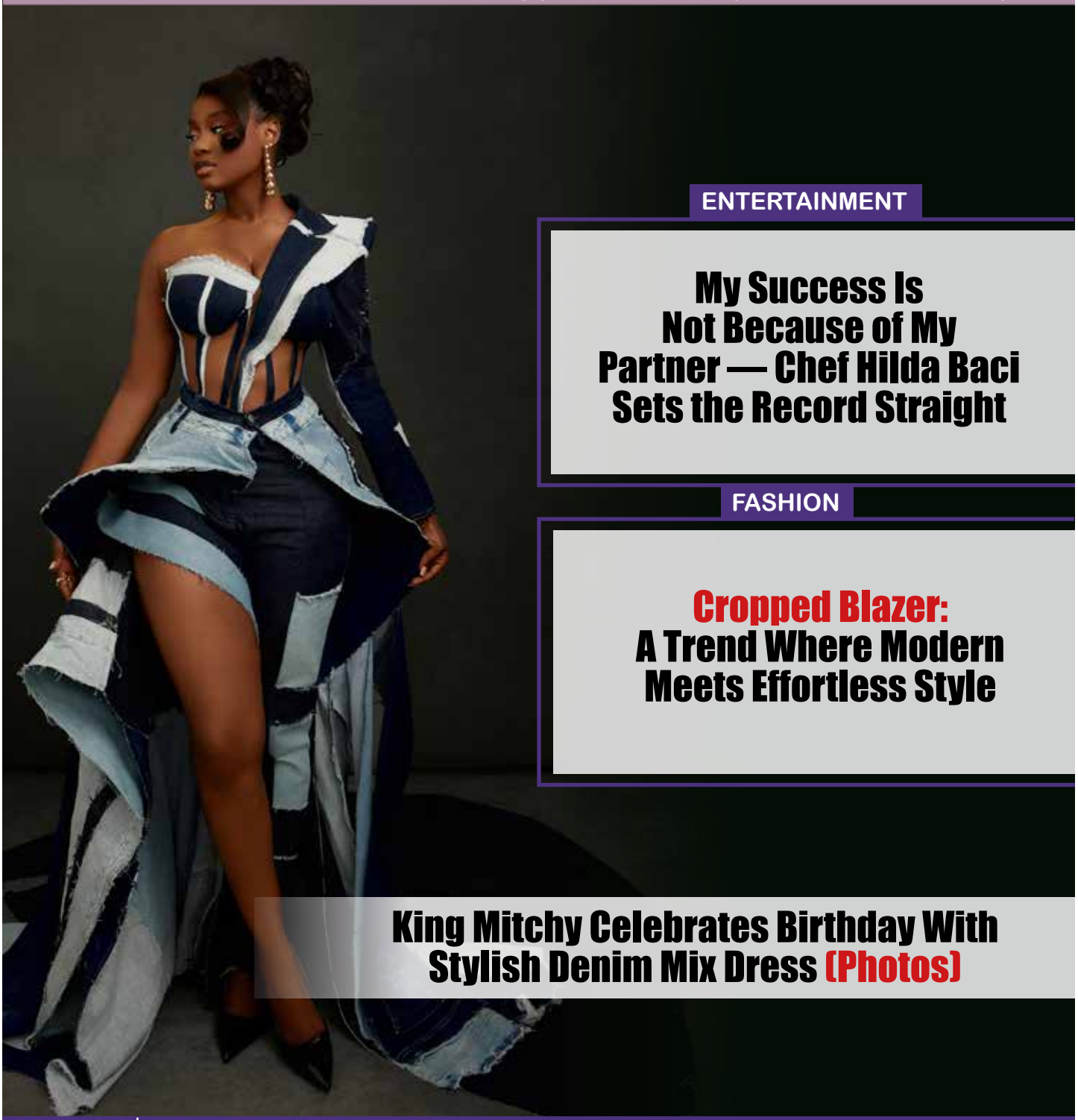
While the disruption is expected to ease gradually, the report projects that refined products demand will rebound by around 2.5 million barrels per day in 2027 as trade flows normalise, feedstock availability improves, fuel prices ease and air travel recovers.

However, the recovery is expected to vary across products and regions, with the growing adoption of electric vehicles, the use of liquefied natural gas in trucks and the substitution of gas for fuel oil in power generation limiting the return of demand in some markets.

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Nkechi Blessing Reunites With Ex-Lover Opeyemi Falegan Four Years After Messy Breakup

Actress Nkechi Blessing has finally reconciled with her ex-husband, Opeyemi Falegan.

This came four years after their messy breakup.

The reconciliation took place during a TikTok live on Saturday night, where the duo revisited the circumstances surrounding their highly publicised bitter fallout.

While demanding a public apology from Opeyemi, the actress disclosed that they have been in talks since February 2026 and explained how some negative comments he made about her during their crisis were still being used against her by trolls.

"I told you in February that if we must do this, you have to apologise to me because what you said years ago, some irrelevant nitwits still used it to insult me yesterday. That is to tell you that the internet never forgets."

While noting that they both had faults, the US-based army officer apologised to Nkechi for speaking ill of her.

"From the bottom of my heart to the depth of my soul, I'm sorry, Nkechi. That's in the past."

It can be recalled that the duo fell apart in April 2022 after throwing accusations at each other online.

In September 2022, Nkechi, in an interview on the "Your View" show, claimed that she entered into a relationship with Opeyemi to get back at her ex.

In response to the interview, Opeyemi accused the actress of dating him for his money and sex.



My Success Is Not Because of My Partner — Chef Hilda Baci Sets the Record Straight

Chef Hilda Baci has criticised the mindset of people who attribute her success to her partner, saying such comments show how much society still needs to change its attitude towards women.

Baci said she finds the remarks upsetting, even though they do not necessarily annoy her, because they overlook the effort women put into building their own careers.

In a video shared by Goldmyne TV, she said the comments reflect how people view women and their achievements.

"It is sometimes upsetting but I think that it just goes to show where we are as people and what the mindset is," she said.

The chef added that she is intentional about representing women and creating opportunities for them to become successful.

"That's why I'm so intentional about putting in so much effort in representing myself, representing women and just giving more women an opportunity to do better for themselves as well," she said.



They Lied and Conspired Against Me — Baba Ijesha Reopens Child Abuse Case, Breaks Silence

Nollywood actor Baba Ijesha has claimed that he was framed in the child segxwal abuse case that sent him to prison, insisting that he is not a paedophile and that people conspired against him.

He made the claims during an interview with Agbaletu Uncensored, where he said he only learnt the meaning of the word "paedophile" while in prison.

"I am not a paedophile, I don't even know what it means until I was in prison," he said.

The actor also challenged the account of the incident, claiming that he had never visited the house where he was captured on camera.

"The house where I was caught on camera, I have never been there before," he said.

Baba Ijesha further recalled what he told his accusers while in prison after being accused of using a key to deflower a seven-year-old girl."They said I used a key to deflower a 7-year-old. I told them I also have a girl child; when is time they should do likewise to her if I truly did it. I laid that curse," he said.



Actress Doris Ogala Gets N30m Bail, Court Restricts Contact With Prosecution Witnesses

A Federal High Court in Lagos has granted Nollywood actress Doris Ogala bail in the sum of N30 million over cyberstalking involving Pastor Chris Okafor.

Justice Akintayo Aluko, in his ruling, ordered Ogala's release on two sureties who must each provide a bond in the same amount.

The judge, however, attached strict conditions aimed at protecting the integrity of the trial.

Ogala and her sureties are required to maintain good behaviour and must not att@ck, hara§§, intimidate or interfere with any prosecution witness, or engage in conduct capable of disrupting the proceedings.

The sureties are expected to own properly registered landed property in Lagos State and provide other required documentation, including letters from their employers confirming their credibility and stability.

Justice Aluko said the decision was made under Section 162 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, stressing that the court had to balance Ogala's constitutional right to liberty with the need to protect the administration of justice.



Some Nigerian Artistes Use Voodoo To Get Hit Songs - Rapper, Odumodublvck Claims

Popular rapper Tochukwu Ojogwu, known as Odumodublvck, has alleged that some artistes use voodoo to secure hit songs in the Nigerian music industry.

Speaking in an episode of the Tea With Tay podcast, Odumodublvck said it is hard to get a hit song, stressing that some artistes never get a single hit song throughout their careers.

He praised Burna Boy, Wizkid, and Davido for consistently dropping hits over the years.

"Getting a hit song is not easy. Sometimes people even do jazz to get one. That is why you see some artists crashing out when they struggle to get a hit.

"Burna Boy, Wizkid and Davido have been dropping hit songs consistently for years.

"You have to respect that. Some artistes never get a hit song throughout their careers," he stated.



King Mitchy Celebrates Birthday With Stylish Denim Mix Dress (Photos)









How to Make Real Friends at Work



Starting a new job can feel like being the new kid in school all over again. You want to be liked, but not too eager to please. Friendly, but not overfamiliar. You're trying to do well, learn fast, and maybe find someone to eat lunch with, and it's not the easiest thing to do.

We already know that making friends as an adult is hard enough. Add the pressure of professionalism, tight schedules, and everyone glued to their laptops, and it becomes a whole different challenge.

Most adults say it's harder to make friends once you leave school. The workplace seems like the next best social hub, but unlike school, people have jobs to do, meetings to rush to, and lives waiting for them after 5 p.m. Still, friendships at work can make your professional life not just bearable, but better. Studies have shown that people who have friends at work are more engaged, productive, and generally happier.

So, how do you build real connections in a place where everyone's technically… paid to be there?

Why Work Friendships Matter

We spend most of our waking hours at work. That's a lot of time to spend surrounded by people you barely know. Having friends at work turns the office from a cold, transactional space into a community.

Work friends make stressful days feel manageable. They check in on you, help you navigate tricky situations, and celebrate your wins. Research even shows that individuals with strong social connections at work are more engaged and more likely to stay in their jobs for longer periods.

Why It's So Hard to Make Friends at Work?

Before you start trying to bond, it's okay to admit that it feels awkward. Making friends in a professional space comes with invisible walls.

You don't want to overshare too soon or appear as though you're trying too hard. Everyone's busy, glued to screens or stuck in back-to-back meetings. And there's always that fear of "what if they don't like me?"

Most people feel the same way, so you're not alone. Everyone's trying to balance friendliness with professionalism, and once you realise that, it gets a little easier to take the first step.

How to Actually Make Friends at Work

1. Start with Small Talk That Feels Natural

Start small. You don't have to launch deep conversations right away. Comment on something relatable like the freezing AC, the never-ending traffic, or that aromatic firewood jollof someone microwaved during lunch. Be consistent. One conversation might not build a friendship, but small, daily interactions do. Greet people when you walk in, compliment their outfit, or ask about their weekend plans. Over time, these light moments form the foundation for something real.

2. Join In Without Forcing It

Every office has its own rhythm, marked by group lunches, work jokes, and after-work hangouts. Join in when you can, even if it feels awkward at first. You don't need to fake interests; just show up and be present.

You don't have to attend every outing or say yes to everything, but being visible and open helps people see you as approachable. Friendships rarely happen if you're always on the sidelines.

3. Be the Helpful Colleague

You'd be surprised how fast offering help can break the ice. It could be sharing a file template, helping with a report, or showing a new teammate how to use the printer; small acts of kindness are remembered. When people know they can rely on you, they naturally open up more.

Cropped Blazers:

A Trend Where Modern Meets Effortless Style

By Ajibade Morakinyo

Cropped blazers are having a moment—and for good reason. They strike the perfect balance between modern edge and classic polish, bringing a sense of fun and freshness to any outfit. Whether you're heading to the office or grabbing coffee with friends, these shorter silhouettes add structure without the stiffness, making them a stylish go-to.

They bring a touch of sophistication to any look, while still feeling fun, youthful, and relaxed. What makes the cropped blazers so special is their versatility. You can dress it up or down, depending on your vibe. For a casual yet polished outfit, pair a structured cropped blazer with high-waisted jeans and sneakers. For a dressier approach, layer it over a slip dress or wide-leg trousers—perfect for date nights, brunch, or evenings out. And for those who love a touch of bold street style, cropped blazers look effortlessly cool with tailored shorts or pleated skirts. They can even double as outerwear over lightweight knits or turtlenecks as the temperature drops.

Maybe you already have one tucked away in your wardrobe—or maybe you've been eyeing one for a while. Either way, don't underestimate the power of a well-styled cropped blazers. Here are some styles to inspire your creativity.










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Apocalypse Now! The Day of Atonement is Near!

The end is nigh; those who have ears, let them listen; those who have eyes, look at the signs: We are now in the End Time. Be prepared to meet your Lord on the day when we will all have to give account for our stewardship, here on planet earth: A Day when all parts of our body will achieve autonomy and give individual accounts of what they did.

"On the Day when every soul will be confronted with all the good it has done and all the evil it has done, it will wish there were a great distance between it and its evil… And Allah is full of kindness to those that serve Him." (Quran 3:30)

The tongue shall confess all that it had uttered without recourse of being guided or controlled by us; the hands shall tell of all that it did and our legs shall tell of our entire sojourn.

For the evil one, it shall be a day of weeping and gnashing of teeth. Those thieves who dispossessed a whole nation and cornered the people's wealth will have a case to answer and would have no court to run to demanding



'habeas corpus'. Let it be known, there will be no police in heaven and no EFCC, no judges to bribe and no SANs to line up for defence. You will face your maker and account for your sins. The Day of Atonement is near!

Chief Missioner, Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria, Sheik Abdul Rahman Ahmad said: "those who craved to amass wealth for themselves would give account to God on the Day of Judgment. Oftentimes, we forget about death and think of how to acquire properties. How foolish and unmindful have human beings become to remember the futility of life because death will come whether you are ready or not.

"There will be no SSS and dispatch riders, all the paraphernalia of the office will be lost and you will be caught up in serious traffic. Every leader will be brought in chains on the Day of Judgment. It is not the number of years we live that matter, but how well we live; we should always live according to Allah's wishes and impact positively on the lives of others while alive."

Matthew 24:10-12 "And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold."

2Timothy 3:1-5 "But understand this that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control,

brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people."

If you call the study of God theology then you might call the study of man "meology" or "it's all about me" and satisfying my needs.

No wonder that in the last days difficult times will come and in fact, have already come. People love money, self, are proud and arrogant, and abusive, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable (can't be satisfied), slanderous, having no self-control, brutal and the list goes on. Just watch the news and you'll see that these last days are full of difficulties.

Regrettably, our leaders are not impacting positively on our lives. Basic welfare is not being provided, while we are left to fend for ourselves; from security, to light, water, healthcare and even our own graves when we die.

They sit on the people's rightful wages while they spend money as if they grow it in their backyard. While the workers trek to work and develop blisters on their feet, these wicked folks ride in the most expensive SUVs money can buy and even provide the same to their wives and children, including their concubines. We have bad news for them, the end is near.

We have been warned in the good books about the coming apocalypse, but we are not taking heed nor making efforts to tidy our affairs. Both the Bible and the Quran are agreed on the coming of the End, they are equally agreed that no one knows when the 'Hour' will come except God; hence Allah said in Surah An-Nazi'at: "They ask you about the Hour, – when will be its appointed time? You have no knowledge to say anything about it, To your Lord belongs (the knowledge of) the term thereof? . . . . . (Quran 79:42-46) See also (Quran 7:187)

Mark 13:2 corroborates the above verse: But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. See also (Quran 54:1), (Al-Anbiya' 21:1) and (An-Nahl 16:1).

There are significant changes going on in our world today. Many people are wondering what is happening with all these disasters: They are the signs of the Apocalypse, though we are told it is El-Nino, climate change and all that, they are indeed End Time events. Matthew 24:7 said "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in various places". See also (Matthew 24:33). These are the signs of the times; very disturbing and perilous.



Earth has experienced five major mass extinctions in the last 500 million years — the Ordovician–Silurian, Late Devonian, Permian–Triassic, Triassic–Jurassic, and Cretaceous–Paleogene — each eliminating at least 70–75% of species and driven by events such as glaciations, volcanism, climate change, and asteroid impacts.

1. Ordovician–Silurian Extinction (443 Million years -Ma). Species loss: 85% of marine species. Causes: Large-scale glaciation, global cooling, and sea-level fall. Impact: Strongly affected shallow-marine organisms such as trilobites, brachiopods, corals, and graptolites.

2. Late Devonian Extinction (372–360 Ma). Species loss: 70–80% of marine species. Causes: Not fully understood; likely climate change, ocean anoxia, and ecosystem restructuring. Impact: Reef-building corals and armored fishes were heavily affected.

3. Permian–Triassic Extinction (252 Ma). Species loss: Up to 96% of marine species and 70% of terrestrial species—the

largest extinction in Earth history. Causes: Massive Siberian Traps volcanism, global warming, ocean anoxia, and possibly impact events. Impact: Eliminated trilobites, sea scorpions, and many coral groups.

4. Triassic–Jurassic Extinction (201 Ma). Species loss: Significant losses among marine reptiles, ammonoids, and many archosaurs. Causes: Volcanism from the Central Atlantic Magmatic Province, climate change. Impact: Cleared ecological space for dinosaurs to dominate the Jurassic.

5. Cretaceous–Paleogene Extinction (66 Ma). Species loss: 75% of species, including all non-avian dinosaurs. Causes: Chicxulub asteroid impact; Deccan Traps volcanism may have contributed. Impact: Collapse of many terrestrial and marine ecosystems; mammals diversified afterward.

While the Big Five are the most severe, many other extinction pulses occurred (e.g., Eocene–Oligocene, Pliensbachian–Toarcian, End-Capitanian), often linked to volcanism, climate shifts, or ocean chemistry changes.

We should also remember Noah's flood and the obliteration of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Several sources note that current extinction rates—driven by human activity—are far above background levels and may signal the beginning of a sixth mass extinction. Earth's mass extinctions mark major turning points in evolutionary history, each reshaping global biodiversity and paving the way for new ecosystems. Science is telling us that we are now in the throes of a Sixth Mass Extinction and the end could come anytime.

The prophet (SAW) said: "There are five things which nobody knows except Allah;" then he recited: "Verily Allah! With Him (Alone) is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die. Verily, Allah is All Knower, All Aware (of things)." (Quran 31:34)

The Holy Prophet (SAW) also said; If the leaders do not govern according to the Book of Allah, you should realise that this has never happened without Allah making them into groups and making them fight one another.' (Ibn Majah).

This is the order of the day, intra elite squabbles. 'Ali ibn Abu Talib said, "The Prophet (SAW) said: 'If my Ummah bears fifteen traits, tribulation will befall it.' Someone asked, 'What are they, O Messenger of Allah?' He said among others: 'When any gain is shared out only among the rich, with no benefit to the poor; when a trust becomes a means of making a profit; when paying Zakat becomes a burden;" Tirmidhi. No doubt these are happening now in our society, when a few people, numbering less than 5,000 sit on the patrimony of 200 million people: It is a sign of the Apocalypse!

Lest we forget: Goodness does not consist in turning your face towards East or West. The truly good are those who believe in God and the Last Day, in the angels, the Scripture, and the prophets; who give away some of their wealth, however much they cherish it, to their relatives, to orphans, the needy, travellers and beggars and to liberate those in debt and bondage; those who keep up the prayers and pay the prescribed alms; who keep pledges whenever they make them; who are steadfast in misfortune, adversity and times of danger. These are the ones who are true, and it is they who are aware of God. (Quran 2:178).

Rabbana ikshif 'anna al-'adhab inna mu'minun"; Our Lord! Remove this torment from us, and we will certainly believe."

May we be worthy of His Grace, the day we meet our Maker! Amen.

Barka Juma'at and happy weekend



Nigeria Wins Historic 2026 U17 Women World Cup



Nigeria's under-17 women's national team, the Flamingos, etched their names into football history Saturday, defeating former champions Japan 2–1 at the Mohammed VI Football Complex to lift the 2026 FIFA U17 Women's World Cup.

With the victory, Nigeria becomes the first African nation to win the tournament since its inception in 2008.

Led by head coach Akeem Busari, the Flamingos entered the showpiece having already broken ground as the first African side to reach the final, surpassing their previous best finish of a bronze medal in 2022.

After a fiercely contested opening half-hour against a disciplined Japanese side making their fourth final appearance, Nigeria broke the deadlock in the 39th minute.

Midfielder Awawu Bashiru—who had starred with a brace in the semi-final against Brazil—unleashed a long-range strike that slipped past Japanese goalkeeper Kou Kadowaki to give the Flamingos a 1–0 lead at the break.

Nigeria wasted no time doubling their advantage after the restart. Just two minutes into the second half, forward Oluebube Umejiaku latched onto a through ball and lifted a composed finish over the onrushing Kadowaki in the 47th minute to make it 2–0.

Desperate to reclaim a title they last won in 2014, Japan responded with a triple substitution and mounted heavy late pressure.

The Young Nadeshiko eventually pulled a goal back in the 80th minute through setting up a tense finish in front of a crowd that included FIFA President Gianni Infantino and CAF President Patrice Motsepe.

Despite Japan's late surge, Nigeria's backline—marshalled by goalkeeper Sylvia Ijirigho and defender Omowunmi Sunday—held firm through stoppage time to seal an unforgettable triumph for Nigerian and African women's football.

The Nigeria Customs Service has announced the release and evacuation of 98 out of 300 containers of power equipment trapped at the port for over 20 years.

The Comptroller-General of Customs, Adewale Adeniyi, announced this in Apapa on Friday during the flag-off of the evacuation exercise.

Adeniyi stressed that the consignments include high-capacity transformers, cables, switchgear and other transmission equipment imported through the Federal Ministry of Power and other government agencies like the Transmission Company of Nigeria, Niger Delta Power Holding Company, and so on and so forth.

He stressed that over the years, equipment imported for critical power projects remained uncleared in the ports and, in some cases, for between 14 and 20 years.

Adeniyi emphasised that following a presentation by the Honourable Minister of Power at the Federal Electricity Council, President Bola Tinubu directed the immediate clearance of the equipment.

He pointed out that the President also directed that relevant agencies resolve all outstanding charges and administrative bottlenecks without delay.

"In line with that presidential directive, this service has commenced the immediate clearance of more than 200 containers of power equipment. Today, I am here with the Honourable Minister of Power to flag off the release of the first 48 containers from ENL Terminal. Another 50 containers at other terminals in Tincan and other ports will also be released," Adeniyi said.

'You Made History' – Ajibade Hails Flamingos After World Title Triumph



Super Falcons captain Rasheedat Ajibade has congratulated the Flamingos following their historic triumph at the 2026 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup.

Nigeria defeated Japan 2-1 in Saturday night's final in Rabat to become the first African nation to win the competition.

Awawu Bashiru opened the scoring for the Flamingos six minutes before half-time with a looping effort before Oluebube Umejiaku doubled Nigeria's advantage just two minutes into the second half.

Japan pulled one back through Fuki Ito 10 minutes from time, but the Nigerian youngsters held firm to secure a historic victory.

Reacting to the achievement, Ajibade took to social media to shower praise on Akeem Busari's side, describing their accomplishment as a moment of pride for the country.

"WORLD CHAMPIONS!

You made history, and you made all of Nigeria proud. I'm so proud of every one of you.The future of Nigerian football is here.Congratulations, Flamingos!," Ajibade wrote on X.

Hossam Hassan Sacked As Egypt Head Coach



The Egyptian Football Association (EFA) has dismissed national team coach Hossam Hassan, citing concerns over the image and stability of the national side after a series of controversies surrounding his marital life.

The EFA said on Saturday that it had reviewed recent events and their "negative impact on the positive image and stability" of the national team before deciding to part company with Hassan and his coaching staff, adding that "maintaining stability of the team is top priority", as reported by Aljazeera.

Ali Maher, currently in charge of club side Ceramica Cleopatra, was appointed his successor.

The move came three days after Egypt's Supreme Council for Media Regulation banned Hassan from appearing on media platforms over a case linked to his private life and former wife.

Local media reported lawyers representing Hassan had filed a complaint against his ex-wife, Dina Mostafa, known publicly as "Dan Adam", alleging forgery of official documents and bigamy.

EPL: Aina Missing As Forest Edge Manchester City



Super Eagles defender Ola Aina was absent from the matchday squad on Saturday afternoon as Nottingham Forest produced a clinical counter-attacking display to defeat Manchester City 3–1 at the City Ground.

Aina, who has made six Premier League appearances and picked up three yellow cards so far this season, was forced to watch from the sidelines as his teammates dismantled the opposition defense.

Forest caught the visitors cold in just the sixth minute. Jair Cunha dispossessed City defender Joško Gvardiol deep in his own half before driving forward and drilling a precise finish into the bottom left corner to open the scoring.

The hosts doubled their advantage in the 18th minute following another defensive lapse from City. Liam Delap seized on a loose ball inside his own half, sprinted past two defenders on a lightning-quick transition, and smashed his effort past the goalkeeper to make it 2–0

When the Ruling APC Resort to Threats As Campaign Strategy

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

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

On a daily basis, die-hard Tinubu followers continue to issue threats to voters, aimed at unwholesome repercussions if a member or members of a community fail to vote for the All Progressives Congress (APC), and its presidential candidate, Tinubu.

It would be recalled that as the Osun governorship election was nearing feverpitch climax, threats were being issued by APC party stalwarts. These threats, unfortunately, were from public officers, most of them, supposedly elected, party thugs and any other person, who somehow have sympathy for President Tinubu.

In Osun, just before the Accord Party resoundingly defeated the APC, a serving Senator, representing Osun Central, was captured on viral video, instructing party faithful, to 'kill Accord members' wherever they are seen. That Senator is Francis Fadahunsi. He is still walking free till date. No manner of punishment was meted out to him, other than an invitation by the Police.

Fadahunsi, had during a protest at the palace of the Owa Obokun of Ijesaland in Ilesa over alleged incessant killings of the APC members in Ijesaland, directed party members to retaliate by the kill with the rival part Accord.

Following in Fadahunsi's footsteps, the Kuje Area Council chairman, Danjuma Samuel Shekwolo, in a speech, ordered anyone who would not support or vote APC during the election, to leave the area council.

With impunity, the chairman added, "with confidence, I'm saying it."

In the same vein, the governor of Ebonyi State, Francis Nwifuru, also threatened to sack all local government chairmen if they fail to delivered their to Tinubu and APC

"Any chairman who fails to win his council will be removed from office and replaced with a councillor.

"I want this information to be on the headlines of newspapers because, as politicians, we would not speak in secret," he said.

Also, a chairman in Ebonyi State, Eze Paul Ituma, toed his governor's



line, in reaction to the sack threat issued to them.

The newly sworn-in Chairman of Ohaukwu Local Government Area warned opposition political parties and their supporters against engaging in political activities in the area ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Ituma issued the warning while speaking on political activities in the council, saying anyone who attempted to operate against his political interests could be declared persona non grata.

Again, the APC chairman in Yobe State, Mohammed Gadaka, also silently seduced married women, urging them to divorce their husband's if they fail to support APC. He promised to marry them if they do.

All these entities have come out to say they were quoted out of context, when their videos are in public. Surprisingly, the law has done nothing to them to dissuade more threats.

Is the APC suddenly introducing a new chapter in campaign strategy, that goes with impunity? Why is the law enforcement agency silent on the these threats, giving other entities the impetus to issue more threats.

The Constitution permits every Nigerian to freely associate, and when anyone tries to prove otherwise, it should be deemed an infringement on the fundamental human rights of the individual, and should not be handled with kid's gloves.

Time has come for all these APC office holders to be accountable for their actions. No one should be permitted to threaten a fellow Nigerian because of his political leaning. Dismissing these utterances as mere joke as the Police are wont to do, is unacceptable, and will never be acceptable.

Heaven will not fall if Tinubu, Atiku, Obi or any other candidate loses election, so individuals should be allowed to freely make their choices.

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